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The Africa Society of the National Summit on Africa and World Cocoa Foundation Honor Two West African Women for their Dedication to Child Labor Issues in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

WASHINGTON, DC, USA (June 16, 2008) – The Africa Society of the National Summit on Africa and World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) paid tribute on Monday, June 16th to Akosua Frema Osei-Opere of Ghana and Amouan Acquah Assouan of Côte D'Ivoire, whose efforts on behalf of child labor have led to historic governmental and social change in their region.

At an event held in Washington, D.C., Mrs. Frema and Madam Acquah were honored for having led their countries in the development of policy initiatives and timelines that would end the worst forms of child labor. Mrs. Frema was introduced by his Excellency Ambassador Dr. Kwame Bawuah-Edusei of the Republic of Ghana and Madam Acquah was introduced by Deputy Chief of Mission Christophe Kouakou. The Monday event was attended by leaders from the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Labor, Congress, non-governmental organizations, WCF member companies, and other dignitaries.

As part of today's recognition event, Mrs. Frema and Madam Acquah each received a financial donation to the charities of their choice courtesy of The Africa Society and World Cocoa Foundation.

Mrs. Frema chose Child Rights International for their leadership in protecting the rights and improving the lives of children while Madam Acquah selected the Fraternite Sans Limite for designing a health care program that addresses community and hazardous work activities. These needs were identified during Côte d'Ivoire's certification pilot data collection efforts in July 2007 and illustrate how cocoa certification is making a difference.

Currently, Mrs. Frema serves as the Deputy Minister of Manpower, Youth and Employment for the Republic of Ghana, Member of Parliament since 2005, and Director of the National Program for the Elimination of the World Forms of Child Labor in Cocoa. Formerly, she held senior positions for more than ten years with ActionAid Africa and SNV/Netherlands Development Organization. She has also served as an economic development consultant for United Nations programs in Malawi and Nigeria.

Madam Acquah is the Executive Secretary of the Child Labor Monitoring System Cocoa Certification and Special Advisor to the Prime Minister for the Republic of Côte D'Ivoire. Since May 2004, she has been twice appointed as the Director of Côte D'Ivoire's Cocoa Task Force, formed to combat child labor in Côte D'Ivoire's cocoa sector. She was formerly the Special Advisor in charge of Cocoa Certification.

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About The Africa Society

The mission of The Africa Society is to be the premiere entity that engages and educates Americans about Africa and to create, through partnerships a better understanding of its peoples, diverse cultures, histories and economies. For more information about The Africa Society, visit: <http://www.africasummit.org>.

About the World Cocoa Foundation

Established in 2000, the World Cocoa Foundation is a leader in promoting economic and social development and environmental stewardship in 15 cocoa-producing countries around the world. With nearly 70 member companies from the Americas, Europe, and Asia, the Foundation actively supports a range of farm-level programs harnessing sustainable agriculture practices to improve the quality of life for the millions of smallholder farmers growing this unique crop. For more information about the World Cocoa Foundation, visit: www.worldcocoafoundation.org.