



WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON

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Warm greetings to everyone gathered in Xiamen, China, for the second World Investment Forum, organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in partnership with the government of the People's Republic of China.

It's fitting that this meeting take place here, in a country that has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty in the past few decades. China's openness to international trade and investment clearly played an instrumental role in this progress and attests to one of the most positive aspects of our global interdependence. All around the world, countries that have chosen the path of open trade and investment have advanced far more than those that have closed their borders.

While we can and should celebrate such progress, we also need to acknowledge that it tells only half the story. With nearly a billion and a half people living in poverty, a billion people with no access to clean water, and a billion people going to bed hungry, the great challenge of this century is to maximize the positive forces of our interdependence and reduce the negative ones. I am pleased that this event brings together all sectors of society -- government and business, nonprofit organizations and academia -- to focus on how we can promote economic growth in a sustainable and equitable way.

I am also pleased that WIF 2010 includes a special meeting on investment opportunities in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, with an emphasis on supporting reconstruction in Haiti. Since the earthquake hit, I have been working on several fronts not only to meet the country's most urgent needs, but also to assist in efforts to help the Caribbean nation become self-sufficient and prosperous in the long term. Such efforts must include creating a more modern, diversified, and sustainable economy. As members of the investment community, you have a unique ability to help bring that goal to reality. I hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to learn how you can invest in Haiti in a way that is both profitable for investors and beneficial for the people of Haiti.

Best wishes for an inspiring and productive event.

*Bill Clinton*