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CENTER FOR  
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at BROOKINGS

**Draft Press Release**

**INTERNATIONAL EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE**

The Hague, April 23, 2008 –The Committee for Economic Development and the Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings are hosting a conference featuring global business leaders and early child development experts on April 23, 2008 in The Hague, The Netherlands.

Early Child Development (ECD) refers to a combination of programs and policies aimed at improving the nutrition, health, cognitive and psycho-social development, education and in some situations, social protection, of young children. It is one of the most effective strategies to improving the health and education of young children, reducing poverty, and promoting economic growth in emerging markets. It is also a very wise business investment, yielding extremely positive returns to private sector investors.

The conference will highlight not only the great benefit of ECD to both local communities and long term global poverty reduction strategies, but will illuminate the benefit to private sector investors and present logistical modalities for private sector involvement in ECD in emerging markets.

The conference will be attended by European business leaders, international early child development experts, and special guests including Her Majesty, Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands.

Key participants of the event include:

- Antony Burgmans, Former Chair, Unilever NV and PLC
- Tony Ruys, Former Chairman & CEO, Heineken NV
- Dennis Jönsson, President & CEO, TetraPak Group
- Gary Knell, CEO, Sesame Workshop
- James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences
- Ambassador Mkhize of South Africa to the Netherlands
- Jack P. Shonkoff, Director, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University
- James Wolfensohn, Former President, World Bank

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