Kees Kruythoff, Head of Unilever North America
Committee for Economic Development: Global Leadership Award
October 25, 2011

Good evening. I would like to start by thanking the Committee on Economic Development, its Board of Trustees, Co-chairs Roger Ferguson and Don Peterson, and President Charlie Kolb. It is an honor to be here tonight to accept on behalf of the 167 thousand Unilever employees around the globe this prestigious Global Leadership Award from the Committee on Economic Development. We are humbled.

We believe businesses can and should lead on environmental, economic and social issues that impact our world. It's part of Unilever's DNA. More than 100 years ago our founders acted on their passion to help create a better world every day.

We are a company that makes every day consumer products like soap, shampoo, toothpaste, detergent, tea, mayonnaise, margarine and ice cream.

You will know us best by our brands – Dove, Hellmann's, Vaseline, Axe, Sure, Persil, Omo, Comfort, Magnum, Ben & Jerry's.

These brands are sold in 180 countries and generate revenues of $60 billion. They are present in 70% of the households on the planet and are used by 2 billion people every day.

According to the United Nations Population Fund, at the end of this month – October – our planet will be home to 7 billion people. All sharing the Earth's land and resources. The majority of our population growth is in developing regions of the world. Yet in the Western hemisphere, we are consuming at the rate of three planets. But we only have one. We are all aware of the challenges we face: a food crisis, an energy crisis, a water crisis.

Because of Unilever's geographic spread, we deal directly with the problems of food supply, poverty and environmental degradation on a daily basis.

As a business, we do not have the luxury of choosing between growth and sustainability. We have to have both.

Unilever's vision is to double the size of our company while reducing our environmental impact. Our ambition is to decouple our growth from our environmental impacts across the lifecycle of our products.

At the same time we intend to increase the positive social impacts of our brands.

The Unilever Sustainable Living Plan sets out how we intend to do this over the next decade.

The USLP is about: better nutrition, better self-esteem, better hygiene and less impact on the environment.

By 2020, we aim to:

- help **a billion** people take action to improve their health and well-being
- **halve** the environmental footprint of our products
- source **100%** of our agricultural raw materials sustainably

Supporting these three big targets are 50 separate commitments - each quantified, each time bound. They cover everything from reducing the level of salt in our products to help consumers meet recommended daily levels to doubling the use of renewable energy in our factories to 40% of our total energy requirement.

The targets are ambitious and challenging and we certainly don't have all the answers.

What we do know is that it requires all of us to work together in partnership with the 3 sectors and within the sectors. America will have to work with China, Harvard with Yale, Coke with Pepsi, and even WWF with Greenpeace.

The Sustainable Living Plan excites everyone at Unilever, because we all believe it is the right thing to do for our business and for the planet.

Achieving a sustainable future will certainly take more than 10 years. We may not achieve it in our lifetimes.

But we know we can make a big difference. Our products are used two billion times a day in nearly every country in the world, so changes we make to the way they are designed, sourced and used can help make consumption sustainable.

We also know that it is action – not simply plans for action – that will create the change we seek in growing a sustainable business.

So we at Unilever join in congratulating all of the awardees this evening that have taken action to advance Business Statesmanship, Excellence in Public Policy, Corporate Citizenship and CED Trustee Leadership. Together we will inspire and drive progress on our shared journey '***to create a better future every day for people and the planet.'***

Thank you so very much.

# # #