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Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation Passes Significant 300th Project Milestone

(Houston, September 3, 2008) The Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation recently swept past an important milestone. Since its inception in 2006, the Foundation has arranged for Lex Mundi lawyers to provide pro bono legal services to social entrepreneurs on over 300 separate projects. These projects have engaged 70 member law firms located in 40 countries around the world and 31 states in the U.S.

As a nonprofit affiliate of Lex Mundi, the world's leading association of independent law firms, the Foundation strives to improve the lives of the world's poor and disenfranchised by calling upon Lex Mundi's unique global network of 160 top-tier business law firms to provide legal assistance to social entrepreneurs on a pro bono basis. By providing social entrepreneurs with access to critically needed legal assistance, the Foundation strengthens the global social entrepreneurship movement for positive social change.

Examples of two of the Foundation's most recent projects, one with Mercy Corps and the other with Solar Electric Light Fund, highlight the pro bono work undertaken by Lex Mundi member firms and their lawyers for social entrepreneurs.

Using a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Mercy Corps, a US-based nonprofit that works to alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression by helping people build secure, productive and just communities, is leading a consortium of investors to create Indonesia's first microfinance wholesale bank – a "Bank of Banks". The Bank aims to bring stability to Indonesian microfinance institutions and allow them to expand their services beyond microloans to savings accounts, insurance, mortgage financing, remittance services and mobile banking.

Responding to the request of the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation, Ali Budiardjo, Nugroho, Reksodiputro, Lex Mundi's member firm for Indonesia, provided invaluable legal advice and guidance in helping Mercy Corps establish the Bank of Banks. The first of its kind in Indonesia, the Bank of Banks posed a number of legal challenges.

Delighted with the quality of the legal work, Mary Chaffin, General Counsel of Mercy Corps, said, "Ferry Madian and his team at Ali Budiardjo, Nugroho, Reksodiputro have been instrumental in providing the critical support necessary to the success of this project and its potential to lift massive numbers of the poor permanently out of poverty."

In the second example, the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation reached out to Alston & Bird LLP, Lex Mundi's member firm for Georgia, USA, to help Solar Electric Light Fund ("SELF") draft and negotiate a contract with a South African company to supply and install off-grid solar systems to three public secondary schools in the rural Amathole Region of Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. The new power systems will provide electricity for basic applications such as lighting and audio-visual equipment to

increase general educational opportunities at the schools. Lawyers with Bowman Gilfillan, Lex Mundi's member firm for South Africa, provided valuable counsel on South African legal issues.

Robert Freling, Executive Director of SELF, stated, "Eric Weingarten [a lawyer with Alston & Bird, whose practice includes renewable energy]...was extraordinarily helpful to SELF in connection with our solar school project in South Africa. Eric was extremely diligent and thoughtful at each stage of the process. He always treated SELF with the same professionalism as he would any paying client of Alston & Bird."

The Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, headquartered in Washington, D.C. The Foundation is a "matchmaker" and does not practice law; instead it identifies effective social entrepreneurs through referrals by its partners/collaborators. These collaborating organizations include the Skoll Foundation, Ashoka Innovators for the Public, Acumen Fund, Draper Richards Foundation, Global Fund for Children, Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, Echoing Green, Lemelson Foundation and Mercy Corps.

The Foundation defines social entrepreneurs as individuals and organizations that use entrepreneurial and innovative ideas to improve communities and the lives of the poor and disenfranchised. Because Lex Mundi member firms are leading, full-service law firms, they have the experience and expertise to provide the necessary assistance to social entrepreneurs, thus helping them become successful agents of positive social change.

The Foundation is unique in that there is no other global organization that is focused exclusively on providing pro bono legal services to social entrepreneurs. It aspires to become one of the world's premier pro bono legal services organizations and to reach many more social entrepreneurs. To learn more about the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation, its mission and its current projects, please visit www.lexmundiprobono.org.

Lex Mundi is the world's leading association of independent law firms. The association has more than 160 member firms around the world, representing approximately 21,000 lawyers. Membership in Lex Mundi provides member firms with a trusted network of law firms that share similar values and a similar focus on quality through which they can access global legal resources that enable them to serve their clients better and to improve continuously all aspects of their firms. Member law firms are located throughout North America, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and Africa. For more information, please visit <http://www.lexmundi.com>.

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