

**Remarks of Lawrence Macdonald on May 26, 2009 in Washington, DC at the conference  
*Beyond the Fence: Research Lessons on How Immigration and Remittances Shape Global  
Development***

Good morning and welcome to the Center for Global Development. This is a joint production of the Harvard Center for International Development, which originally had the meeting and the Center for Global Development and, on behalf of Michael Clemens, who, on our side, helped to organize this conference. I was really delighted to be hosting this today. My name is Lawrence MacDonald, our vice president for communications and policy outreach. As many of you know – and it's CGD's tagline for claims – we're in the business of independent research and practical ideas for global prosperity. It's a goal that many of you in this room share and I'm sure that it's a spirit that will shape our proceedings today.

The migration policy of the United States and other rich countries is a powerful force in the lives of poor people around the world. But too often, people who work on migration policy, who study migration policy are not the same people who are studying development, and the two groups only too rarely speak to each other. Overcoming that and ensuring that migration becomes part of the development agenda and that development becomes part of the migration policy reform agenda is one of the important goals of today's conference.

You'll hear today from some of the finest scholars who've explored this interface as well as from key players in the policy realm who will help us to understand the connection between the fine research we're going to hear about and policy action. A warning: you may leave here today thinking very differently about these issues than you do now.

The timing of this conference could not have been better. On June 8<sup>th</sup>, President Obama is expected to announce a major initiative that would lead to fundamental migration reform in the United States. One possible approach is through a set of study groups, and we, at the center, and I'm sure our colleagues at Harvard will be working very hard to make sure that the ideas that are presented today inform that process.

Much of the research you will hear about today and most of this meeting itself was made possible by the support of Open America Foundation, and you will be hearing more about that from Bob Hildreth later today.

But I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge another very important support, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation represented here today by Milena Novy-Marx. Milena, where are you? There she is. Thank you, Milena, and thank you for being here today. Not only did MacArthur support a portion of this meeting and some of the research by Dean Yang and by my colleague Michael Clemens but two of the Harvard researchers you will hear from today are former MacArthur fellows which we all know is the so-called genius grant – or maybe in their presence I shouldn't say so-called genius grant – Michael Kremer and Sendhil Mullainathan.

Without further ado, I'd like to introduce Ricardo Hausmann. Ricardo was the director of Harvard Center for International Development as well as professor of the practice of development at Harvard's Kennedy School. Equally important from our point of view I'm proud to say that he's a non-resident fellow at the Center for Global Development. His numerous past positions include serving as minister of planning in Venezuela and as the first chief economist of the Inter-American Development Bank. Please join me in welcoming Ricardo.