

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Secretary General Kofi Annan recently said the world is in the worst shape he'd seen it since he began work at the United Nations. While the secretary general may be right about the scope and magnitude of the challenges, I believe that, with some of the brightest minds on the planet engaged in the search for practical policy solutions, there's good reason to hope we can put the world on a path to prosperity and peace. And as head of an international think tank, I am fortunate to know many of these individuals.

Here at the Milken Institute, we are working on issues ranging from affordable housing to minority business access to capital. The emphasis we place on capital access was reinforced at the June economic summit of leaders from the Group of Eight countries, where the importance of free markets in driving job creation, income growth and social mobility was stressed. Indeed, many of the G8's priorities parallel our own: (1) reduce regulatory barriers to entrepreneurs and investors, (2) expand access to microfinance, and (3) increase the liquidity and transparency of regional financial markets.

These and other approaches to stimulating growth and raising living standards were explored at the Institute's recent Global Conference, a gathering of business executives, policymakers and academics from five continents. Among the many intriguing ideas that were aired:

- To replace the jobs lost in the ongoing process of globalization, the United States must, in effect, enroll American workers in lifetime training programs.
- Speeding the pace of medical innovation will require more sophisticated collaboration among researchers, entrepreneurs, financiers and regulators.
- Getting the most out of a workforce strained by burdens ranging from elderly parents to ever-longer commuting times demands far more flexibility on the part of employers.
- Rich countries can do more for poor countries by inducing market reform than by subsidizing incomes or building infrastructure. Think China and India.

I can't do these ideas justice in sound-bite prose. But I hope my enthusiasm for policy research, not to mention my confidence in the value of big ideas, is catching.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Klowden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "M".

Michael Klowden
President and CEO