

MESSAGE FROM THE U.S. SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

*B*usiness Ethics: A Manual for Managing a Responsible Business Enterprise in Emerging Market Economies grew out of collaboration between the U.S. Department of Commerce and many dedicated people and organizations. It is intended to provide a practical guide to assist owners and managers in meeting emerging global standards and expectations for an effective business ethics program.

Such a step-by-step guide should have great utility in the emerging market economies that ring the globe. Many are new players in the modern global economy and lack experience in what it takes for free markets to function efficiently and to deliver the jobs, goods, services, consumer choices, and general prosperity that are expected from democratic capitalism. Even developed market economies, moreover, are searching for better ways to meet market challenges.

A fundamental ingredient of any successful market economy is respect for basic human values: honesty, trust, and fairness. These values must become an integral part of business culture and practice for markets to remain free and to work effectively. Private business is at the strategic center of any civil society. It's where people go for a job or to invest savings to realize their aspirations for their families.

Having spent most of my life working in American business, I am compelled to ask, "If businesses fail to honor their responsibilities to society and don't believe in corporate stewardship, who in our society will?" Corporate stewardship protects the whole "human ecology" of the corporation and its communities, nurturing the long-term economic growth of both and of their human resources.

You can apply the manual whether you represent business, civil society, or government and whether your enterprise is large or small. I hope you find the manual easy to use in your development of a business ethics program. We certainly hope that it will stimulate public debate on the importance of business ethics.

Sincerely,



Donald L. Evans
U.S. Secretary of Commerce