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Steve Weinstein, *President of Altair Advisers*, opened the conference by reviewing the first quarter market results. Steve discussed the recent out-sized returns of many major asset classes in comparison to historical averages. He pointed out several potential causes for concern going forward, such as rising commodity prices, inflation, and the political situation in the Middle East, but he also identified reasons to be optimistic, including low unemployment and rising corporate earnings.

Paul Laudicina, *Vice-President and Managing Director, Global Business Policy Council, A.T. Kearney, Inc.*, next discussed the many factors that drive the global business environment, including globalization, technology, demographics, and natural resources. He expressed concern over a rise in regionalism and protectionism and provided his views on the importance of free trade in a true global economy.

David Hale, *Founder and CEO of Hale Advisors and China Online*, provided commentary on a variety of global economic issues, such as opportunities and risks in emerging markets, recovery in Japan and Europe, the commodity markets, and political threats to the world economy. He offered insights into the discord in Iran, and the potential impact of several impending elections and policy decisions world-wide.