



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Donna Thiessen
(703) 875-4357

**USTDA DIRECTOR WALTHER UNVEILS
AFRICAN TRADE LANES PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE**

*\$4 Million Initiative Will Promote Transportation Infrastructure Development
Throughout Sub-Saharan Africa*

CAPETOWN, SOUTH AFRICA – (April 14, 2008) Today, USTDA Director Larry W. Walther officially launched the *African Trade Lanes Partnership* in [opening remarks](#) at the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Transportation and Trade Forum. The *Partnership* will support a coordinated intermodal transportation infrastructure program in order for Africa to better take advantage of the AGOA benefits. Director Walther is joining a U.S. Department of Transportation delegation led by Deputy Secretary Thomas Barrett on a four country tour of Africa to promote the strengthening of transportation linkages throughout the continent.

“The *African Trade Lanes Partnership* is a strong response to Africa’s call for a more robust transportation infrastructure to get African goods to market,” said Director Walther. “This initiative has the potential to serve as a catalyst for growth and job creation across the continent.”

The *African Trade Lanes Partnership* seeks to advance the development of sub-Saharan Africa’s most vital trade lanes and transportation networks to facilitate local, regional and global trade. The initiative is designed to promote regional cooperation and connectivity in all modes of transportation, including aviation, maritime, land, and rail. During the two-year initiative, USTDA will provide \$4 million for transportation infrastructure planning across sub-Saharan Africa, including technical assistance, investment analysis, business workshops, training, project definition, and other critical trade capacity building activities. USTDA’s resources will help to leverage donor assistance and private capital to promote the implementation of efficient trade lanes and core transportation infrastructure. Additional details about the *African Trade Lanes Partnership* is contained in a [separate information sheet](#).

As an initial activity under the initiative, Director Walther signed an agreement awarding a \$725,050 grant to the Zambian Ministry of Communications and Transport. The Director of the Zambia Civil Aviation Authority, Mr. Chitalu Kabalika, signed the grant agreement on behalf of the Government of Zambia. The USTDA grant will fund the development of a master plan for Zambia’s four international airports, Lusaka, Livingstone, Ndola and Mfuwe to accommodate the country’s economic growth and increasing demand for air transportation services.

(More)

The Government of Zambia has placed the highest priority on the development of these four airports. To support this objective, the USTDA-funded study will provide the Ministry with an implementation plan for the improvement and rehabilitation of the four airports, which will include schematic designs, drawings and financial strategies for how to finance the improvements using conventional donor financing, commercial financing, concessions, or other public-private partnership options.

The opportunity to conduct the USTDA-funded study for the Ministry of Communications and Transport will be competed on the Federal Business Opportunities website at www.fbo.gov. Interested U.S. firms should submit proposals according to the instructions in the Federal Business Opportunities announcement. The Ministry of Communications and Transport will select the U.S. firm that will provide the assistance.

Director Walther also announced USTDA's intention to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation with the East African Community (EAC) under the *African Trade Lanes Partnership*. Through the MOC, USTDA will fund an orientation visit to the United States for transportation ministerial officials from the five EAC countries, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. During their visit, the delegation will engage senior-level U.S. Government policy officials, development assistance agencies, and U.S. private sector companies to promote regional transportation infrastructure and interconnectivity.

The U.S.-African Growth and Opportunity Act Transportation and Trade Forum is the first conference to focus solely on transportation as a means for economic development. A wide range of public and private sector experts are at the event to address factors critical to the development of safe and efficient transportation systems in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition to Director Walther, other presenters at today's opening plenary included: the Director General of South Africa's Department of Transportation Ms. Mpumi Mpofu; U.S. Deputy Secretary of Transportation, Vice Admiral Thomas J. Barrett; Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa Florie Liser; and U.S. Ambassador to South Africa Eric M. Bost.

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds various forms of technical assistance, early investment analysis, training, orientation visits and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment. USTDA's strategic use of foreign assistance funds to support sound investment policy and decision-making in host countries creates an enabling environment for trade, investment and sustainable economic development. In carrying out its mission, USTDA gives emphasis to economic sectors that may benefit from U.S. exports of goods and services.

-30-

Please visit USTDA's Website at www.ustda.gov

[AGOA Transportation and Trade Forum – Larry W. Walther, Director, USTDA – Opening Remarks](#)

[Africa Trade Lanes Initiative Concept Paper](#)