



---

## U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2007

### MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Donna Thiessen  
(703) 875-4357

### USTDA WELCOMES GEORGIAN PRIME MINISTER ZURAB NOGHAIDELI



Georgian Prime Minister Noghaideli (left) and USTDA Director Askey (right) take questions from the press following today's meeting.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – USTDA Director Thelma J. Askey welcomed Prime Minister Noghaideli to the agency's headquarters today to discuss greater cooperation as a means of continuing Georgia's economic development. Since the peaceful "Rose Revolution" of November 2003, Georgia has had a successful track record of tackling corruption and expanding the economy through economic liberalization. This success was highlighted most recently in the World Bank's *Doing Business* report where Georgia was noted as the top reformer, moving from an overall rank of 112 in 2004 to a rank of 37 in 2006.

"I am very impressed with the vision and road map Prime Minister Noghaideli laid out in our meeting," said Director Askey following today's meeting. "I look forward to ongoing and closer cooperation between USTDA and Georgia."

During their meeting, Director Askey and Prime Minister Noghaideli discussed the status of ongoing USTDA-funded investment analysis of a power transmission project. The results of the study are expected soon and will include recommendations to the Georgian government on options for strengthening the country's power grid. One objective is to enable the sale of seasonal surplus power to Turkey.

Looking toward possible areas for future cooperation, Prime Minister Noghaideli expressed his strong desire to develop a more comprehensive strategy for Georgian tourism. Director Askey noted the agency's intention to respond to Georgia's needs and indicated that there would be discussions next week on the details of a proposed technical assistance program, which may be funded by USTDA.

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries.

(More)

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-

Visit USTDA's Website at [www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov)