



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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USTDA HONORS VIETNAM AS 2006 COUNTRY OF THE YEAR



USTDA Director Thelma J. Askey (right) presents His Excellency Nguyen Tam Chien (left), Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the United States, with a plaque in honor of Vietnam's selection as the agency's 2006 Country of the Year.

WASHINGTON, DC – As a result of Vietnam's strong and growing partnership with USTDA, Director Thelma J. Askey today presented an award commemorating the agency's 2006 Country of the Year honor to His Excellency Nguyen Tam Chien, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the United States, who accepted it on behalf of the Government of Vietnam. The presentation took place at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center at a reception marking Vietnam's accession to the World Trade Organization and U.S.-Vietnam trade normalization.

“USTDA's recognition of Vietnam as Country of the Year is symbolic of the dedicated commitment that Vietnam has made to its development goals and the strengthening of U.S.-Vietnam relations,” said Director Askey in making the presentation.

“USTDA has been pleased to cooperate with strong partners in Vietnam in a broad range of sectors. We look forward to maintaining our commitment to Vietnam in 2007 with activities that will foster an environment ripe for trade, investment, and sustainable economic development.”

Since USTDA's program was launched in Vietnam in 1996, the agency has funded 36 activities and 18 orientation visits designed to support priority development projects and procurement opportunities in Vietnam. To date, those activities and visits have been associated with \$210.5 million in U.S. exports in the transportation, energy, services, water and human resource sectors.

USTDA has responded to the emergence of Vietnam as an important economic participant in Southeast Asia by playing a significant role in strengthening the U.S.-Vietnam relationship. In 2006, the agency substantially expanded its Vietnam portfolio by providing assistance for activities designed to meet priorities established in the APEC forum, Vietnam's World Trade

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Organization accession negotiations, and its efforts to obtain permanent normal trade relations with the United States. USTDA was also active in the aviation and financial services sectors in response to Vietnam's substantial growth and the government's desire to meet international standards, promote market-oriented reform, and increase transparency.

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.

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