



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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USTDA REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO VIETNAM'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DURING OFFICIAL VISIT OF VIETNAMESE PRIME MINISTER DUNG

*Witnesses Project Implementation Success and Commits to Assist in the Expansion of
Transportation Logistics Sector*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, two USTDA projects were featured at a business and trade promotion event held at the U.S. Department of Commerce during the official visit of Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung. The projects involve the upgrading of passenger reservation and e-commerce systems at Vietnam Airlines and improving container logistics at ports in the greater Ho Chi Minh City area.

First, Vietnam Airlines committed to implement an Internet booking engine and e-commerce solution using Sabre, Incorporated's (Southlake, Texas) technology solution. This success was made possible by a USTDA-funded technical assistance program conducted by Unisys Corporation that recommended system upgrades and procedures necessary for Vietnam Airlines to comply with IATA standards. The ultimate upgrade to Vietnam Airlines capabilities will serve to enhance its service and competitiveness in the airline industry.

In addition, a new USTDA-funded program will look at options to reduce costs and improve trade security at ports and container terminals in and around the greater Ho Chi Minh City area. Working with Vietnam National Shipping Lines (Vinalines), USTDA awarded a \$148,170 grant at the event today that will fund a study to determine the necessary systems and upgrades for a proposed transportation logistics system. The grant was signed by USTDA Deputy Director Leocadia I. Zak and Vinalines Chief Executive Officer and President Mai Van Phuc on behalf of the U.S. Government and Vinalines, respectively. Prime Minister Dung and U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez witnessed the grant agreement signing.

In recent years, Vietnam has witnessed an increase in sea-going container trade. As Vietnam's largest transportation service company, Vinalines is responsible for nearly every facet of trade logistics. To expand its trade capacity and ensure cost savings for its customers, Vinalines is teaming with SSA Marine, a U.S. company based in Seattle, Washington, to adopt appropriate procedures and implement technologies for the efficient movement and flow of containers in Vietnam.

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As a U.S. investor, joint partner with Vinalines, and experienced container terminal operator, SSA Marine will assess the current state of container logistics for international cargo at ports and container terminals in and around Ho Chi Minh City. SSA Marine will also project anticipated trade growth, highlight areas for improvement, and identify additional potential U.S. business opportunities. In addition to the USTDA grant awarded today, SSA Marine has agreed to contribute resources towards the completion of the study.

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, 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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