



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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USTDA DIRECTOR WALTHER APPOINTED TO PRESIDENTIAL DELEGATION ATTENDING PALESTINE INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. – (May 20, 2008) U.S. President George W. Bush has appointed USTDA Director Larry W. Walther to serve as an official member of the Presidential Delegation to Bethlehem attending the Palestine Investment Conference May 21-23, 2008. The Honorable Robert M. Kimmitt, Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, is leading the delegation.

“This conference presents an important opportunity for USTDA to support Prime Minister Fayyad’s economic development plans,” said Director Walther. “As a first step in reopening our program in the West Bank, I intend to sign a grant agreement at the conference to promote the development of essential information technology infrastructure for the private sector to serve as a catalyst for growth.”

During the conference, USTDA plans to award a grant that will fund technical assistance in the expansion of wireless Internet connectivity through the deployment of a WiMax system in the West Bank. The grant will mark the first USTDA assistance in the Palestinian Territories since 1995.

Other participants in the Presidential Delegation to Bethlehem include the Honorable John J. Sullivan, Deputy Secretary of Commerce; the Honorable Robert Mosbacher, Jr., President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation; Mr. Walter Isaacson, President and CEO of the Aspen Institute and Chair of the U.S.-Palestinian Partnership; and Dr. Ziad Asali, President and Founder of the American Task Force on Palestine and Co-Chair of the U.S.-Palestinian Partnership. The conference will take place at the Intercontinental Jacir Palace and the Convention Center in Bethlehem.

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.