



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Donna Thiessen
(703) 875-4357

USTDA PROMOTES ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND WATER QUALITY AT STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DIALOGUE MEETINGS IN CHINA

BEIJING, CHINA (December 4, 2008) – Supporting bilateral objectives under the Ten-Year Energy and Environment Cooperation Framework are the goals of two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) signed by USTDA Director Larry W. Walther at the fifth U.S.-China Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED) meetings taking place this week in Beijing. Director Walther is part of the U.S. delegation, led by Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson, Jr., that is in China attending this week's meetings.

“The programs supported by these MOUs are outstanding examples of the way that USTDA mobilizes U.S. private sector expertise and resources to meet priority development objectives,” said Director Walther. “These partnerships will serve as mechanisms through which the U.S. government and industry representatives can share information and best practices with their Chinese counterparts.”

The Ten-Year Energy and Environment Cooperation Framework was established at the fourth SED meeting to foster collaboration in addressing the challenges of environmental sustainability, climate change, and energy security. The five initial goals of the Framework are clean, efficient, and secure electricity production and transmission; clean water; clean air; clean and efficient transportation; and the conservation of forest and wetland ecosystems. A sixth goal, energy efficiency, was announced during this SED.

USTDA furthered these objectives today by signing two MOUs signifying the Agency's commitment to supporting key programs in the areas of energy efficiency and water quality. Under an MOU with China's Ministry of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), USTDA expressed its intention to fund the establishment of a Water Quality Cooperation Program designed to mobilize U.S. private sector expertise and resources toward priority water quality projects in China. Working in collaboration with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and other entities, this public-private partnership, developed in cooperation with the private sector and EPA, will sponsor at least 12 technical seminars/workshops on topics such as pollution monitoring and control, policy mechanisms, and best practices in improving water quality. Director Walther, EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson, and His Excellency Zhou Shengxian, Minister for Environmental Protection, signed the MOU. Vice Premier Wang Qishan, Secretary Paulson, and Deputy Secretary of Commerce John Sullivan served as witnesses to the MOU.

(More)

Under a separate MOU between USTDA and China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank) and the Export-Import Bank of China, USTDA will provide resources to promote energy efficiency investments in China through a program that will identify suitable projects, facilitate project financing, provide training, and introduce suppliers and buyers. The program will utilize and leverage U.S. private sector expertise and resources and will support the new energy efficiency goal of the Ten Year Framework Agreement announced at the SED. In addition, it will build upon existing energy efficiency activities of the U.S. Department of Energy, EPA and the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate. Director Walther, NDRC Vice Chairman Zhang Xiaoqiang, Ex-Im Bank Chairman and President James Lambright, and Export-Import Bank of China Chairman and President Li Ruogu, signed the MOU. Vice Premier Wang, Secretary Paulson, Administrator Johnson, Deputy Secretary Sullivan, and Acting Deputy Secretary of Energy Jeffrey Kupfer served as witnesses to the MOU.

The fifth Cabinet-level meeting of the SED is focusing on strategies for managing macroeconomic risks and promoting balanced economic growth, strengthening cooperation in energy and environment, confronting the challenges to trade, promoting open investment environments, and furthering international economic cooperation. The dialogue was launched by President Bush and President Hu in September 2006.

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.