



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Donna Thiessen
(703) 875-4357

USTDA LAUNCHES U.S. – INDIA STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE COOPERATION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, DC (March 2, 2009) - Today, USTDA, along with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) held the U.S. program launch for the U.S. – India Standards and Conformance Cooperation Program (SCCP). The program seeks to promote trade through improved cooperation between the U.S. and India on more streamlined and transparent standards, conformity assessment procedures, and technical regulations that apply to the large and growing trade volume between the two countries.

“India is an important partner for USTDA, and this program is a priority for us both because standards play a key role across all trade sectors in ensuring access, safety and quality for producers and consumers,” said USTDA Acting Director Leocadia I. Zak in remarks at today’s launch. “USTDA is pleased to support this important program that will improve access for U.S. companies to the Indian market by boosting cooperation on standards and conformance issues.”

In September 2008, USTDA awarded a \$535,300 grant to CII to establish a program to support technical exchanges on ways to better harmonize standards and regulatory matters between the United States and India. In addition to developing a U.S.-India standards portal, sector-specific workshops will be held in India to bring together industry and technical experts in an effort to address standardization and conformance issues. The workshops will present an opportunity for U.S. and Indian organizations to participate in technical discussions that affect standards requirements for each industry involved. CII selected ANSI as the U.S. contractor to implement the USTDA-funded program, and both are also contributing resources to the program.

“In order to be competitive and increase their overall productivity, U.S. companies doing business in India need more information and more dynamic resources,” explained Mr. Joe Bhatia, President of ANSI. “Together, ANSI, USTDA, and CII, working in close cooperation with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), are making a commitment to empower U.S. and Indian stakeholders with the standards and conformity assessment information resources they need.”

(More)

In addition to the organizations named above, senior representatives from the International Trade Administration and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Embassy of India in the United States also took part in today's ceremony. A similar launch ceremony was held in India on February 20, 2009 to highlight the bilateral importance of this program.

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.

-30-

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