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# U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **USTDA GRANT SUPPORTS AVIATION DEVELOPMENT IN NAMIBIA**

WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA (August 13, 2009) – USTDA awarded a grant today under the agency’s African Trade Lanes Partnership to the Namibia Airports Company Limited (NAC) to update the master plans for modernizing and expanding Hosea Kutako International Airport (HKIA) and Eros Airport (Eros). In particular, the USTDA-funded study will examine proposed upgrades to key airport facilities, systems, and operations to meet growing demand for air traffic services.

A signing ceremony to confer the \$393,810 grant was held at the American Cultural Center in Windhoek. U.S. Ambassador to Namibia Gail Dennise Mathieu and NAC Acting Chief Administrative Officer Matti Asino signed the grant agreement on behalf of the U.S. government and NAC, respectively. USTDA Regional Director for Sub-Saharan Africa Paul Marin and NAC General Manager of the Commercial Services Department Sikongo Haihambo signed as witnesses to the grant agreement.

“Helping the Namibia Airports Company develop a well-designed plan to improve its infrastructure is one important component in our partnership with Namibia - a partnership rooted in promoting the economic prosperity of all Namibians,” said Ambassador Mathieu.

Spurred by strong economic growth, especially in the tourism sector, Namibia has experienced a significant rise in demand for air traffic services. To accommodate existing and future air traffic needs, the NAC intends to modernize and expand HKIA and Eros airports. The NAC is seeking private sector expertise and investment to elevate these airports to international standards and convert them into profitable enterprises.

“By serving the capital, Windhoek, Hosea Kutako and Eros Airports are of such cardinal importance for tourism and economic development of the country,” said Advocate Asino. “NAC expresses gratitude for the generous grant from the USTDA that will realize the capacity expansion of its infrastructure.”

The USTDA-funded feasibility study will help the NAC to achieve these goals by updating the master plans for both airports. Some of the major capital improvements under consideration are: expansion or construction of a terminal building; expansion of the baggage handling system; fuel storage upgrades; cargo facilities expansion; and upgrades for navigational aids.

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The grant was awarded under USTDA's African Trade Lanes Partnership, which was launched in 2008 to support a coordinated intermodal transportation infrastructure program to help Africa take better advantage of AGOA benefits. The initiative is designed to promote regional cooperation and connectivity in all modes of transportation, including aviation, maritime, land, and rail.

The NAC has selected The Louis Berger Group, Inc. of Morristown, New Jersey, to perform the feasibility study based upon previous technical work the firm has conducted for the upgrade of Namibia's Walvis Bay International Airport. The Louis Berger Group will contribute additional resources toward 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, feasibility studies, 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.