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MEDIA INQUIRIES:

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U.S. GRANT TO DURBAN PROMOTES ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN SOUTH AFRICA

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA – Addressing critical concerns over South Africa's declining electricity reserve margin, USTDA awarded a grant to eThekweni Municipality today to support the rollout of advanced electricity metering, or smart meters, by eThekweni Electricity. South African electricity distributors are facing a National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) requirement to integrate energy-intensive users into a smart metering system by 2012.

U.S. Ambassador to South Africa Donald H. Gips said that the \$446,500 feasibility study funded by USTDA will support eThekweni Electricity in developing a flagship smart metering program for South Africa that will provide a technological foundation for improved demand side management policies and regulations.

"Through the grant signed today, South Africa will improve its ability to streamline electricity demand," said Ambassador Gips during the grant-signing ceremony at eThekweni Electricity with Head of Electricity Sandile Maphumulo.

"First, this assistance from USTDA supports eThekweni Electricity in its unwavering commitment to reach the highest level of customer service delivery," said Maphumulo.

"At the same time, the project will assist South Africa in meeting its energy efficiency goals, an issue of critical importance to South Africa's energy security," said Maphumulo.

This is the second time that eThekweni Electricity is the beneficiary of a USTDA grant. In 2007, eThekweni Electricity utilized USTDA funding to develop a strategic plan for the implementation of an integrated information technology (IT) system to allow for quicker responses to network and system problems. The first phase of eThekweni Electricity's integrated IT system will be the installation of an outage management system, which after following an open tendering system in terms of the City's Supply Chain Management Policy, was awarded to General Electric in April 2009.

The opportunity to conduct the USTDA-funded feasibility study will be competed on the Federal Business Opportunities (FBO) website. A link to the FBO announcement will be posted to USTDA's website at www.ustda.gov. Interested U.S. firms should submit proposals according to the instructions in the FBO announcement. eThekweni Municipality will select the U.S. contractor that will complete the technical assistance.

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