



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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USTDA PROMOTES AVIATION SAFETY AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

ATLANTA (October 27, 2009) – With accelerating passenger numbers and increasing cargo volume, sub-Saharan Africa faces major challenges to its aviation infrastructure, acknowledged Ministers from 7 African nations and senior civil aviation and airport company officials who met at the U.S. – Sub-Saharan Africa Partners in Aviation Summit, sponsored by U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), in Atlanta today.

Meeting with USTDA, U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration and the U.S. business community, participants strengthened strategic and commercial relationships that support aviation infrastructure development, project financing, and air traffic safety and security.

With investment from individual African governments and bilateral and multilateral investors, the region is poised to improve its aviation infrastructure offering significant opportunities for U.S. aviation firms.

“A healthy aviation sector is good for economic development,” said James A. Wilderotter, USTDA’s General Counsel who spoke today. “Without exaggeration, aviation is a catalyst for growth and prosperity in Africa and around the world.”

“Although the benefits of aviation transcend national boundaries, the strength of the sector depends in large part on decisions that are made on the national level.”

Citing examples of projects in Africa where efforts are underway to improve aviation safety, Wilderotter said that USTDA has collaborated closely with local partners to develop public-private partnerships that are working toward modernizing and upgrading airport infrastructure.

“The conference profiled 90 upcoming aviation projects in 25 countries in Africa,” Wilderotter said. “Holding this event in Atlanta gives U.S. companies the opportunity to demonstrate the value of their products and services to potential clients in emerging markets across Africa.”

In the summit meeting, Ministers from Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Namibia Tanzania, and Uganda discussed strategies for a safe and secure aviation infrastructure development and how it can help attract investment in industries that generate significant local employment opportunities, raise incomes, and help elevate people out of poverty.

Today’s plenary session, hosted by USTDA, provided the venue for the signing of an Open Skies Agreement between the United States and the Republic of Uganda. The agreement was signed by

U.S. Department of Transportation Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, Susan Kurland, and Ugandan Minister of Works, Housing and Communications, H.E. John Nasasira, bringing the accord into force. Open Skies Agreements have been shown to bring substantial economic benefits to shippers, travelers and communities in the United States and abroad.

U.S. Trade and Development Agency:

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.

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