



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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NEWS RELEASE
September 10, 2010

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NEW SIGNALING SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY ON KAZAKHSTAN RAILWAYS

ASTANA – The large and increasing volume of train traffic on Kazakhstan’s railways has led to logistical challenges as Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (KTZ) continues to service Central Asia’s largest economy. To identify ways to increase the speed and safety of movement of commerce and passengers, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) awarded a grant today to KTZ. The grant comes at a time when Kazakhstan is increasingly a transit hub for rail traffic between China and Europe, and represents an opportunity for U.S. companies to export technologies to help KTZ achieve its growth goals.

U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan Richard Hoagland said that the \$655,188 grant will fund a feasibility study on the implementation of rail signaling systems including train control systems on three Kazakh rail lines covering 1356 kilometers.

“Improved train control and signaling are needed to enable more efficient and intensive use of railway infrastructure, allowing trains to move closer together, at higher speeds, while reducing delays, thereby increasing network capacity and quality of service on existing railway lines,” said Ambassador Hoagland who conferred the USTDA grant for \$655,188 to Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (KTZ) Chairman Askar Mamin during a ceremony held at the U.S. Embassy.

“The added safety that modernized train control and signaling brings is important as KTZ pursues its recently announced program to increase its high speed rail lines from 1320 km in 2009 to 7850 km in 2014,” he added.

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 announcement. Kazakhstan Temir Zholy will select the U.S. contractor that will complete the feasibility study.

USTDA will also be hosting a visit later this fall by a delegation of KTZ officials to the United States to allow the officials to observe and become acquainted with the latest U.S. rail sector technology. The delegation will meet with U.S. government and private sector rail experts and will travel to Washington, DC, Chicago, IL and Pueblo, CO to visit rail facilities.

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The [U.S. Trade and Development Agency](http://www.ustda.gov) advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds technical assistance, feasibility studies, training, orientation visits and business workshops to support development of modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment. USTDA's efforts create an enabling environment for trade, investment and sustainable economic development.