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USTDA'S GLOBAL CUSTOMS INITIATIVE IMPROVES CUSTOMS COORDINATION IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

MOMBASA, KENYA – As the East African Community (EAC) moves to implement a unified common market, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency kicked off a three day workshop today in Mombasa designed to provide member countries with assistance in developing integrated systems for border management. The workshop, which includes delegates from Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, will address the challenges, policy solutions and procedural remedies for implementing a single window customs.

U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Michael E. Ranneberger encouraged customs officials who attended the workshop to focus on what the single window customs system could mean for the expedited movement of goods within the EAC, which faces a July 2010 deadline for implementing a common market.

"I'm certain that the benefits of regional economic integration are by now clear to all of us," said Ambassador Ranneberger. "I congratulate the East African Community, and each of your governments, for your vision in deciding to capture these advantages for your people and for your economies."

"USTDA hopes that U.S. firms and technologies will help the EAC members meet its July 2010 deadline for regional integration," said USTDA's Regional Director for sub-Saharan Africa Paul Marin, who spoke at the workshop. "This workshop as well as our support of other initiatives in transportation and ICT sectors, confirms USTDA's commitment to being a partner in the EAC's economic development."

Launched in 2006, USTDA's Global Customs Initiative addresses critical customs training requirements in emerging economies and incorporates proactive private sector-driven approaches to customs-related technical assistance.

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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.