



# U.S. Trade and Development Agency

Connecting U.S. companies with export opportunities overseas

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MEDIA INQUIRIES

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## USTDA SUPPORTS CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT FOR THE KARACHI-LAHORE RAILWAY

**KARACHI, PAKISTAN** – Today, USTDA conferred a grant to Premier Mercantile Services (PMS), a private sector port and freight logistics operator in Pakistan, for expert assistance to facilitate the acquisition and operation of a fleet of locomotives on the existing Karachi-Lahore Railway. This initiative is central to improving the capacity of one of Pakistan’s most important trade corridors, and promoting continued economic growth in northern Pakistan.

The \$628,000 grant was signed in Karachi on behalf of USTDA by U.S. Consul General William J. Martin, and on behalf of PMS by its Chairman Mr. Haleem A. Siddiqui.

This technical assistance will enable Pakistan’s rail system to handle the growing volume of cargo between Lahore and Karachi. To remedy a shortage of properly maintained locomotives, Pakistan Railways (PR) has agreed to allow PMS to deploy and operate a fleet of locomotives using PR’s existing rolling stock and railway infrastructure. Initially, these trains would operate between Karachi and Lahore but the project also contemplates the eventual expansion of the project northbound from Lahore into Afghanistan. The USTDA-funded technical assistance will provide PMS with an assessment of future freight volumes, security and communications needs, and financing requirements for the project.

“Assisting PMS with its planning for locomotive acquisitions will help improve trade flows and access to the international market for northern Pakistan and potentially Afghanistan,” stated USTDA Regional Director Henry Steingass. “This project also represents significant opportunities for U.S. companies in Pakistan’s growing transportation sector, and USTDA is pleased to partner with PMS in this important endeavor.”

As a next step, PMS will select a U.S. contractor to perform the feasibility study. The opportunity to conduct the USTDA-funded 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](http://www.ustda.gov). Interested U.S. firms should submit proposals according to the instructions in the FBO announcement.

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*The U.S. Trade and Development Agency helps companies create U.S. jobs through the export of U.S. goods and services for priority development projects in emerging economies. USTDA links U.S. businesses to export opportunities by funding project planning activities, pilot projects, and reverse trade missions while creating sustainable infrastructure and economic growth in partner countries.*

