

RELEASE IN  
PART B6

**From:** Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2009 1:48 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** FW: Thank you to the Secretary from the Acting Director of USTDA

See below

**From:** Zak, Leocadia [mailto: ]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2009 1:45 PM  
**To:** Mills, Cheryl D  
**Cc:** Abedin, Huma; Sullivan, Jacob J; Phipps, Brian H  
**Subject:** Thank you to the Secretary from the Acting Director of USTDA

B6

Dear Ms. Mills,

I'd like to pass along the email below, with the US Trade and Development Agency's thanks to the Secretary for providing both inspiration and motivation to members of our agency.

USTDA actively participated in the recent AGOA Forum, where the response to our program was tremendous. The benefits did not end there, however. Hoping to give the agency at-large a greater connection to our mission, I asked our Regional Director for Sub-Saharan Africa to write an agency-wide email describing the Forum. The result was something that agency heads dream of to inspire their employees. It had heart, humor (I hope the Secretary does too) and appreciation for our mission and fellow employees. Agency staff, especially those who do not travel, responded to the email enthusiastically. Why am I telling you this? Because, as you will see, the motivating aspects of email were **inspired by the Secretary's words** at the Forum.

I know the Secretary intended to motivate the African community with her plenary speech, but she motivated us as well. My sincerest thanks to her for being a good sport and an inspiration. If only she had gone to Mt. Holyoke College instead of that other Seven Sisters College.

Best regards,  
 Lee Zak

*Leocadia I. Zak*  
 Acting Director  
 U.S. Trade and Development Agency  
 703-875-4357

**From:** Marin, Paul  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 20, 2009 6:57 PM  
**To:** allustdastaff  
**Subject:** AGOA Readout

Two weeks ago, USTDA participated in the 8<sup>th</sup> AGOA Forum in Nairobi, Kenya. The conference was attended by Secretary Clinton (State), Secretary Vilsack (Ag), USTR Kirk, several important congressional representatives and our own Acting Director Zak. The President and Prime Minister of Kenya were there, in addition to dozens of African ministers and senior officials responsible for trade and development in Africa. If I do say so myself, USTDA shined and stood out in this crowd of stars thanks to a collective planning effort by just about everyone here at the Agency.

So, what is AGOA and why should you care? Please read on. "AGOA" is a trade preference program for sub-Saharan Africa, and the intent is to provide trade advantages for the continent's exporters. As we know, trade leads to

development, economic growth, and poverty reduction. But one of the challenges for Africa is that its exporters are not globally competitive because of the lack of basic infrastructure, whether it's transportation, energy, or information and communication technology. That's where we come in.

The message we heard from African leaders at AGOA is that trade preferences are good, that but infrastructure development is better. With that in mind, you can pretty much imagine that they ate up USTDA's message. Lee co-chaired a high profile plenary session where her speech was interrupted by applause. Then, she went all Oprah on the audience (about 1,000 people) by stepping off the podium and encouraging a dialogue between the plenary panelists and the audience (unlike Oprah, no one on stage cried). Taking another note from the Oprah playbook, we made sure we had goodies for the audience. Instead of giving away Buicks to everyone (my idea to promote US exports), we signed a grant for a West Africa regional rail integration project that created a bit of buzz, as well as several new projects leads for the agency.

We were popular and got great visibility for the Agency. And we didn't even have to dance in the middle of any crowds to get anyone's attention (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsqRbCGERF8>).

Let me end this e-mail with a story that kicked off the Forum. In her opening plenary speech, Secretary Clinton talked a lot about this, that, and the other thing, but she really caught my attention when she started talking about her hair. While getting coiffed by some local women in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, Secretary Clinton asked what they liked best about living there, and they responded that it was a great place to raise children (if you've been to Nairobi, you might disagree, but that's beside the point). Anyway, Secretary Clinton told the audience how she wanted to hear those words from everyone in Africa – that their village, town, or city is a great place to raise kids.

I left AGOA with those words, and I think they should give us some perspective as a foreign assistance agency. We can sometimes get caught in the minutiae of our day-to-day around here, but it's important to take a few steps back and realize the big picture of what we're accomplishing. It's about improving people's lives.

I'll dance to that.

Paul Alvaro Marin  
Regional Director, Sub-Saharan Africa  
U.S. Trade and Development Agency  
1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1600  
Arlington, VA 22209-3901  
Tel: (703) 875-4357  
Fax: (703) 875-4009  
Internet: [www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov)