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202-395-3230

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Contact:

Sean Spicer/Christina Lucas (202) 395-3230

United States and Mauritius Conclude Meeting to Strengthen Trade and Investment Relations

Washington, DC – U.S. and Mauritian officials met today to discuss implementation of the United States-Mauritius Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA).

The meeting, which was co-chaired by Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa Florizelle Liser and Mauritian Secretary for Foreign Affairs Anand Neewoor, was the second held under the TIFA's bilateral Council on Trade and Investment (TIFA Council), which monitors trade and investment relations, identifies opportunities for expanding trade and investment, and provides a forum for addressing challenges in the two countries' trade ties. The TIFA Council was set up to facilitate a dialogue and help to increase commercial and investment opportunities by identifying and working to remove impediments to trade and investment flows between the United States and Mauritius.

"The TIFA Council reviewed a common workplan that the United States and Mauritius are jointly undertaking to implement the TIFA, including a wide-range of programs and activities to support, facilitate, and ensure progress and success in strengthening the U.S.-Mauritian trade and investment relationship," said Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa Florizelle Liser.

The meeting provided the opportunity to review progress, identify challenges, and chart the way forward for future work under the TIFA. During the TIFA Council meeting, officials from the United States and Mauritius explored common objectives – including cooperation in the World Trade Organization, implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, trade capacity building and technical assistance, intellectual property protection, export diversification, trade promotion, and development – and examined opportunities for a more comprehensive trade and investment relationship.

Background:

In September 2006, the United States and Mauritius signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) aimed at strengthening and expanding trade and investment ties between the

United States and Mauritius. The TIFA provides a formal mechanism to address bilateral trade issues and helps enhance trade and investment relations between the United States and Mauritius. The TIFA encourages new trade and investment opportunities in both countries by establishing a cooperative forum for implementing specific strategies to enhance the U.S.-Mauritius trade and investment relationship.

Created by the TIFA, the United States-Mauritius Council on Trade and Investment (TIFA Council) addresses a wide range of trade and investment issues that include, but are not limited to, trade capacity building, intellectual property, labor, environmental issues, and enhancing the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in trade and investment. The TIFA Council facilitates an ongoing dialogue that is helping to increase commercial and investment opportunities by identifying and working to remove impediments to trade and investment flows between the United States and Mauritius.

Total two-way trade between Mauritius and the United States was valued at \$237 million in 2007, with U.S. imports of \$188 million and U.S. exports of \$50 million. The leading U.S. exports to Mauritius are wheat, diamonds, aircraft, and jewelry. U.S. imports from Mauritius are primarily apparel, diamonds, seafood, perfumes, and sugar. In 2007, U.S. imports from Mauritius under AGOA, including its GSP provisions, were valued at \$120 million.

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