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United States and Mauritius Strengthen Cooperation on Trade and Investment

Pointe Aux Piments, Mauritius – U.S. and Mauritian officials met in this Indian Ocean island nation today to review progress in implementing a workplan developed under the United States-Mauritius Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA). This was the third meeting of the high-level TIFA Council created under the 2006 agreement.

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa Florizelle Liser and Mauritian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration, and International Trade Arvind Boolell co-led the discussions, which focused on cooperation in the World Trade Organization, implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), export diversification, trade and investment promotion, and economic development.

“Mauritius has one of the most open and dynamic economies in sub-Saharan Africa and is a leader among those developing countries seeking to advance economic development through trade,” said Assistant U.S. Trade Representative Florizelle Liser. “The TIFA Council provides a mechanism for the U.S. Government to support the Mauritian Government’s efforts to liberalize and expand trade and investment and to work with Mauritius to enhance opportunities for U.S. exports of goods and services.”

As a result of work under the TIFA, Mauritian firms have participated in a variety of U.S. trade shows, resulting in millions of dollars in new trade deals. The TIFA has also significantly enhanced cooperation between Mauritius and U.S. trade agencies on topics such as trade promotion, sanitary and phytosanitary issues, and trade-related infrastructure.

Background:

Total two-way trade between Mauritius and the United States was valued at \$227.7 million in 2008, a 4 percent decline from 2007, due primarily to decreases in Mauritian textile and apparel exports as a result of increased global competition in that sector. Mauritian exports to the United States were valued at \$176.4 million in 2008, a 6 percent

decrease from 2007; and U.S. exports to Mauritius were valued at \$51.3 million, a 3 percent increase. Leading Mauritian exports to the United States include textile and apparel, cut diamonds and jewelry, live animals, prepared fish, optical and medical instruments, and perfume. The leading U.S. exports to Mauritius include wheat, diamonds and jewelry, and machinery. In 2008, Mauritian exports under AGOA and the Generalized System of Preferences were valued at \$101.7 million, a 15 percent decline over the same period in 2007, due to the fall in textile and apparel exports.

At year-end 2007, the U.S. direct investment position in Mauritius was \$2.9 billion, an increase of 83 percent from 2006. Since 2004, the U.S. direct investment position in Mauritius has increased nearly 700 percent.

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