



PRESS RELEASE

U.S-backed Alliance to Facilitate Trade through Public-Private Dialogue

HO CHI MINH CITY, December 12, 2014 -- The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) today joined the American Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry to formally establish a new Vietnam Trade Facilitation Alliance (VTFA) through a memorandum of understanding. The private sector-led alliance will provide policy and technical assistance to the General Department of Vietnam Customs and relevant trade facilitation agencies and authorities in Vietnam to advance Vietnam's competitiveness.

“Trade facilitation is a powerful tool for integrating small and medium enterprises (SMEs) into domestic and global value chains, which makes growth more inclusive,” said USAID's Acting Assistant Administrator for Asia Anne Aarnes. “The VTFA will be an important voice for these SMEs that too often are not well-represented in policy processes.”

A number of USAID programs, including the Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI), highlight the importance of SMEs, including women-led enterprises, to Vietnam's growth and the value of involving business in policymaking.

With today's launch, the VTFA will support the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in Vietnam, as well as next generation free trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The Alliance also aims to improve competitiveness of Vietnam's domestic and foreign companies through a more predictable and transparent business enabling environment. There will be special emphasis on helping Vietnam achieve the target it established in Resolution No. 19/NQ-CP to improve its performance trading across borders by significantly reducing the time and cost of importing and exporting to regional averages.

Through its multi-stakeholder networks, the VTFA will improve information sharing on trade facilitation including participation in the annual Traders Satisfaction Survey, implemented by Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry in partnership with General Department of Vietnam Customs, and the sharing of private sector generated data on customs performance.

USAID has been working closely with the Vietnamese government and business groups to develop and implement effective trade facilitation assistance to enable Vietnam to meet the commitments in the TFA and prepare Vietnam for the implementation of the TPP. USAID support for the VTFA will enable Vietnam to build a sustainable and open public-private partnership to facilitate trade, thereby reducing poverty and promoting inclusive growth. The VTFA is a pioneering effort for USAID under its global trade facilitation programming.

See more of USAID's work on trade and other issues on www.usaid.gov/vietnam.

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