



**Remarks of
Jeffrey N. Shane
Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy**

**Celebrating Twenty Years of U.S. Trade and Development Agency
Support to African Infrastructure
Washington, DC
June 25, 2003**

Your Excellency President Mwanawasa, Honorable Ministers, Ambassadors, Members of Congress, Distinguished Delegates, and last but not least, our colleagues at the U.S. Trade and Development Agency.

It is my honor, as the representative of a sister agency, to congratulate and salute the U.S. Trade and Development Agency on its twentieth year of support to African infrastructure development.

I would like to acknowledge and celebrate the long commitment of TDA and its staff to assisting the nations of Africa in building sound transport systems. The development of greater ties with Africa is a clear priority today, but TDA has been there for the last 20 years, partnering with African nations, its sister agencies in the U.S. government, and the private sector.

Operating at the crossroads of U.S. foreign policy, commerce, and trade, TDA has supplied funding for the studies, training, orientation visits, and workshops that serve as the foundation for progress with respect to African transportation infrastructure.

Not only does TDA support transportation projects, its support for African development projects run the gamut – energy and power, health care, mining and minerals development, telecommunications, and environmental services.

In addition to commercially focused projects, TDA provides funding for trade capacity building projects – allowing African nations exposure to the U.S. market and the opportunity to partake of some of the most advanced technology in the world.

For example, under the Safe Skies for Africa Initiative, our African aviation partners were challenged as to how to improve air navigation over the vast airspace of the continent. We all knew that it would take billions of dollars of investment across the continent to build the kind of air navigation infrastructure in Africa that we operate in the United States.

But then we had a series of meetings and discussions with experts at our Federal Aviation Administration who specialize in advanced air navigation systems. Those discussions led to a continent-wide meeting held in Nairobi last November. From that meeting came a proposal for a pilot project for the implementation of global positioning satellite technology. If properly implemented, this technology will enable Africa to leapfrog both the U.S. and Europe in the use of advanced air navigation systems – and at a fraction of the cost.

TDA was at the Nairobi conference, and with the broad based expertise of its staff, immediately understood the possibilities and implications of this opportunity. As a result, on June 10, TDA and the Secretariat for the East African Community signed an agreement for a pilot project to develop an operational road map – a map to guide the region in transitioning from a ground-based air navigation system to a satellite based system.

Once again, TDA was at the forefront of providing the resources to build a foundation – this time for a state-of-the-art air navigation system whose importance to the prospects for economic growth simply cannot be overstated. TDA was on the vanguard in seeing the possibilities of advanced technology.

I will close by noting a great deal of important work is underway between Africa and the United States – and a great deal is yet to be done. In reviewing the last 20 years of TDA support for the continent, I believe we can get there, and we can count on TDA to be there to build on the work we have begun.

Thank you.

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