

Testimony of Thomas R. Hardy
Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer
(Performing the Duties of the Director)
U.S. Trade and Development Agency
House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on National Security, Department of
State and Related Programs
September 16, 2026, at 10:00 am

Chairman Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member Frankel, and distinguished Members, thank you for the invitation to testify before you today. I appreciate your support for the U.S. Trade and Development Agency.

That support is an important vote of confidence in USTDA's mission and in the role the Agency can play in advancing America's national security and economic interests.

I would like to begin by describing the kinds of projects that we will continue to fund thanks to your support for our Agency.

In Palau – a strategically critical U.S. treaty partner in the Pacific's Second Island Chain – USTDA helped turn a national security vulnerability into an opportunity for trusted American technology. Coordinating with fellow Quad members Australia, India and Japan, in June 2023 USTDA provided technical assistance to help Palau replace a Chinese-built mobile network with a resilient, secure, and trustworthy nationwide 4G/5G system.

The project is incorporating trusted U.S. technology from companies in California, Massachusetts, and Texas. It is the first commercial Open RAN deployment in the Pacific Islands and provides a model for other countries seeking secure, interoperable alternatives to untrusted telecommunications equipment.

I am proud to add that on September 1, during the Pacific Islands Forum, President Surangel S. Whipps Jr. placed Palau's very first 5G phone call. It was to Congresswoman Aumua Amata, who represents American Samoa and serves as Vice-Chairman of the Indo-Pacific Subcommittee of the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs.

In the Philippines, USTDA is helping strengthen the Luzon Economic Corridor, a strategic network connecting Subic Bay, Clark, Manila, and Batangas. At Subic Bay, USTDA is supporting the engineering and design work needed to expand berthing and drydock facilities, to support the Philippines' capacity to serve as a regional hub for ship repair and maintenance.

This is the kind of infrastructure that can improve supply-chain resilience and reinforce the Philippines' role in regional commerce while creating opportunities for American companies.

Along the Lobito Corridor in Southern Africa, USTDA is supporting a feasibility study to expand hydropower generation and upgrade electricity distribution in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia. Reliable power is essential to mining operations, but it is also essential to the

communities along the corridor. By investing in the infrastructure needed to move resources from the ground to global markets, we can help diversify critical mineral supply chains while creating opportunities for U.S. companies.

These projects illustrate what USTDA does best: we get in early.

As the U.S. government's first mover on critical infrastructure abroad, USTDA helps move strategically important projects from an idea to a well-prepared, financeable investment. We use feasibility studies, engineering and design, pilot projects, transaction support, and partnership-building to address the technical, commercial, and financial barriers that can prevent a project from moving forward.

And we do this with a clear America-first standard.

USTDA prioritizes projects that advance U.S. national security interests foremost and then the strategic priorities of our partners. We offer significant potential for U.S. exports, and have a credible path to implementation financing. We coordinate closely with the State Department and our interagency partners – including DFC, EXIM, MCC, Commerce, Energy, and others – to make sure our resources complement broader U.S. government efforts.

The result is a powerful multiplier for the American taxpayer. As of fiscal year 2026, USTDA's program generated an average of more than \$200 in U.S. exports for every dollar programmed, and since the Agency's creation in 1992, USTDA has facilitated more than \$127 billion in U.S. exports to the infrastructure projects it has supported in emerging markets.

The examples I have described also reflect the four strategic areas where USTDA will concentrate its resources.

Securing Critical Mineral Supply Chains

First, I would like to start with critical minerals.

China's dominance of critical mineral supply chains presents a direct challenge to American economic and national security. USTDA is working with U.S. industry and international partners to diversify those supply chains.

Our approach is targeted and strategic. We will support responsible mining projects across their lifecycle, including mine expansion and reopening, refining and processing, and the pilot projects needed to demonstrate innovative U.S. technologies. We will also support the enabling infrastructure – power, transmission, rail, ports, and digital systems – that makes mineral projects commercially viable.

The objective is straightforward: USTDA will help create diversified and resilient supply chains that connect strategic resources with the United States, while creating opportunities for American technology and services.

Advancing American Energy Dominance

In the energy sector, USTDA is advancing the goal of American energy dominance, with particular emphasis on advanced nuclear power and liquefied natural gas.

In nuclear energy, USTDA is helping position American technology to compete against heavily subsidized Chinese and Russian alternatives. In Romania and Poland, USTDA-supported project preparation helped lay the groundwork for U.S. nuclear technology to be selected for major projects. In Thailand, USTDA is now supporting a feasibility study examining the deployment of approximately 600 megawatts of small modular reactor capacity.

These are not simply energy projects. They are opportunities to strengthen America's nuclear industrial base, expand markets for U.S. companies, and ensure that strategic partners have a trusted alternative to state-backed competitors.

We are taking a similar approach with LNG. USTDA has supported LNG infrastructure overseas for more than three decades, helping expand markets for American natural gas while reducing partners' dependence on unreliable suppliers. Through our U.S. Global Gas Initiative, we are working with American industry to accelerate the development of LNG import, regasification, processing, storage, transmission, and gas-to-power infrastructure.

Extending American AI and Digital Leadership

Artificial intelligence and digital infrastructure are top priorities for USTDA because American leadership in AI is critical to our national security and global competitiveness. But AI leadership depends on infrastructure: secure telecommunications networks, subsea cables, data centers, cloud infrastructure, cybersecurity, and reliable power.

USTDA is therefore focused on helping partner countries build trusted digital ecosystems using American technology and standards.

In Colombia, USTDA is supporting development of a hyperscale data center and fiber-optic network that can create opportunities for U.S. cloud providers and trusted American AI infrastructure while providing an alternative to Huawei's expanding presence.

We will continue to use USTDA's project preparation tools to help American companies compete for these markets and to support broader U.S. government initiatives – including Pax Silica – that seek to establish secure, trusted technology ecosystems around the world.

Securing Supply Chains through Strategic Corridors

Transportation infrastructure and economic corridor development will be central to USTDA's investment strategy in the year ahead.

For example, critical mineral extraction and processing are no less important than moving resources to market. That is why USTDA is supporting strategic corridors that connect resources, ports, markets, and people.

The Lobito Corridor and Luzon Economic Corridor are central examples. But our strategy extends beyond them. In Central America, USTDA is supporting multimodal corridors that can strengthen supply chains and provide alternatives to vulnerable trade routes. In South America, we will support corridors that improve access to critical minerals. In the South Caucasus, we will work with the State Department and regional governments on projects associated with the Middle Corridor and the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity.

The common thread is resilience: building infrastructure that gives the United States and our partners more options and reduces reliance on infrastructure controlled or financed by strategic competitors.

A Regional Strategy Built Around U.S. Interests

We are applying these four priorities across four broad regions, working in close collaboration with U.S. government financing agencies including DFC, EXIM, and MCC, Cabinet-level partners including State, Commerce and Energy, and White House components such as the National Energy Dominance Council.

In the Indo-Pacific, USTDA will focus on strategic corridors, critical minerals, energy dominance, and trusted digital infrastructure. We will deepen partnerships with allies such as Japan and Australia and coordinate closely with U.S. Pacific Command and technical agencies such as the FAA and TSA.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, we will support supply-chain diversification while expanding opportunities in critical minerals, civil nuclear power, subsea cables, and digital infrastructure. We will work closely with our partner agencies, U.S. Southern Command, and regional financial institutions.

In Europe and Eurasia, USTDA will focus on energy, digital infrastructure, critical minerals, and transportation, including projects that strengthen alternative trade and energy routes between Asia and Europe.

In Africa and the Middle East, USTDA will leverage the region's strategic natural resources, energy markets, digital growth, and transportation corridors. The Lobito Corridor, Nacala Corridor, and emerging West African corridors offer opportunities to strengthen supply chains while expanding commercial engagement by American companies.

Across all four regions, the strategy is the same: identify projects that matter to America, prepare them for investment, bring trusted U.S. technology and companies to the table, and work with partners and financiers to get them built.

That is the value of USTDA.

We are not simply funding studies. We are using a relatively small amount of U.S. government funding to shape major infrastructure investments before key decisions are made. We are helping our partners choose trusted American solutions. We are opening markets for U.S. businesses, and we are helping ensure that infrastructure critical to global commerce and security is not financed, built, or controlled by strategic competitors.

Most importantly, USTDA connects America's commercial strength with America's national security interests. When an American company exports the technology to power a mine, secure a telecommunications network, build a data center, develop a nuclear reactor, expand a port, or strengthen a strategic corridor, that is good for the American economy – and it can also strengthen the security and resilience of the United States.

FY27 funding will allow us to get further upstream on strategically important projects. It will allow us to deepen partnerships with countries that want to work with the United States, and it will allow us to put American companies and American technology in a stronger position to compete and win around the world.

Thank you again for your support of USTDA and for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I look forward to your questions.

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