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African Cotton & Textile Industries Federation



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USAID, AAFA and ACTIF MOU Will Boost U.S.-Africa Apparel Trade

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), and the African Cotton & Textile Industries Federation (ACTIF) has entered into a memorandum of understanding to expand trade and investment linkages between the United States and sub-Saharan Africa in the cotton textile and apparel sectors.

Building on the momentum of President Obama's Trade Africa initiative, this new alliance will promote Africa as a reliable sourcing destination for international buyers and explore opportunities to promote U.S. trade and investment in Africa. As ACTIF's Chairman Jaswinder Bedi noted, "Africa is poised to make great strides in economic development in this decade with our combined GDP growing by 60 percent by 2020. This partnership with USAID and AAFA will ensure that both the United States and Africa participate in this growth story."

With support from USAID, AAFA and ACTIF plan to expand and facilitate U.S.-Africa cooperation through the exchange of market and import/export policy information, guidance on requirements and best practices, and the promotion of joint solutions to address market constraints. "Sub-Saharan Africa is a growing player in the global apparel and footwear marketplace," said AAFA Executive Vice President Steve Lamar. "Through this memorandum of understanding, AAFA is excited to work with USAID and ACTIF to facilitate increased trade and market access opportunities between the United States and Africa."

President Obama has renewed the United States' emphasis on spurring economic growth, trade, and investment in Africa, including promoting an enabling environment for trade and investment, regional integration, improved economic governance and expanded African capacity to trade. As America supports the development of Africa's economic growth, it can generate new export markets and tap into a common market that could one day outpace India or China. USAID Principal Advisor for Africa Oren Whyche-Shaw remarked that the new USAID-AAFA-ACTIF partnership will "take advantage of growing opportunities in the global marketplace and create jobs and income on both continents."

For more than 50 years, USAID has supported efforts to achieve sustained and broad-based economic growth—creating opportunities for people to lift themselves, their families, and their societies out of



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poverty, away from violent extremism and instability, and toward a more prosperous future. For more information about the U.S. Agency for International Development, visit our website at www.usaid.gov.

ACTIF is a pan African association representing the cotton textile apparel value chain of 24 sub-Saharan countries. ACTIF operates out of Nairobi, Kenya with a primary vision to help enhance sustainable growth of the cotton textile value chain and create the much needed jobs in Africa.

Representing more than 1,000 world famous name brands, the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) is the trusted public policy and political voice of the apparel and footwear industry, its management and shareholders, its four million U.S. workers, and its contribution of \$350 billion in annual U.S. retail sales. AAFA stands at the forefront as a leader of positive change for the apparel and footwear industry. With integrity and purpose, AAFA delivers a unified voice on key legislative and regulatory issues. AAFA enables a collaborative forum to promote best practices and innovation. AAFA's comprehensive work ensures the continued success and growth of the apparel and footwear industry, its suppliers, and its customers. Learn more about how AAFA wears its mission at www.wewear.org.

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