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## **MBDA DIRECTOR HINSON LEADS PANEL ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT AMERICAS COMPETITIVENESS FORUM**

*Forum aims to expand bilateral trading relationships among nations of the Western Hemisphere*

WASHINGTON (November 5, 2010) – David A. Hinson, national director of the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) at the U.S. Department of Commerce will moderate the “Social Inclusion through Entrepreneurship” panel at the Americas Competitiveness Forum (ACF) in Atlanta on Monday.

The panel will explore the positive impact entrepreneurship programs can have on improving the standard of living for historically underserved populations, including minorities, women, youth and distressed communities, in North America, Latin America and the Caribbean. Participants will share best practices from projects around the region, including Pathways to Prosperity women’s entrepreneurship mentoring program; Coca-Cola’s Haiti Hope Project, a public-private initiative to develop a sustainable mango industry in Haiti; and a self-empowerment and entrepreneurship training program for at-risk youth administered by the Young Americas Business Trust and the Violence, Peace and Sustainable Development Programme of the Jamaican Ministry of National Security.

Hosted by the U.S. Department of Commerce, this year’s Americas Competitiveness Forum will examine the key factors that drive innovation and competitiveness throughout North America, Latin America and the Caribbean. Business leaders and policy makers from 34 countries will come together during the two-day forum to exchange best practices about how to foster sustained economic growth, increase mutually beneficial trade and competitiveness.

In support of strong bilateral trade relationships, MBDA has made it a priority to help minority-owned firms increase their exports by facilitating business-to-business forums and identifying global strategic partners for U.S. businesses in new markets. Minority-owned firms in the United States are twice as likely to export compared to non-minority-owned firms. According to data from the Export-Import Bank, minority-owned firms top export locations include Mexico, Brazil and the Dominican Republic.

“Partnering with minority-owned firms in the United States gives small- and medium-sized firms throughout the Americas entry into one of the largest consumer markets in the world,” said Hinson. “And consumers in Central and South America, Canada and the Caribbean benefit from the

innovative products and services created by U.S. minority-owned firms. It's a win-win for the Western Hemisphere.”

**What:**

Panel on Social Inclusion through Entrepreneurship at the Americas Competitiveness Forum  
Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Track

**Who:**

- David A. Hinson, National Director, MBDA
- Adriana Fabrega, Director, Discover the World Marketing
- Yaribeth deLeon, General Manger, NATIVAES S.A.
- Pablo Largacha, Vice President, Public Affairs and Communication, Coca-Cola Latin Center
- Jonathan Burke, Programme Manager, Jamaica Violence Prevention, Peace and Sustainable Development Programme, Ministry of National Security

**When:**

Monday, Nov. 15, 2010  
11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

**Where:**

Atlanta Marriott Marquis  
Atrium Level, Room 706  
265 Peachtree Center Avenue  
Atlanta, GA 30303

**Media:**

For members of the press interested in interviewing Director Hinson or attending ACF, please complete [the Media Credential Application Form](#). Access will be provided free of charge to all events on the official agenda. If you are interested in being seated at the formal luncheons and/or dinners, there will be a \$250 charge.

Applications may be emailed to the International Trade Administration Office of Public Affairs via email at [ACFpress@trade.gov](mailto:ACFpress@trade.gov) or via fax at (202) 482-5819. You will receive a confirmation email when your application is accepted. **Credentials must be picked up onsite.**

For more information about the Forum, please visit [www.competitivenessforum.org](http://www.competitivenessforum.org).

***About the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)***

MBDA, [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov), an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, promotes the growth and global competitiveness of the minority business community, making them better equipped to create jobs, impact local economies and compete successfully in domestic and global marketplaces. With a nationwide network of more than 45 business centers and strategic partners, MBDA assists minority entrepreneurs and business owners with consulting services, contract and financing opportunities, bonding and certification services, building business-to-business alliances and executive training.

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