



**USAID | MACEDONIA**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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## PRESS RELEASE

### US\$20 million for small and medium enterprises and for energy efficiency

USAID Macedonia for the first time is introducing two Development Credit Authority (DCA) Loan Portfolio Guarantees totalling US\$20 million to support the expansion of small and medium enterprises (SME), energy efficiency and other infrastructure projects in municipalities. To implement this guarantee program, USAID signed today the partnership agreement with UNIBANKA and NLB Leasing.

“The DCA Guarantee will play a prominent role in mobilizing private financing for various industries and for municipalities to trigger local economic growth,” Ambassador Milovanovic said in her address to the audience.

The SME DCA facility is designed to provide access to working and investment capital for companies in various industries that want to expand their operations or market opportunities. USAID believes that this facility will help make Macedonian private sector firms more competitive on the domestic and global market.

The Energy Efficiency DCA facility is designed to provide funding for energy efficiency and other infrastructure development projects in municipalities. With phase two of decentralization, 42 municipalities have qualified and are now able to borrow from private financial institutions. In addition, energy service companies (ESCOs) have been formed and are in a strong position to implement energy efficiency projects on behalf of municipalities, especially those unable to borrow. USAID believes that this facility provides a foundation for establishing and developing strong and credible business relations between private-sector lenders and Macedonian municipalities.

“Ministry of Finance fully supports this guarantee scheme and is of the position that such scheme is undertaken in a convenient period, when large number of municipalities have already met the criteria to enter the second stage of the decentralization proces. By providing guarantees for borrowings by the municipalities, it will enable the municipalities to start building their positive credit history, as well as to build greater credit ability to finance their future needs”, said Minister of Finance, Mr. Trajko Slaveski.

#### NOTES TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested more than \$450 million in Macedonia since 1993. Over 25 projects worth more than \$25 million a year are currently being implemented. These projects are designed to support Macedonia’s transition to a free market-based, multi-ethnic democracy. They include initiatives to accelerate economic growth, develop democratic institutions, and educate citizens for a modern economy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>