

**Remarks by Ambassador Shari Villarosa
At the Invest In USA Workshop
Sirius Conference Room, 1st Floor, Labourdonnais Hotel Caudan
Tuesday July 9, 2013 at 09:15**

Mr. Aaron Brickman, Acting Executive Director,
Select USA, U.S. Department of Commerce
Distinguished Participants
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning and Welcome!

Thank you very much for joining us this morning for the Invest in USA workshop. I am pleased to welcome Aaron Brickman from the Select USA Program who has come from Washington to lead this workshop. And I wish to thank Financial Secretary Ali Mansoor for joining us to open this event, demonstrating the Mauritian government's support for this initiative.

The United States and Mauritius signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) in 2006 to strengthen and expand trade and investment relations between our two countries. So far, collaboration between our two governments has focused on ways to expand trade, primarily through the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). This workshop provides an opportunity to explore the possibilities of expanding investment relations between our two countries. Today we will discuss investment opportunities in the United States and how Mauritians might take advantage of these opportunities.

We understand that more than 60 Mauritian businesses have invested in 28 countries, mainly in Africa and South East Asia. Why not the U.S.? We believe one of the reasons is the lack of information on the business and investment opportunities in the United States. Therefore, Aaron Brickman will use this workshop to bridge this information gap and provide you all key information you should have and then answer any questions you may have.

Promoting investment into the United States is a priority for the U.S. government. It has not always been so, but now we recognize that the same benefits we have long touted to others about U.S. investment apply equally to the U.S.: opening new markets and job creation. President Obama established the Select USA initiative in 2011 to lead efforts to attract investment into the United States by highlighting the many advantages the United States offers as a location for business and investment.

Foreign investment into the United States has gone from less than 5% of GDP 30 years ago to 16% of GDP reaching a total of \$2.5 trillion. With the world's largest and most diversified economy, the United States offers investors extraordinary opportunities. The United States has a GDP of over \$15 trillion dollars. It has a prosperous and open consumer market of over 310 million Americans, in addition to providing access to about 415 million more customers via free trade agreements for goods and services produced in the United States. So you gain access to a total market of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a billion consumers by investing in the United States.

With a land area that is the third largest in the world and blessed with abundant resources, a varied geography, and several climate zones, the United States offers a broad range of possibilities for investment.

The Governments of Mauritius and the United States should shortly conclude negotiations on a Bilateral Investment Treaty which will provide enhanced protection and encouragement to investments between our two countries.

Aaron will give you the details on all aspects of investing and doing business in the United States. In addition, Angela Henry from the Embassy's Consular Section will brief you on the procedures for applying for an Investment Visa to the United States.

Aaron will also be available for one-on-one meetings after the workshop with anyone who has specific questions. I hope you all will take advantage of that.

You should also keep in mind that Select USA will host an Investment Summit in Washington D.C. from October 31-November 1 later this year. The Summit will help companies more effectively identify business opportunities in the United States, connect with U.S. partners and federal, state and local Economic Development organizations to encourage you to ultimately invest in the United States.

Thank you again! I wish you a productive workshop. Please remember that the U.S. Embassy stands ready to assist you to explore investment opportunities in the United States. You can come visit us anytime!