



## EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*Public Affairs Section*

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### **New U.S.-PNG Trade Dialogue to Deepen Trade Relationship**

On May 31, the United States and Papua New Guinea held their first ever bilateral trade dialogue. This dialogue is the first step toward enhancing trade between our two countries. Participants in Port Moresby used the power of technology to speak to the U.S. delegation in Washington via digital video teleconference on key issues affecting our bilateral trade relationship, including sanitary and phytosanitary regulations, customs procedures, trade preferences under the Generalized System of Preferences, and intellectual property rights.

Improving bilateral understanding of sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and streamlining customs procedures will allow Papua New Guinea to more efficiently import U.S. products, particularly food products, thereby decreasing the cost to consumers in Papua New Guinea. Utilizing trade preferences under the Generalized System of Preferences will allow certain goods from Papua New Guinea to enter the United States duty free, an advantage PNG can use to boost exports. Strengthening protection for intellectual property rights protects consumers by blocking the import of counterfeit, and potentially harmful, products and protects businesses who have worked hard to develop and patent products.

Charge' D'affaires Bryan Hunt hosted the dialogue at the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby, and noted that this engagement on trade issues is an important first step toward greater economic cooperation between the United States and Papua New Guinea. The head of PNG's delegation, Acting Director General for the Trade Division, Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry Joseph Varo, underscored the importance of regular contact on trade issues. Participating from Washington, Assistant Director for Southeast Asia and the Pacific at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative Lia Theodosiou-Pisanelli led the U.S. delegation and reviewed trade policies and programs that could potentially serve as areas to deepen bilateral trade relations. Both delegations agreed to review the issues raised and continue the discussions at a later date, and have agreed to establish ad hoc working groups on several issues. The United States also offered technical assistance and advice in a few key areas.

Other U.S. Government agencies participating in the dialogue included the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, and the Patent and Trademark Office. PNG was represented at the dialogue by officials from the National Agriculture and Quarantine Inspection Authority, National Fisheries Authority, PNG Customs, the Investment Promotion Authority, PNG Intellectual Property Office, Departments of Trade, Commerce, and Industry; National Planning; Agriculture and Livestock and Health.

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