



Statement by Jamaica
54th Session of the International Trade Centre (ITC) Joint Advisory Group (JAG)
Meeting
25th November 2020

Thank you Chair, Ambassador Athalia,

Jamaica wishes to congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of this 54th Joint Advisory Group Meeting.

We also wish to convey our thanks to former Ambassador Terhi Hakala for her stewardship of the 53rd Session.

My delegation wishes to once again, congratulate Ms. Pamela Coke- Hamilton on her appointment as the new Executive Director of the ITC. Jamaica is confident that along with the support of the entire Team, the ITC will continue to fulfill its mandate of providing trade related technical assistance to developing countries.

In that connection, it would be remiss of me not to express appreciation and make special mention of Deputy Executive Director, Mrs. Dorothy Tembo, who along with Chef de Cabinet Mathew Wilson and other members of the Team held the organization on a very firm footing in the transition period.

We thank Secretary General Kituyi and DDG Agah for their remarks and the Executive Director for her comprehensive report.

Chair, we commend the ITC for the excellent work not only as reflected in its Annual Report for 2019 but also for its achievements during a very challenging time as fueled by Covid 19.

From supporting MSMEs in their quest to deal with operational stress and build resilience, to assisting small farmers to boost income, improve livelihood and food security, the ITC interventions have helped to shape countries's Covid 19 response.

This was further bolstered by its suite of innovative programmes, training courses, online tools and databases. We also note the ITC's efforts to make its valuable work known to the man in the street.

All of this is testament not only to the Organization's agility and adaptability in seeking to address the needs of developing and least developed countries in very challenging times but also its dedication to fostering inclusive, sustainable growth and development through trade and international business development.

Chair as a small island developing state, we are pleased at the ITC's attention and role in supporting SIDS countries in areas of critical importance, including trade, sustainable investment, climate resilience, the green economy and women empowerment.

As SIDs have borne the brunt of the ravages of climate change and natural disasters, we are pleased at the announcement this morning that SDG 13 - combatting climate change and its impacts will be added to the ITC's portfolio of focus.

As regards women empowerment, Jamaica is pleased at its partnership with the ITC through the She Trades Initiative. Through the "She Trades Outlook", for example, stakeholders are receiving valuable assistance in assessing, monitoring and improving the extent to which their institutional framework supports the participation of women in international trade.

Chair,

In fact, the relationship between Jamaica and the ITC has been a longstanding one characterized by invaluable support in areas vital to our economic development.

Jamaica has benefitted from a 'Regional Coconut industry development Project, financed through EDF resources and which is being implemented by the ITC in collaboration with other regional and local stakeholders. The project aims at improving the competitiveness of the coconut industry with the shared objectives of improving market linkages, increasing production performance and quality, and improving regional coordination.

We are pleased that this project has been proceeding very well, with Jamaican companies increasing their production of value-added products. It is our hope that these fruitful

partnerships that have so positively impacted the coconut industry value chains in the Caribbean, can be replicated in other sectors and products in the region.

Chair

It is also well known that Tourism which is the mainstay and main foreign exchange earner of not only Jamaica but the entire Caribbean and indeed SIDs, has been one of the hardest hit by the Pandemic. We therefore urge that the ITC increase its attention to work in that area.

Finally Chair, allow me to express appreciation to the development partners, who continue to provide invaluable financial and technical support to the important work of the ITC, and we hope support levels can be maintained, providing comfort to countries like Jamaica who are reeling from the devastating trade, social and economic impacts from the Covid -19 pandemic.

To quote the Executive Director, Trade is the most powerful prosperity engine and Jamaica looks forward to continued collaboration and partnership with the ITC in that regard.

We view the ITC as a key resource in our economic development strategy and a valuable partner as we work to build back better and bolder.

I thank you.