

NEWS RELEASE: 1 May 2014

## International Trade Centre celebrates 50th Anniversary

(Geneva) On 1 May 2014 the International Trade Centre (ITC) celebrates 50 years of service in promoting trade impact for good. Established in 1964, the then termed 'GATT International Trade Centre' started out with three professional officers and two general service staff members who were focused on providing information and advisory services to promote trade. Today, ITC is the only United Nations agency with the specific mandate to work with and support the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to benefit from the poverty reducing impact of trade.

Half a century later, ITC has grown into a team of 300 staff from across the globe working with developing countries, their SMEs, and trade promotion and investment institutions, to build productive capacities and sharpen economic competitiveness.

ITC will continue to improve and modernise its services to enable the private sector to translate trade opportunities into realities, generating growth and employment. ITC will continue to facilitate public-private dialogues on trade; help SMEs to enter and move up value chains; promote sustainable trade; and support women's economic empowerment and youth employment.

Our organization pays specific attention to the smallest and weakest – least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS). We work to strengthen trade support institutions and assist in regional trade integration. We will do this while remaining true to the spirit of our founders, the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. Strengthening partnerships and collaboration with the private sector will remain key to our success.

We invite you all to join ITC in this year of celebration!

### Events:

22 May – [Astana Economic Forum](#) – Helping SMEs to Internationalize: Navigating Through Thick Borders

10 June – [Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ITC in Geneva](#) – launch of the publication, *50 Years of Unlocking SME Competitiveness – Lessons for the Future*

11-12 June – [Joint Advisory Group meeting](#), Geneva

13 June – Ethical Fashion event, Geneva

15-17 September – [World Export Development Forum](#), Kigali, Rwanda

16-17 September – [Women Vendors Exhibition and Forum](#), Kigali, Rwanda

3-5 November – [TPO Network World Conference and Awards](#), Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Note to Editor:** ITC is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the [Aid for Trade](#) agenda and the [Millennium Development Goals](#).

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