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Improving access to foreign markets for SMEs in developing countries

ITC teams up with Bosch, Brazil World Economic Forum, and Bain & Co

(Geneva) The International Trade Centre (ITC) today (10 June) signed three partnership agreements to step up support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries.

In conjunction with ITC's 50th anniversary celebration held at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, Memoranda of Understanding were signed with Bosch, the German engineering and electronics company; and with the Government of Brazil and Apex-Brasil, the country's trade and investment promotion agency. In addition, a letter of intent was signed with the World Economic Forum (WEF) and Bain & Company.

ITC Executive Director [Arancha González](#) said: 'Through these three agreements, in which we are teaming up with four different organizations, ITC will be able to provide better support to SMEs and trade-support institutions in developing countries.'

ITC's co-operation with Bosch will focus on building value chain competencies of SMEs in developing countries and least developed countries to improve their capacities to enter foreign markets. ITC and Bosch will jointly develop training and assistance programmes to boost the skills of partner institutions and their experts.

Karl Nowak, Bosch's President of Global Logistics and Purchasing, said: 'Within this co-operation Bosch, together with ITC, will help to enable and strengthen SMEs in Africa through knowledge exchange, training and coaching. Through this project, we are helping to create the supplier base for the future.'

ITC's partnership with Brazil and Apex-Brasil is focused on providing trade-related technical assistance on trade facilitation to selected countries in Africa to help them meet commitments to the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. Specifically, the three parties will support African countries in conducting or updating the trade facilitation needs, categorize commitments and develop project plans for the implementation of these commitments.

Daniel Godinho, Brazil's Secretary of Foreign Trade, said: 'For us it is an honour to be part of the ITC 50th anniversary. We are very excited about this agreement and hope this will establish the foundation for a long-term relationship with ITC on trade facilitation, which is a subject of foremost importance for Brazil.'

'Hopefully, with ITC's leadership and expertise, in Brazil's experience on this issue we will be able to show other developing countries the importance of trade facilitation.'

The agreement with WEF and Bain & Company through the 2014 Enabling Trade project will seek to ensure that momentum for global implementation of the 2013 WTO Bali accords remains high by catalysing progress in high-priority countries. This will be fulfilled by pursuing four underlying goals with a focus on Brazil and Nigeria: facilitate private sector involvement and share expertise from specific industries to guide border process redesign in



focus countries; share lessons and best practices from other regions with focus country governments; identify and communicate new lessons based on focus country, and provide a transparent, quantitative view of the costs and benefits of implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement, along with concrete actions that governments will take to achieve these benefits.

Mark Gottfredson, Partner, Bain & Company, said: 'This collaboration will allow us to have the most possible success in identifying best practices in trade facilitation and reducing the costs in global supply chains, and helping countries and companies apply those best practices for tangible results.'

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](#).

Media Contact:

Jarle Hetland

Media Officer, Office of the Executive Director

Tel: +41-22-730-0145

Mobile: +41-79 582 9180

Email: hetland@intracen.org