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ITC to hold series of trade-development events in Madagascar

The International Trade Centre (ITC) will next week (13-17 October) hold a series of meetings and workshops in Madagascar to help boost the country's economic recovery. The scaled-up ITC mission to Madagascar will be led by Ashish Shah, ITC's Director for Country Programmes, and aims to set the scene for trade-related support to the country for the coming years.

The events, which have been grouped as an 'ITC Week for Madagascar', follow an agreement signed between ITC and Madagascar in May that sets out wide-ranging trade-related technical assistance to the country. The goal is to place private-sector and export-oriented development at the centre stage of its economic recovery.

'Madagascar has a tremendous potential for growth, but it needs assistance to capitalize on this,' said Mr. Shah. 'Ensuring that the country's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are aware of their export possibilities and able to export to regional and international markets is an important step in achieving this.'

Following the introduction of a democratically elected government at the beginning of the year, technical assistance to post-crisis Madagascar is now being stepped up, in parallel to growing optimism in the country.

'To start work with the Madagascar government now is crucial to bring back economic growth to the island state,' Mr. Shah said. 'Having recently exited from a crisis, it is crucial to ensure decent livelihoods for as many people as possible, as soon as possible.'

Having already kicked off events on 8-9 October with a workshop on enhancing public-private dialogue, ITC Week will feature the bulk of events. On Wednesday 15 October, there will be workshops on foreign trade representation and on trade and the environment.

On Thursday 16 October, there will be a round-table to launch ITC's proposed project for Madagascar, which will look at setting up an enabling business environment to facilitate export operations; strengthening trade support institutions; improving the export readiness of SMEs to access domestic, regional and global markets; and developing a tourism project that will create backward linkages with the agro and handicraft sectors. On the same day, there will be a joint workshop with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that will focus on how to implement a single-window facility for Madagascar.

ITC Week will be rounded off on Friday 17 October with a workshop on investment promotion and development strategy. Throughout ITC Week for Madagascar, several bilateral meetings will be held between the ITC delegation led by Mr. Shah and the Madagascar government, including Narson Rafidimanana, Minister for Trade and Consumption, ITC's focal point in the country. The ITC delegation will also meet with other partners, including the European Union, UNDP, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, GIZ and the African Development Bank.



Note to the 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](#).

International Trade Centre:

Jarle Hetland

Media Officer

P: +41 22 730 0145

M: +41-759 829 180

E: hetland@intracen.org