

ITC Joint Advisory Group – Canada’s statement

10 July 2017, World Trade Organisation, Room S1

Madam Chair

Director General Azevedo

Secretary General Kituyi

Executive Director Gonzalez

Ministers, Excellencies, Colleagues and Friends

- Canada wholeheartedly supports the intervention of our British colleague. In addition, I wish to make a few remarks.
- I would like to recall the long-standing partnership between Canada and ITC, as we have been funding it since 1982. But it is not only about money: we think of the ITC as an excellent partner with whom to exchange ideas. In this respect, I would like to applaud the ITC and EU’s organization of the *International Forum on Women and Trade* last month, in which Minister of Trade François-Philippe Champagne was a panelist. I would say that it was very timely.
- A few weeks ago, Canada released its new Feminist International Assistance Policy, stating that promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls were the most effective approaches to reducing poverty and building a more inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous world.
- Through this policy, Canada decided that we would seek to address gaps between men and women as one of our primary means of reducing poverty. Two gaps call our attention today: the gap in SME ownership, with close to 6 SME out of 10 being owned by men in developing countries; and the gap in their sectors of operation, with women-owned SMEs being overrepresented in low-value-added, non-trading sectors. We believe that the ITC can be instrumental in addressing them.
- We know that supporting the internationalization of SMEs is one of the best investments that we can make for the prosperity of the poor, as trade boosts SMEs’ productivity, which translates into higher wages. And we know this in part thanks to the work done by the ITC in collecting robust evidence of the impact of trade on the inclusiveness of growth. ITC’s work to complete the

map of evidence on what works in private sector development makes it very valuable.

- In addition, a balanced strategy to support inclusive growth through enterprise growth should also address access to finance and the lack of business development services for growth-driven entrepreneurs in developing countries.
- The ITC's work to develop TISIs' capabilities to support their SMEs should be complemented with better services from financial institutions operating in developing countries and which, all too often, neglect SMEs. In this respect, the G20 report released this year on the use of "alternative data" mechanisms to better assess the actual risk posed by an entrepreneurs in the absence of collateral could represent an important breakthrough for all entrepreneurs, but particularly for women, who often lack collateral. Perhaps could this find a place in ITC's work with TISIs and financial institutions?
- In any case, we need more of this innovative thinking that seeks new ways of making things work, of making it possible for those with the creativity, energy, and ambition to set up an enterprise and make it grow.
- I would finally like to commend ITC's work on how to help migrants support themselves and their communities through trade, which is a very innovative and, again, timely, initiative.
- We look forward to continuing to work closely with the ITC, other donor countries and with ITC partner countries in the coming year. Thank you.