

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you for your election as Chair of the 52nd session of the Joint Advisory Group, and I wish to thank the outgoing Chair for her excellent work. I also join my voice to that of others today in congratulating the ITC and its Executive Director Ms. Arancha González for the results achieved in 2017. I would like as well to thank the WTO and UNCTAD for their valuable support to ITC, and to welcome the two young entrepreneurs and to thank them for their insightful remarks.

ITC has provided trade-related technical assistance to Egypt throughout the years. In this regard, I would like to refer to the launch of the Global Textiles and Clothing Programme in 2017, which is executed in collaboration with the Swiss Government. I would like to commend this initiative, which is aimed at increasing exports and sustainable income of 5 target countries, including my country Egypt, through enhancing the competitiveness of the textiles and clothing industry and its improved integration in the global value chains, and we would like to thank Switzerland for its support to this initiative.

I would also like to refer to one of the issues to which the government of Egypt attaches great importance, and which falls under the field of work of ITC, namely fostering youth entrepreneurship. The government of Egypt has recently launched a number of initiatives to support young entrepreneurs, several of them in close partnership with the private sector, as a means of reducing youth unemployment rates and creating decent and sustainable job opportunities for young people. These initiatives aim to encourage young entrepreneurs by allowing them to easily access funding, through the initiative by the Central Bank of Egypt to support SMEs, as well as providing them with logistical and technical support. We look forward to cooperating with ITC in this important field in the future.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt firmly believes in the important role played by ITC in advancing economic growth and sustainable development, by enabling SMEs to enhance their competitiveness and connecting them to global value chains, as well as creating opportunities for the youth and women. Furthermore, as the High-Level Political Forum meets in New York this week to assess the overall progress towards the SDGs, we would also like to commend ITC on the many ways in which its work contributes to the efforts by developing countries to achieve these important goals through trade.

In conclusion, I would like to seize this opportunity to express our full support to the work conducted by ITC, with its continued emphasis on maximizing efficiency, sustainability, and impact, and to assert our keenness on pursuing further constructive cooperation in the future in the various fields of development.

Thank you.