

EU statement ITC JAG, 25 November 2020

**Thank you Chair,
Executive Director, Excellencies,**

- I would like to start by **commending** the Executive Director, and the entire extended ITC team on behalf of the European Union, for the record results delivered in 2019 and for the continuous efforts and flexibility to adjust course and continue delivering in the challenging context of 2020.
- The European Union **attaches great value** to the work of the organisation and its contribution to supporting the WTO and UNCTAD to achieve an inclusive and sustainable multilateral trading system.
- The European Commission specifically **attaches great value** to its strategic partnership with ITC. Our close cooperation has increased steadily over the years.
- This is reflected in the **range of activities that we support:**
 - trade competitiveness and regional integration
 - WTO accession and trade facilitation
 - strengthening and making value chains more sustainable
 - sustainable agriculture, fashion, and culture,
 - creating market linkages and providing market and trade intelligence,

- fighting the root causes of migration and economically reintegrating returnees, creating employment and empowering youth and women.
- **Geographically**, our collaboration reaches across five regions and impacts 25 countries directly, plus many more through regional and global projects.
- Our collaboration with ITC is facilitated through several Directorate-Generals [*DEVCO, TRADE, NEAR, EAC*] and in total, the EU-ITC collaboration has currently **39 active projects**, which together have a total multi-year budget of **\$333 million over the next 5 years**.
- This has translated into **annual contributions** to ITC of \$57 million in 2019 and, and to date \$28 million in 2020.
- **Looking ahead**, the ITC will continue to have our full support in its work on implementing Aid for Trade and its efforts to achieve inclusive, sustainable trade.
- We all know that the **impact of the Covid-19 pandemic** on ITC's core clients - **the MSMEs**- has been devastating and that an inclusive and sustainable recovery will need to have MSMEs at the centre.
- It is thus **important for the ITC to continue and strengthen** the integration of businesses, in particular MSMEs of developing countries into the world trading system.

- The ITC will play a vital role in supporting businesses in developing countries, and in **particular least developed countries**, to become **more resilient**, and respond to a variety of new global challenges, taking into account the lessons learned from the coronavirus crisis.
- **In the future**, we see ITC's work as particularly relevant for market intelligence, sustainable value chains, greening of trade, promoting networks & private sector dialogue and African regional integration.
- We recognize the fact that as **ITC's largest funder**, we contribute exclusively through Window 2 projects. We are aware that some funders are worried about the increase in relative importance of Window 2 funding.
- I would like to highlight that the **projects supported by the EU** are fully in line with the overall strategy that ITC has put in place to support WTO and UNCTAD priorities.
- The **EU's support** ties into ITC's overall approach and strengthens its position in its priority countries. It enhances its footprint and the scope and scale of its operations across the globe.
- Our collaboration equally **enables ITC to roll out** its Trade Related Technical Assistance tools and methodologies that are developed with its core expertise and core funding and

help support more beneficiaries, whether business supports organizations, or MSMEs, women entrepreneurs or youth, who are looking for employment opportunities.

- Chair, I would like to conclude by repeating my thanks for the years of close collaboration, and confirm once again the EU's readiness collaborate – with ITC and all ITC stakeholders. We particularly look forward to engaging with other donors and partner countries in the consultative process you have outlined to agree to a new Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 by the end of next year.
- At this junction I would like to warmly thank the Ambassador of Japan for Japan's coordination of the ITC donors group in the past months, especially in light of the difficult circumstances.
- **We look forward to working together and further showcasing the results of our joint work with all ITC partners, WTO and UNCTAD members.**
- **Thank you, chair.**