

52° Joint Advisory Group ITC

GRULAC Statement

Tuesday 10 July 2018

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the group of Latin America and the Caribbean - GRULAC I would like to start by thanking ITC and its Executive Director, Arancha González, for the information provided and the presentation of the Annual Report 2017.

We would also like to congratulate the ITC for the effective work carried out during the last year, which is reflected in the fact that each \$1 dollar of extra-budgetary funding lead to \$14 dollars of export and investment transactions.

We commend the extensive work undertaken to bind together the efforts to increase the participation of MSMEs from developing countries in international trade, and the implementation of the SDGs. As reflected in the presentations, ITC's actions have a direct impact on the reduction of poverty, the promotion of gender equality, responsible production and industrial diversification, among other topics related to the Agenda 2030.

The work of the ITC is of particular relevance, as it is the leading international agency supporting the internationalization of MSMEs, fostering their competitiveness and connection to global markets. We commend as well the development of the Global Trade Helpdesk, as a one-stop shop for businesses seeking information to participate in international markets.

Regarding the Competitiveness Outlook, which in its 2017 edition had a special focus on regional trade, we recognize the important information, insights and recommendations that it provides for policy makers and MSMEs. In particular, the report's approach to regional value chains and trade and investment networks at the regional level, which contributes to a more inclusive growth and encourages business and entrepreneurs to take advantage of the benefits of regional integration.

Regarding the Market Intelligence Tools, we register a constant improvement and update of the databases and the online platforms, as well as the coordination with other international agencies in order to join efforts to provide the most up to date information. Grulac would like to highlight the importance of the free availability of these tools for users in developing countries. They are of special importance to

policymakers, companies and entrepreneurs in the region, and we encourage ITC to continue its constant improvement, as well as the diffusion and capacity building activities, aimed to a greater use of all their functions.

For the Latin American and Caribbean region, the empowerment of women in global trade and furthering the participation of women led MSMEs in value chains are also essential. Therefore, we acknowledge the important achievements of the “She Trades” initiative, which was already launched in some countries in the region, and we look forward to its greater outreach in the near future.

Finally, we would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the important work that ITC carries out for land locked countries and small island developing States from Latin America and the Caribbean, which contributes to overcome the special challenges that they face, and allows them to enhance their capabilities to seize the opportunities from international trade.

Thank you very much.