

50th Joint Advisory Group Meeting

Intervention by H. E. Mr. Israhyananda Dhalladoo, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations Office and WTO

Geneva, 4 July 2016

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, Ambassador Kebret Botora from Ethiopia, to congratulate you to assuming the Chairmanship of the 50th Joint Advisory Group meeting session. I trust you will steer us with success and great distinction.

My delegation also recognises the excellent leadership of the outgoing Chair, Ambassador Patricia O'Brien of Iceland.

I would also like to commend Ms. Arancha Gonzalez, the Executive Director of the ITC, under whose able and distinguished leadership, the ITC is delivering effectively and meaningfully on its mandate as evidenced by the remarkable achievements highlighted in the 2015 ITC 2015 Annual Report.

I seize this opportunity to convey the gratitude of the Government of Mauritius to the ITC for all the trade-related technical assistance that ITC has extended to Mauritius.

The ITC cooperation with Mauritius has been a successful one in the areas of elimination of NTMs, the setting up of the Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism, a joint project on Trade Facilitation Agreement with UNCTAD immediately following the Bali WTO Ministerial Meeting for assisting Mauritius in identifying its Category Commitments, notification of same and the Category B and C Commitments.

More importantly the assistance of the ITC/UNCTAD in the validation of the National Implementation Plan for the TFA helped to gather all domestic stakeholders to adopt a shared and collective vision and approach. Our other development partners also participated in the exercise.

In less than a fortnight, we will be in Nairobi for UNCTAD XIV and we look forward to meaningful discussion with the ITC leadership to refresh the areas of cooperation and identify critical sectors where ITC's intervention would be catalytic- promotion of innovation, ICTs and technology led growth and development, integration of MSMEs in the global value chains, including for young entrepreneurs, business intelligence, enhanced support to business environment as well as specific sector growth development.

Mauritius has a strong reliance on trade-led growth and development. And this is boldly emphasised anew in the Vision 2030 Economic Statement of the Government of Mauritius. We look forward to the earliest completion of the ITC work on the National Export Strategy mindful that this is a country led process. We are confident that the local stakeholders will complete the validation process and enable the ITC to trigger the post Strategy cooperation with the stakeholders as regards implementation- which matters most.

With regards to the SMEs, the Government has serious intent to develop this sector into a more viable and sustainable pillar of the economy of Mauritius. In this regard, the Government is in the process of setting up a SMEs One-Stop Shop that will support SMEs and microenterprises to start and grow businesses. We look forward to more meaningful measures being announced shortly.

On a final note, my delegation urges the international community to continue supporting ITC's work and projects and to contribute to the ITC Trust Fund.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.