

Philippine Statement on 53rd Session of the ITC Joint Advisory Group
02 July 2019, 10am, WTO Room S1

Thank you, Madame Chair.

On behalf of Ambassador Manuel A.J. Teehankee, our delegation congratulates you for assuming the Chairmanship of the 53rd Session of the Joint Advisory Group. We would also like to thank the ITC for organizing this annual meeting to give us the opportunity to know more about the activities of the ITC and make recommendations on its work programme.

The Philippines recognizes the important role of ITC in promoting trade as a means to spur the economic development of developing countries and achieve their goal of inclusive growth. We commend ITC especially for its work in improving the competitiveness of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), including women entrepreneurs, to enhance their participation in global markets and international trade.

We are thankful to ITC's assistance and collaboration with the Philippines through various projects in the previous years, such as the NTM Business Survey and the SME Academy, and we are happy to continue our partnership on new initiatives, such as the Global Trade Helpdesk and the SheTrades initiatives.

The Philippines is pleased to take part in the pilot phase of the Global Trade Helpdesk (GTH), which is an online transparency tool that enables MSMEs to access valuable trade-related information to facilitate their access to new markets. As one of its pilot users, the Philippines hopes to contribute to the development and improvement of this global platform. Our Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) stands ready to collaborate further with ITC on the next steps in moving this initiative forward.

The Philippines also looks forward to take part in ITC's SheTrades initiative which provides women entrepreneurs around the world with a unique network and platform to connect to markets. We look forward to host our own national chapter in the Philippines (She Trades

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Philippines) in the coming months to demonstrate our commitment to promoting women's economic empowerment and contribute to the global goal of connecting three (3) million women entrepreneurs to markets by year 2021.

We appreciate ITC's partnership with the Philippines, and we look forward to working more closely with ITC in helping MSMEs reach their full potential in the global market.

Thank you.
