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International Trade Centre

UN/WTO Joint Advisory Group

UK Statement

4 July 2016

World Trade Organisation

Dear Chair,
Ambassadors,
Director General Azevedo,
Secretary General Kituyi,
Executive Director Arancha Gonzalez,

It is a great pleasure for me to address you today at the 50th Session of the ITC's Joint Advisory Group.

The global community has just completed a remarkable year of international collaboration to boost development and economic growth. We delivered successful conferences on Financing for Development and Climate Change. We delivered the first WTO Ministerial in Africa. And as a crowning achievement, we agreed to the Global Goals, as part of a wider agenda for sustainable development.

As the only international agency fully dedicated to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, the ITC can make a strong contribution to the achievement of the Global Goals. Aid for trade can play a critical role in promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth. Your alignment of the ITC's six programme areas with the Global Goals is a step in the right direction to better fulfil your mission of creating trade impact for good.

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The ITC's 2015 Annual Report shows an organisation moving forward in its delivery, visibility and impact. Last year, the ITC saw its largest-ever delivery, despite the operational challenges of wide-ranging improvements to your internal systems. You exceeded not only your original outcome targets, but even most of your upward revised targets.

Your trade and market intelligence tools reached a record half-million users. You ensured strong support to donor priority countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the LDC Group, and fragile and conflict-affected states. You also launched important new initiatives: among them, your Call to Action, aimed at bringing one million women-owned businesses to market, and a new flagship research report on SME competitiveness.

As the largest donor to the ITC, I'm happy to highlight some of the impacts and results that you've generated through UK support, which totals more than £27 million across seven years. This includes:

- Ground-breaking work to stimulate trade and investment between India and Africa that – in only its first year of implementation – has created market linkages worth of \$15 million US dollars, with another \$ 60 million currently under negotiation.
- 23 million USD worth of export opportunities gained directly by 172 women entrepreneurs – exceeding an initial target of \$15 million.
- 30 countries surveyed to better understand the non-tariff measures affecting their exports, benefiting a total of 20,000 companies, most of which are SMEs.
- Two high-level events, backed by innovative research, that have strengthened linkages between Chinese investors and African firms.

The Annual Report suggests that the ITC may have to navigate more difficult waters in hitting its fundraising targets. This underscores the need for even more investments in monitoring and evaluation, and further improvements in the ITC's

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effectiveness and efficiency. We're happy to see that your implementation of the recommendations from external evaluations now stands at more than three-quarters complete, up from one-third less than a year ago.

In this more challenging climate, we encourage you to keep pushing the envelope on value for money on both your regular and extra-budgetary funds, and to maintain a clear line of sight to how your interventions impact and benefit the poor.

We stand at the mid-point of your biennium Strategic Plan, and look forward to robust and constructive exchanges as we develop both its successor and your next Operational Plan, building on lessons learned and tackling challenges on the horizon, in close coordination with our colleagues in New York.

The ITC is a global trend-setter, and we salute your efforts to create tools and platforms for SMEs to reach more markets, creating prosperity for all. This work reflects the UK's strong support of aid for trade and its role in helping developing countries – particularly the poorest and most fragile – to reap the benefits of trade.

Thank you.