

ED's Closing Statement

Thank you, Chairperson Ambassador Molokomme, for that statement and your able stewardship of today's JAG meeting. I look forward to continuing our collaboration in the coming months.

I also thank all the speakers and delegations for their statements, observations and congratulations. Over 60 of you took the floor and I appreciate that.

I have to admit that for my first JAG, this has been an excellent experience. The statements of support and recognition for the work of ITC and the dedication of the incredible staff has been heartening. It gives me the motivation and the momentum to ensure that in 2021 we can scale even higher heights.

I would like to express my appreciation to all those funders that have committed to continue to support ITC in both Window 1 and Window 2 funding streams, including Window 1 unearmarked grants.

In particular, I appreciate your comments on how ITC has managed to stay true to its mandate while adjusting our modes of delivery due to COVID restrictions. As speakers noted, the intensification of our own digital tools dovetails with the clear call from our beneficiaries for scaling up the digital economy, in particular e-commerce, which will be key to COVID recovery plans.

I also appreciate the call for more collaboration with other organizations, including here at the WTO: be assured that we will place a particular accent on strengthening existing partnerships and creating new partnerships.

I also note your emphasis on sustainability and our efforts to help beneficiaries to mainstream sustainable production and business practices into their operations. As I mentioned in my opening statement, ITC is deepening its strategic commitment in this area, and

I look to you all to support our new “Green to Compete” strategy which will promote circular economy approaches.

I am also grateful for your support on our work on AfCFTA implementation, including the new One Trade Africa programme.

I welcome the presentation of the 2020 Annual Evaluation Synthesis Report and I take careful note its findings, particularly with regard to concrete and actionable recommendations contained therein. I am particularly pleased with the emphasis on more informed dialogue and better decision-making.

I also look forward to having all of you contribute to our 2022-25 strategic plan to ensure that ITC aligns to global and regional priorities and meets the demands from the ground.

Finally, I once again thank you for engaging with ITC at this historic remote Joint Advisory Group meeting. I have learned a great deal and feel energized to build back boldly for MSMEs, women, young people and poor communities.

I wish you a good evening.