



**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY ZAMBIA AT THE 53RD INTERNATIONAL TRADE
CENTRE JOINT ADVISORY GROUP MEETING, 2ND JULY 2019**

The Chairperson, H.E. Ms. Terhi Hakala, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations Office and International Organizations at Geneva

Mr. Jaime Coghi Arias, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the World Trade Organization

H.E. Mr. Roberto Azevêdo, Director General, WTO

H.E. Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary General, UNCTAD

Ms. Arancha González, Executive Director, ITC

H.E. Ms. Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe, Secretary General, COMESA

H.E. Mr. U Aung Htoo, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Commerce, Republic of the Union of Myanmar,

Mr. Mamadou Traoré, Commissioner for Industry and Private Sector, ECOWAS

Distinguished participants,

Thank you, **Madam Chair**, for giving me the floor.

On behalf of the Zambian Delegation, I wish to join others in congratulating you on your election as Chairperson of the 53rd Session of the Joint Advisory Group of the International Trade Centre. My delegation wishes to thank you as well as the rest of the distinguished panel for the opening remarks and statements.

Madam Chair, we join previous speakers in thanking Ms. Arancha Gonzalez and her team for her report to this meeting on the important work of ITC in its efforts to promote the trade and economic interests of developing countries particularly the least developed.

I would like to express Zambia's appreciation to ITC, WTO, UNCTAD and the donor community for the longstanding support to our country's development efforts through the promotion of trade as a means to economic development.

Madam Chair, ITC's trade-related technical assistance programme continues to play a very important role in Zambia's trade and economic development agenda through its support in strengthening trade-support institutions such as the Zambia Development Agency, implementation of programmes that are building the export capacity of SMEs particularly women entrepreneurs as well as through the mainstreaming of inclusiveness and sustainability in all its programmes which guarantees lasting impacts on beneficiaries.

Madam Chair, as you may recall, in September last year, Zambia partnered with ITC to host the World Export Development Forum in Lusaka. I am happy to report that the Forum was well attended and more importantly, it was successful on many fronts. One such success was the launch of the SheTrades Zambia chapter.

Through the SheTrades Zambia, Government is working very closely with the ITC and other development partners to improve the competitiveness of women entrepreneurs in local, regional and international markets. The aim of SheTrades Zambia is to enable women benefit from economic participation through targeted support focusing on, among other areas, agriculture, textiles and garments value chains. The SheTrades Zambia will also advocate for a conducive business environment for woman entrepreneurs, giving them access to the skills and support systems required to run successful businesses as well as connect women-owned enterprises to local, regional and international markets.

On that score **Madam Chair**, I happy to report that the Enhanced Integrated Framework of the WTO has provided financial support amounting to USD 200,000 towards the development of a pilot project running for a period of 3 years until 2021. This financial support is additional to the financial and in-kind support already provided by ITC towards implementation of the SheTrades Zambia.

Madam Chair, the Government of the Republic of Zambia thanks ITC and all the development partners for initiating this special purpose vehicle that moves together women-owned businesses from across the globe in search of new but viable trade and investment opportunities. As you are aware, the economic empowerment of women continues to remain a compelling factor which is critical for ending poverty, child marriages and gender-based violence. Therefore, through platforms such as the SheTrades and many others, it is our hope that we will continue to strategise together on how we can step up efforts to empower as many women as possible and guarantee their active participation in economic activities.

Madam Chair, we look forward to the continued close collaboration with ITC and the development partners to ensure the successful implementation of not only the SheTrades programme in Zambia but also many other women-focused empowerment programmes that Government has prioritised in its 7th National Development Plan Policy document.

With these words, I thank you **Madam Chair!**