Thank you Mr. Chairman,

- International trade is an important catalyst for economic growth, especially for poor developing countries.
- The Netherlands believes that poor developing countries should, like we do, be able to make real use of existing and new trade opportunities.
- At a time when protectionist tensions are rising, it is of utmost importance that developing countries remain convinced that they can exercise their existing trade rights. Poor developing countries should therefore receive practical assistance, through ITC and other institutions, to address infrastructural and institutional obstacles effectively. Then poor developing countries will be able to strengthen their position on the global market and their negotiating position within the multilateral trade system.

- The Netherlands takes the opportunity to express its appreciation of the strong and fruitful partnership ITC and CBI have established as two implementing Aid for Trade agencies, both in governing the programs in the Netherlands Trust Fund and in other areas.

A remark on the Annual Report

- The Netherlands welcomes the Annual Report and appreciates the overview of budget expenditure by region, but would like to know if in addition, a break-down of delivery by major strategic priorities could be supplied.

Some remarks on the Strategic Plan

- The Netherlands is pleased with ITC’s 2014-2015 Corporate Log frame. All four corporate objectives have our support. It would be very useful that ITC delivers results on the increased level of sustainable and inclusive trade in 2016-17 or preferably earlier. ITC’s results could be important input for
ongoing discussions within the WTO and UNCTAD on the impact of trade on development.

- In spite of the fact that ITC’s ambition is to report on outcome and impact, we notice that the results described are mainly on the outputs level. In addition to that, we should like to see an indication of the exports that are achieved in different programs and countries (in numbers), because export is ITC’s mandate.

- We are pleased to see that ITC has ambitions to realize an integrated approach in its projects and programs. In addition, we encourage the broadening of the export base in ITC’s projects in client countries by contributing to further export diversification. Also the sector based approach described in the Strategic Plan gets our support, because it is also our experience that offering tailor-made programs on country and sector level addressing specific constraints and needs of the recipients, creates larger impact in the longer term.

- In the Strategic Plan, the ITC mentions that TSIs represent a natural priority target of ITC interventions, particularly government administrations, TPOs and generic TSIs. We should like to stress that the generic TSIs have an added value role indeed, but they also sometimes lack a strong relationship with the private sector. We wonder to what extent the ITC secures contacts with the private sector in specific value chains.

I thank you.