STATEMENT BY BARBADOS AT THE 47TH SESSION OF THE JOINT ADVISORY GROUP MEETING, 6TH MAY 2013 (OPENING SESSION)

Thank You Madam Chair.

I wish to first thank Ambassador Gordillo for his able chairmanship of the 46th Joint Advisory Group session and congratulate on your election to Chair this 47th Session of the IIC Joint Advisory Group.

Madam Chair before commenting on the ITC’s activities in 2012, I wish to pay tribute to Ms Patricia Francis, as this is scheduled to be her last JAG as Executive Director of the ITC. Under Ms. Francis’ able leadership, the ITC has grown, improved and implemented a number of measures that ensure Value for Money, results based management approaches, targeted assistance to producers, and businesses, including SMEs and improved the export impact for Good.

The ITC has been a key partner for a number of developing countries in the area of trade capacity building and I wish to specifically mention the programmes on Ethical Fashion, Women in Trade and Non Tariff Measures – this last area being of critical importance to a number of countries, and small developing countries in particular. Indeed, my country has most recently joined our CARICOM colleagues – Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago – in seeking ITC’s assistance for the conduct of a national assessment on NTMs. Madam Chair, as various reports have shown, non tariff measures can be detrimental to small countries and small producers and can affect competitiveness and a country’s ability to effectively participate in the multilateral trading system. As tariff barriers are reduced, NTMs can be the principal remaining impediment to the increased participation of small economies in the world trading system.

We note that the report recognises that 2012 was a tough year for the global economy. We also note with pleasure the Executive Director’s report that the ITC made good progress in improving its effectiveness and capacity building in 2012. We are also pleased that the formal mid-term evaluations confirmed that the ITC is on the right track with respect to delivery of its core functions.
We commend the ITC for achieving a number of its performance indicators, including the number of TSI (93.3% of targets achieved in 2012); and the number of enterprises enabled to become export ready through ITC training activities (91.7% of targets achieves in 2012). We note with regret, however, the poor results with respect to the number of country networks generating multilateral trading system related activities and proposals on the MTS (only 32.7% of overall target achieved in 2012) as well as the number of enterprises enabled, with ITC’s assistance, to formulate sound international business strategies (only 35.6% of overall target achieved in 2012). As a small developing country, ITC’s assistance in these areas can go a long way in assisting small countries to better organise themselves and to enhance their effective participation in the multilateral trading system.

We recognise that to provide the necessary support, achieve its targets and to continue to deliver on core areas such as the examination of NTMs, the ITC needs to be provided with the necessary resources. As such, we call upon the donor countries to provide the requisite resources – and importantly to the ITC’s regular budget – to ensure that the organisation has the necessary resources to conduct its business and continue to deliver the excellent services.

Madam Chair, inc losing, let me once again thank the ITC team under the leadership of Ms. Francis for an excellent report, good performance over the past year and extend the best wishes for a successful 47th JAG session.

I thank You.