Statement by Finland, ITC JAG 2013:

- Thank you Mme Chair, and congratulations for your selection as the Chair of the Joint Advisory Group.

- Finland would wish to start by thanking the ITC senior management and staff for the work well done over the past year. We would wish to extend our thanks to ITC’s partners – the private sector, the governments and the agencies and other – without whom the results yielded could not have materialized.

- We are pleased with the thus-far improvements in monitoring and reporting on results, and, of course, with the results of this round that show that ITC is on track to deliver on its 2012-13 outputs and achieve the outcomes. We may need to still better understand the ITC RBM system – and find the time to duly follow the information and reporting provided – to appreciate the development impact delivering the outputs and reaching the outcomes can be expected to have.

- As one of the donors funding for the ITC evaluation, we are eager to see the evaluation process really get going as it – hopefully – soon will. We expect the evaluation to provide us with more insights on how to do our part in working with the Secretariat and the entire “ITC-family” to really ensure maximum value-added ITC work resulting into optimum development gains.

- ITC has made a long journey under Ms Francis’ able leadership. Ms Francis, in her presentation expressed her confidence in that a successor, an ED equipped for the 21st century, be delivered; we also wish and believe this will happen. Nevertheless, it will be difficult for Ms Francis’ successor to fill her shoes but in the same time, the next Executive Director will be able to start from a place where all the fundamentals are in place, the organization enjoys a high degree of appreciation and the grounds are laid for making ITC even more successful and yielding greater development impact. This was already nicely articulated by the Netherlands on behalf of the ITC donors – but: We are very grateful to Patricia, wish to congratulate her for all her great achievements and wish her great success in all her future endeavors, too.

- ITC’s development ethos is much in line with Finland’s development policy as set out in our Development Policy Programme and Aid for Trade Strategy. There is mutual understanding when we discuss. We should, however, never lose sight of the beneficiary, and here I am, perhaps paradoxically, asking ITC to remind us donors at times of that the resources should really go where the justified need and demand are.

- We nevertheless of course hope that going for need and demand continues resulting into programming dear to us; namely focusing on reducing poverty and inequality through trade, supporting women and advancing gender equality, and furthering climate friendly green economy. We are also pleased to see the LDCs as beneficiaries and that the ITC further advances its collaboration with other agencies, programmes and partners. Here, I would wish to note that we would very much wish to see resources falling under the ITC Trust Fund Window 1 to be also utilized, as appropriate and need be, into financing large programmes. in general, we would wish to make sure that these funds, too, will lead into generation of direct development impacts and there be reporting on these, at least at the outcome level.

- ITC has become Finland’s key multilateral partner in Aid for Trade and we believe this will continue so.
Announcement of trust fund contributions to ITC for 2013

- Ms. Chairwoman, as we stated yesterday, ITC is the key multilateral partner to Finland in Aid for Trade. Finland has over the years steadily increased its voluntary contribution to ITC as part of its overall Aid for Trade support. In 2010 and 2011 we both increased our support to ITC and moved from annual commitments to bi-annual commitments.

- While Finland’s overall ODA is unfortunately somewhat diminishing, we are retaining the upward trend in our support to ITC. Our contribution to be made this year will cover the past year, 2012, and the current, 2013, and be in total 5 million euros.

- The contribution will go to the W1 with the following soft earmarking:
  - Support to ITC’s innovation efforts focusing on concrete application of needs assessment methodology in support of regional integration, and export strategies
  - Mainstreaming MDGs, with special focus on inclusive growth, women and the green economy
  - Complementing other trade development initiatives, including leveraging of EIF projects
  - Targeting LDCs with special focus on Finland’s country priorities
  - and, finally, a contribution of maximum 100,000 euros for the ITC Evaluation

Also, the two Associate Experts, we mentioned in our pledge last year, are joining ITC this year.

- Thank you, Mme Chair.