Statement by H.E. Mr. Pedro Comissário
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mozambique

WTO: 47th Session of the Meeting of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to express my delegation appreciation for the invitation addressed to us to participate for the first time ever in these important meetings of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre (ITC). We value such meetings for their important decisions which mostly shape the future activities of the ITC.

Mr. President,

We note with gratitude the role of ITC in Africa in supporting fast-tracking the establishment of a continental free trade area, looking at both national and regional solutions.

Such support becomes even more important as it focuses in eliminating trade barriers through improved trade facilitation, enhancing opportunities for intra-African trade through trade information networks, and improving business relationship between African industries and sectors with businesses from other regions.

We believe new ways are needed for the expansion of trade for the benefit of all, in which we all work together for the attainment of that goal. In this context, we commend ITC projects that seek Export Impact for Good as they fit in the overall objectives of trade for all.

We recognize the ITC role in bridging business partnerships between African businesses and other regions of the world. As the ITC continues committed in assisting Africa in building capacity its business capacity, more is required for our partners in Europe and Asia to sit with us on the business tables.
Mozambique welcomes and it is open to investment, therefore, we need serious capacity building. We also believe we should OWN the projects that ITC is implementing in my country.

My country feels that it is about time, donors and ourselves together we seek for better ways to secure better capacity with which business partnerships can be created between Africa and the rest of the world.

Our goal is the achievement of better trade related investment that will solve unemployment problems, better profits for the businesses and better understanding among the business communities about the future trajectory of our trade expansion in Africa.

In this context, I would kindly like to call your attention to the following priorities we have established in in Africa, and very much so, in Mozambique, which require the assistance of our international partners and donors:

1) Organisational strengthening of regional business associations to make their participation in public-private dialogue on trade and investment policy more meaningful for future business partnerships.

2) Technical capacity building of business organisations to linkup by sector or industry so that the level of knowledge on ways of doing business is understood by either side, be it on forward markets or on productive capacity issues.

3) Integration of trade in services into manufacturing, and using Business Services Coalitions to ensure that competitiveness of products and in to ensure that the supply chains does not get disrupted by poor support services. Unless we start thinking on how best to connect our businesses and promote common understanding of what is important for collective profitability for Africa, we will continue to face massive unemployment, disruptive immigration and strife among our populations.

4) Closer cooperation with ITC in jointly developing suitable projects, provision of technical expertise for capacity building and assistance from our international partners and donors.

5) Capacity Building for national and regional business organizations to embark on Business Generation through shared business intelligence.

It is important to recognize that in Mozambique business associations of any kind, but especially the newly formed Small and Medium Enterprises (SME), even joint ventures with Foreign Direct Investor, need an array of attractive services in order to unleash the potential of innovative products, and also to move from commodities to value added products. Mozambique has talented youth that can make an impact in business.

In this context, we commend ITC agenda to build the capacity of coalitions of services industries to facilitate their member’s access to local government procurement opportunities.
This is especially important as on a global average over 50 per cent of government procurement is in the services sector. Coalitions of services industries offer a useful platform for sharing information and networking, enabling a variety of services firms from different industry sub-sectors to come together in a bid for a procurement contract.

We have other urgent priorities that our businesses and government want to see happening and we are counting on ITC technical and donor support.

This is the case in the area of business stakeholder’s partnership for driving expertise and knowledge in management of global value chains. The framework of the tripartite group of COMESA, East African Countries (EAC) and SADC sets a basis for facilitating the creation of regional-level business forums.

We need to walk the talk and do things that will create business expansion and not just stop at discussion of policy issues or trade agreements. That’s why we want ITC to do better than hitherto. I very seriously hope that even if ITC has done fantastic work in Mozambique, including helping us with the design of our National Export Strategy, more technical assistance is required. We still have to address the issue of Business and Trade Policy for a growing Africa trade.

We are confident that once we establish a mechanism that allows us to directly engage with ITC management, and it let us guide their teams in what we need as a work-programme for a specific time frame in Africa, the results of our development partnership will be better and our development partnership will unlock other unfinished businesses.

We look forward to work jointly in designing technical solutions for Africa and in particular for Mozambique. We believe we need each other in this challenging and changing world because the world youth and women cannot wait any longer.

Before I conclude, I wish to reiterate our willingness to see ITC more engagement with us and more importantly, we wish to sees more improved financial resources with which to support the future needs of African countries.

I wish you a successful outcome of the meeting.

I thank you.

Geneva, 6 May 2013