Thank you Madame Chair,

I would like to start by congratulating you as the new chairwomen of the 47th Session of the JAG. I also thank you and your predecessor H.E Ambassador Francisco Pirez de Gordillo of Uruguay, Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, the Secretary General of UNCTAD, Mr Pascal Lamy, the Director General of the WTO and finally Mrs. Patricia Francis, Executive Director of the ITC for your opening remarks and assessments on the works of ITC.

Mme. Chair,
Let me also express our appreciations to the experts and management team of the ITC who have made presentations today on the ITC’s financial and strategic achievements and challenges in carrying out its operation.

We believe that, as one of the most efficient organization of the UN System, ITC have a clear, well defined and optimized mandate. We strongly support ITC’s strategic and geographical focus on LDCs, Small and Vulnerable Economies, and especially its efforts towards Sub-saharan Africa;

- in enhancing their capacity towards a higher value added exports,
- in strengthening the integration of business sectors of these countries into global economy,
- In strenghtening the competitiveness on enterprises and SME level,
- And in increasing the capacity of trade supporting institutions in these countries,

Mme. Chair,

We attach utmost importance to our relations with the ITC in improving our trade relations with DCs and LDCs on both regional and functional basis. Governed by the principle of result based management strategy, Turkey perceives and sees ITC as one of the most practical, effective and efficient international organization to co-operate and collaborate towards developing economies.

In this context, I would like to specifically mention that, in recent years we have had a very productive and fruitfull co-operation with the ITC especially towards LDCs and Africa Region. In 2012 and in this year, we held several meetings with the ITC on Ambassador and Director level. Within the same period, ITC experts and higher level officials also paid several visits to Turkey to talk with our officials in the Ministry of Economy, Turkish International Development Agency and Trade Promotion Institutions on the possible ways for cooperation towards LDCs and Africa Region.

Mme. Chair,

In addition to their governmental contacts, ITC experts and some members of the management team have also participated in private sector and NGO activities in Istanbul such as ‘Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board-Africa Joint Business Council Meeting.’

We strongly believe that, deepening relations between Turkey and ITC towards Africa will not only have a positive impact on our bilateral relations with Africa
Region but also create important synergies for regional co-operation within Africa as well.

Before closing, I would like to thank to Patrica Francis and her staff for all the efforts they have spent in drastically improving and deepening our relations with the Institution. I also thank them for the recent brief report, they have prepared on Turkey’s trade relations with Africa Region. I think this report does constitute a practical example and good contribution for improving bilateral relations and enhancing understanding of different regions towards each other.

Finally,
We wish our best for Patricia Francis in her post-ITC life and career.
Thank you.