Opening Statement for 47th Session of the ITC Joint Advisory Group  
May 6, 2013

Good afternoon. It is both pleasure and an honor to attend the 47th session of the ITC Joint Advisory Group. On behalf of the United States, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Pierce on her election as the Chair of the 47th Session of the Joint Advisory Group. Madame Chair, you can count on our full support and we anticipate a great year for the JAG under your leadership. I would also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Pirez Gordillo for his service as President of the 46th Session of the JAG. The JAG has benefitted from his leadership over the past year, and I hope he will continue to be an active participant. I would also like to thank Executive Director Patricia Francis, her management team, as well as the ITC staff for their good work over the past year, as well as for the work that went into preparing the input for the Joint Advisory Group.

The United States commends ITC for fulfilling its core mandate in programming in 2012, and overall we appreciate the high quality of its trade-related technical assistance. We also welcome the hard work undertaken by ITC in Results-based management. Efforts made on training in RBM, project quality assurance, and evaluation are starting to pay off. Given the significance of RBM, it will be important for ITC to allocate regular budgetary resources to it to ensure its continued progress.

Evaluation is essential to the successful implementation of RBM, so we are especially pleased that ITC is beginning a comprehensive evaluation program. As a gesture of our support, the United States is pleased to provide peer support to ITC’s evaluation team through our experts in the State Department’s office of Aid Effectiveness. In addition to reviewing progress made by Executive Director Francis and her team in RBM since the last evaluation in 2006, the evaluation will
identify areas where RBM can be improved at the ITC. We hope the outcome of this collaboration will help in guiding ITC’s future leadership, and we encourage ITC in the future to allocate regular budgetary resources for evaluation, as well.

To fully harness the power of trade to spur economic growth, it is essential to empower women, half the world’s population. The importance of gender was recently institutionalized within the UN system through the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The United States congratulates ITC for its proactive work on gender, such as developing a gender mainstreaming policy and an action plan for 2011-2015. We especially commend ITC’s work on women and trade, and the recent global platform for action on sourcing from women vendors. We encourage ITC to expand its high quality substantive work on gender, which has of our full support.

We are pleased that ITC has continued its efforts to move from smaller project-based initiatives to larger programs that can have a more measurable and lasting impact and we look forward to Tuesday’s briefing on ITC’s large project pipeline.

These are times of change in ITC. Today we have the pleasure to welcome a new Chair of the JAG, and soon we hope to welcome a new Executive Director. At this time I would like to like to join those who have gone before me to congratulate Patricia Francis on her achievements as Executive Director. Under her leadership ITC has used results-based management to enhance its efficiency and impact. We wish Mrs. Francis the best in her future endeavors and we hope that her successor will keep the ITC on its current upward trajectory.

In closing I would like to reiterate the support of the United States for the ITC. We look forward to continuing to work closely with other countries, the ITC
Secretariat, and the next ITC Executive Director to help the ITC fulfill its mandate in furthering export impact for good.

Thank you.