

Thank you very much, Madam Chair,

On behalf of The Netherlands, let me firstly take this opportunity to congratulate the International Trade Centre on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Five decades of work in aid for trade are an important landmark, and The Netherlands wishes to congratulate ITC on its important achievements during this time. The ITC is an important agency to The Netherlands, specifically because our development policy moves away from reliance on an “enabling environment” (education, health) for economic development, towards support for “trade and private sector development” as a solid foundation for poverty reduction.

The ITC is not only important to The Netherlands now; there have been long years of partnership with The Netherlands. ITC has been partners with CBI, covering aid for trade for nearly 40 years. This gives us an understanding of the importance of long-term partnerships and long-term financing to enable ITC to achieve its strategic objectives.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Gonzalez on her work in her role as Executive Director of ITC. Ms. Gonzalez’s energetic leadership has raised ITC’s visibility, both in Geneva and globally. She has consistently stressed the importance of measuring results and impact, and steered ITC towards making further improvements in this area. The Netherlands welcomes and appreciates this focus. The results agenda is crucial, not only for measuring and reporting attribution to donors and recipients, but also to generate an understanding of the effects of ITC’s support activities and how to further improve these.

I would like to make some remarks on:

### ***ITC Evaluation***

- The Netherlands welcomes the Independent Evaluation of ITC and appreciates the useful insights provided concerning ITC’s organization and

management, and ITC's performance and results since 2006. The Netherlands would like to commend the ITC for the considerable steps that it has taken since 2006.

- The Evaluation of the International Trade Centre evidences the absence of a comprehensive overview of the products and services ITC has to offer. Yet these products are still the main organizing elements in ITC's work; a planned approach to needs assessment is not yet in place. The Netherlands would like to underline the importance of addressing this. The Netherlands highly favors the focus on an integrated approach, tailored to a particular value chain and country/region. We believe that such targeted efforts based on market demand and sound analyses are the best warranty for a significant contribution to sustainable economic development.
- Moreover, although The Netherlands supports ITC's efforts to move from smaller to larger programs, we do believe that a more integrated approach is required within this scaling up of activities. We therefore commend the ITC for clustering its work under six focus areas, and support the evaluation report's recommendation for ITC to capitalize on its proven strengths globally and regionally.
- The report underlines the strong potential of ITC collaborating with other agencies with similar missions. The Netherlands has a great experience with this through the longstanding partnership between ITC and CBI. The Netherlands would recommend seeking out more collaborations and partnerships, which would enable ITC to work in its niche strengths, complemented by the work of partner organizations.
- The Netherlands considers realistic evaluation to be crucial, and supports the reports' recommendation to work towards this. The Netherlands would however also like to encourage further refining of the current indicators used to measure ITC's performance, as displayed on the development results page of the ITC website, so as to realistically yet adequately measure ITC's output and outcome.

- While appreciating the significant measures that ITC has already undertaken in the areas of monitoring and evaluation, The Netherlands would like to ask how ITC intends to further enhance a culture of results-based management, monitoring and evaluation in its activities and further involve staff in this effort.