



Statement by India at the 58th session of the Joint Advisory Group of the International Trade Centre (ITC) delivered by Mr. Gaurav Kumar Thakur, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of India, Geneva, 25 June 2024

Thank you madam Chair,

Congrats to you and the outgoing chair. Many congratulations to Madam Executive Director and all ITC staff for completing 60 years of this eventful journey. In today's context, ITC's role in bridging information asymmetry in a digital, interconnected world will only grow in importance.

2. MSMEs shape the future of the modern business world. They are the engines of export and job rich growth; support big business through ancillary clusters; and are the flag bearers of private entrepreneurship and innovation. In India, there are about 36 million MSME units, which employ 80 million people, give 45% of industrial output and 40% of exports, and are 22% of India's GDP.

3. India values and supports ITC's work with MSMEs, particularly on Trade and Market intelligence, capacity building, trade facilitation and promoting sustainable and inclusive trade. We also appreciate ITC's forward-looking vision that seeks to link MSME to digital connectivity, gender, green and youth.

4. India has been a regular donor to the ITC under Window I, which provides ITC the flexibility on its utilization. Our partnership is exemplified by project SITA (Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa), that was implemented by ITC in five Eastern African countries to promote trade, investment, technology, and knowledge transfer.

5. Most recently, the commitment to upgrade Global Trade Help Desk at the Jaipur Call for Action during India's G20 presidency in 2023 exemplified our renewed commitment on greater integration of MSMEs with global trade. We believe that for this initiative to be effective and far reaching in its impact, there is a need to anchor the Global Trade Help Desk in more robust trade data onboarding, make it accessible as per the requirement of specific countries and leverage technology to bring desired information to the concerned user. We look forward to continued engagement with ITC through our concerned Indian line Ministry and other partners on successful implementation of the mandate given at the Jaipur call for action.

Madam Chair,

6. Since its inception, ITC has been synonymous for its expertise in trade data and analysis. As a long-term partner, we urge ITC to continue to provide access to its Market

Analysis Tools for all users in developing countries. We are hopeful that discussion in this respect with the Ministry of MSME of the Government of India are successfully concluded.

7. In conclusion, we look forward to deepening our relationship with ITC, with a view to achieving inclusive and sustainable development for all. Happy 60th once again.

I thank you.