



**Statement by Jamaica**  
**57<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Trade Centre (ITC) Joint Advisory Group (JAG)**  
**Meeting**  
**20<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Thank you Madam Chair, for giving me the floor.

Jamaica joins other delegations in congratulating you on your appointment as Chair of this 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Joint Advisory Group (JAG) and you can be assured of our support during your tenure. My delegation would like to place on record our appreciation to Ambassador Canabady for her able stewardship over the 56<sup>th</sup> Session.

Jamaica welcomes the participation and statements delivered by both the Director-General, of the WTO, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and Secretary General of the UNCTAD, Ms. Rebecca Grynspan earlier this morning. The joint ITC – UNCTAD-WTO collaboration remains critical in helping member states foster economic growth, enhance international competitiveness, and facilitate the integration of developing countries into the global trading system. Jamaica therefore applauds the ITC for its commitment to enabling sustainable and inclusive trade and the alignment of its work to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Under the leadership of Ms. Pamela Coke Hamilton, the ITC has had another successful year which is captured in the Annual Report 2022 and demonstrates the effective implementation of ITC's Strategic Plan 2022–2025. In this connection, it would be remiss not to highlight the invaluable contribution of donors and other

developments partners to the regular budget and extra budgetary resources. Jamaica encourages their continued support to the work of the ITC.

Madam Chair,

The theme of this year's annual report, "Diversifying trade in times of crisis" is relevant as it recognizes that the Covid-19 pandemic reiterated the need for developing countries to prioritize economic diversification. In Jamaica's context, we continue to pursue diversification of the economy, which includes initiatives to move up the value chain and increasing the exports of high-value digital services. As reflected in the SME Competitiveness Outlook 2022: Connected Services, Competitive Businesses report, services are emerging as a powerful force for economic transformation. Jamaica therefore requests the support of the ITC in promoting services exports in areas such as sports and the cultural and creative industries as we continue to advance work on our National Services Policy.

The world is experiencing a rapid change due to digitalization which undoubtedly impacts MSMEs and broadly the dynamics of international trade. Jamaica welcomes the ITC's digital connectivity Moonshot project, Switch ON, which aims to connect and support 20,000 MSMEs and 4,000 digital entrepreneurs. This project will be beneficial for developing countries to better leverage the opportunities of the digital and platform economies and speaks volume of the ITC's ability to pivot in response to the needs of members and the developments in the global economy. The use of digitalization in entrepreneurship remains a priority for Jamaica. We therefore look forward to engaging the ITC on this as well as other critical matters related to the future of work and establishing collaboration with our National Productivity Center.

Madam Chair,

The ITC remains a key partner for Jamaica in our pursuit of further economic growth and development through its support to our MSMEs and projects which

directly impact the livelihood of our citizens. In this regard, we wish to highlight the Alliances for bluer, greener Caribbean (Ridge to Reef) project which is a collaboration of the ITC with the Alligator Head Foundation, an organization that support communities dependent on marine resources for their livelihoods. This partnership has so far supported over 40 small farmers and their communities in producing and commercializing diversified crops with over 10,000 combined coconut, scotch bonnet pepper and plantain suckers' seedlings distributed.

The project tackles issues which pose a serious threat to our economic development such as climate change, environmental degradation, and food insecurity. We are delighted that earlier this month, this project received the laureate award in the Environmental category of the 2023 SIDS Partnerships Award at the United Nations HQ in New York.

On the point of food security, Jamaica recommends ITC's collaboration in the implementation of the CARICOM 25 by 25 Initiative, to reduce the region's large food import bill by 25 per cent by 2025.

In a similar vein, we wish to welcome the continued support received from the ITC through the projects: Alliances for Coconut Industry Developments for the Caribbean (Coconuts II) and the ACP Business Friendly Program. As a follow up to the visit of the team from the Basque Culinary Center to Jamaica last year, we are delighted that products and recipes are being developed using our coconut and cocoa.

Increasing export and tapping into new markets continue to be a key area of focus for Jamaica. The tools, platforms and initiatives of the ITC oriented towards export promotion are useful in this regard. Jamaica has benefited from training on market intelligence and welcomes further training and capacity building for our MSMEs to overcome export challenges. We convey our appreciation for the

Export Max trade initiative being awarded for 'Best Use of a Partnership' at the event held last year jointly hosted by the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) and the ITC in recognition for the program's success in using partnerships to help Jamaican MSMEs with export related activities.

Madam Chair,

In closing, we wish to reiterate our commendation to the Executive Director and her Team at the ITC and assure of Jamaica's continued support to the work of the Organization.

I thank you.