

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES
ON THE OCCASSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE'S 56th JOINT ADVISORY
GROUP (JAG) MEETING
13 September 2022**

Thank you, Chair
Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives,

I make this statement on behalf of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). We are pleased to participate in this the 56th Joint Advisory Group Meeting and we join others in thanking the International Trade Centre (ITC) for its stellar work over the past year. In particular, we express our appreciation to the ITC's Executive Director, Dr. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, for her visionary leadership of the ITC, especially at this time of heightened global uncertainty owing to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, military conflicts and a host of other challenges.

We also recognise the dedication and high level of professionalism and competence of the ITC staff, with whom it has been a joy to interact.

The OECS has benefitted tremendously from the work of the ITC not only in the past year, but also for many years before. During the period under review, we have benefitted from the ITC in the following areas, among others:

- Women's economic empowerment;
- Tourism strategies;
- Investment facilitation reforms;
- Trade facilitation;
- Export development;
- Development of protocols for facilitating and regulating trade and export in the OECS;
- Strengthening of cross-sectoral linkages, for example, the commercialization and expansion of coconut production, including through value addition;
- Strengthening of trade and investment support institutions;
- Sharing of best practices and experiences;
- Market intelligence; and
- Applied research.

The ITC's work in the OECS directly and indirectly supports job creation, entrepreneurial development and greater integration of OECS countries into regional and global value chains. Currently, we are in the process of finalizing

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the renewal of the OECS-ITC Memorandum of Understanding. We are also in the process of partnering with the ITC and the Caribbean Development Bank to establish a she-trades-hub in our region.

In closing, we extol the ITC for its work not only among our Member States, but across the developing world. If the ITC did not exist, it would have needed to be created because of its unique work in providing capacity building support in assisting countries like ours to boost economic and social inclusion, and in benefitting from the multilateral trading system in tangible ways.

We assure the ITC of our continued support and our shared commitment to improving the lives of our people. We also call on all donors to continue their funding for the work of the ITC.

Madame Chair, I am obliged.

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