

51st Session of JAG of ITC

Statement by Marwa J. Kisiri, Head of ACP Geneva Office

Madam Chair,

On behalf of the ACP Secretariat, allow me to convey congratulations to you for the election to spearhead the work of the 51st Session of JAG.

Further, ACP extends compliments to the Executive Director of ITC Madame Arancha Gonzalez for her statement to JAG today expounding the works of ITC in 2016 and planned events for the period ahead.

We commend the Secretary General of UNCTAD and Director General of WTO for their respective views as expressed.

ACP applauds all the Guest Speakers, the Ministers of Gambia, Liberia, Pakistan and the Commissioner for Trade and Industry of the African Union.

The 2016 annual report gives an analysis of how ITC has progressed in delivering various activities on its mandate. Among other things ITC was able to provide services worth \$85.4 million as its delivery in all budgets commendable strides.

There has been close collaboration between ACP Secretariat and ITC over the years and ACP would like to commend ITC for the performance in promoting inclusive trade and sustainable economic development. I would like to reiterate commitment of ACP Secretariat to enhance collaboration with ITC inter alia in accordance with meeting between ACP Secretary General and Executive Director of ITC in March 2017.

We are glad to note that ACP member states were the main beneficiaries of the projects and initiatives undertaken by ITC and its donors in the year 2016. Furthermore, ACP again would like to acknowledge the work that has been done in regards to incorporating SMEs in the Global Value Chains, providing support for developing countries for effective implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and addressing the issue of gender equality and climate change in the best possible manner.

We support the call for increased interventions on SDGs. There are multiple areas where ITC can contribute towards the achievements of Sustainable Development

Goals. In fact, ITC can contribute to 12 of the 17 SDG goals stated in the agenda 2030, especially in the areas of trade, poverty reduction, women empowerment, quality education, industrial innovation and infrastructure, environment and rural development. ACP would like to call for a need to a concerted programme to address challenges that countries will face in moving towards the achievement of those goals in ITC's strategic plan for 2018-2021.

Finally, as the digital economy is becoming one of the fastest growing sectors, which is estimated to be around 4.3 trillion USD in its value by 2016, we urge enhanced programme development of ITC online training and capacity building on issues related with the digital economy. The digital economy presents multiple opportunities and challenges, which ITC can play a catalytic role in assisting countries of the Group and others from the South.

At last, we would like to thank donors who have backed up ITC's activities over the years.

Thank you.