

STATEMENT BY THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI AT THE JOINT ADVISORY GROUP HELD ON THE 25TH NOVEMBER 2020.

Outgoing Chair, H.E. Ms. Kirsti Kauppi, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Finland

Incoming Chair, H.E. Ms. Athaliah Lesiba Molokomme, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Republic of Botswana

UNCTAD Secretary-General, Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi

WTO Deputy Director-General, Mr. Yonov Frederick Agah

ITC Executive Director, Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton

Let me take this opportunity on behalf my delegation, to congratulate the new Executive Director, Mrs. Pamela Coke-Hamilton for her appointment to this mammoth task and I wish to pledge the Kingdom of Eswatini's support as she carries out her mandate. It would be remiss of me not to recognise the sterling work done by the Deputy Director Ms. Dorothy Tembo during the transition period.

The Kingdom of Eswatini is very pleased to be one of the beneficiaries from the ITC presence, as recent as September 2020, through a strong and commendable initiative entitled: **Promoting growth through competitive alliances.**

This is an ambitious 4-year programme which will aim to increase the competitiveness and sustainability of Eswatini MSMEs, Social Enterprises and Producer Associations through the reinforcement of the support institutions, the establishment of public-private alliances, and the improvement of access to finance and investments. The project, which is at its inception phase (*identifying key beneficiaries and partners*) will focus on advancing the agribusiness sector, value chains amongst others, and offers

already strong prospects of advancing the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

We are confident that the reputation of the ITC will be demonstrated again through this intervention, but also in the context of ongoing projects development, notably with our Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade on increased technical assistance in other sectors. In this connection, the Kingdom expresses its gratitude to the ITC for the scheduled Technical Assistance to support e-Trade Readiness Assessment and Development of E-Commerce Strategy.

We also commend the country-needs orientation approach of the ITC, the national leadership promoted in ITC technical cooperation with countries, as well as the results focus of proposed interventions.

Lastly, I wish to renew to the new Executive Director, Ms. Coke Hamilton our support and also our desire for continued and closer collaboration between the ITC and the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Thank you for your attention.