

Statement by Finland, ITC JAG, 26 June 2015

Thank you and our warmest congratulations to you Madam Ambassador on your election as the chair. I would also like to thank the outgoing chair Ambassador Salleh for her leadership during the past year.

Finland is a long-standing supporter of ITC. In particular, we see ITC as a key partner in the area of Aid for Trade. We value ITC's strong focus on private sector development and SMEs, ITC's capacity building work in facilitating developing countries to benefit from regional and global trade opportunities, as well as, the strong commitment of ITC in promoting gender equality and environmental sustainability in the context of international trade. These are priorities that Finland also promotes in its overall Aid for Trade cooperation.

Over the past year, Finland has enjoyed close collaboration with ITC. Especially, we would like to highlight the visit of Executive Director Arancha González to Finland in February this year. This was indeed a very successful visit which has led to many positive developments in our cooperation with ITC.

Consequent to Madam González' trip to Finland, we have made good progress in introducing ITC trade intelligence tools to a wider audience in Finland, in strengthening the partnership between ITC and the Trade Promotion Organisation (TPO) of Finland, called Finpro, and also in enhancing links between ITC and women business leaders in Finland. One of our aims has been to broaden the partnership between Finland and ITC from a traditional development assistance focused approach to wider partnership.

Another positive current development from our perspective is Finland's collaboration with ITC in promoting intra-regional trade in Eastern Africa, particularly in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. The project is currently making good progress. Also, I was pleased to hear Benin's warm words directed to my delegation during the morning session with regard to another successful ITC project in Benin which Finland has supported.

With increasingly tight financial resources available for development cooperation in Finland, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of demonstrating results and value for money. In this regard, we are very pleased to note that ITC has taken on board the recommendations from the recent evaluation and is implementing measures to improve results based management (RBM). We warmly welcome ITC's efforts and encourage you to continue towards further improvements.

My delegation will be seeking the floor again under agenda item "Announcement of the contributions to the ITC Trust Fund".

To conclude, I would like to thank Executive Director Arancha González and her staff for your excellent work. We look forward to continue good collaboration with ITC also in the future.