

## **GRULAC Statement**

**51° Joint Advisory Group ITC – Monday 10 July 2017, afternoon session**

Mr. Chairman,

GRULAC would like to thank ITC and in particular Executive Director Arancha González for the information provided and the preparation of the Annual Report 2016.

We would also like to congratulate for the effective work that the ITC has developed during 2016, in particular in support of the MSMEs as the only international agency that is fully dedicated to their development.

We thank for the extensive work presented on the report regarding the relationship between the work of ITC and the implementation of the SDGs. We believe that developing countries need the support of organizations such as ITC (with its specific focus) to help achieve these important Goals.

Regarding the Competitiveness Outlook 2016, we would like to thank the focus of this study on the role of standards and regulations in trade, this is one of the main concerns of MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean and there we find interesting data and recommendations for our enterprises. We concur with the observation that when standards are designed with little thought for supplier's needs and technical institutions are weak, compliance costs can quickly become prohibitive, especially for smaller firms. We welcome the continuation of ITCs research in this area in order to continue providing recommendations and policy options for MSMEs to overcome the challenges they face in this area.

Regarding the Market Intelligence Tools, we see a constant improvement and update of the databases and would like to remark the free availability for developing countries as for the usage of these tools.

At the same time, we would like to mention the organization of a successful workshop held for GRULAC members on these market intelligence tools, in June this year.

Last but not least, let us remember that for the Latin American and Caribbean region, the participation of women and women led MSMEs is essential. That is why we acknowledge the important achievements of the program “She Trades”,

which we expect brings, in the near future, a more active involvement of countries from our region in it.

Thank you very much.