

**The Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre (ITC)
Fifty-second Session (July 10th, 2018)
Statement by Japan**

Thank you Chair,

At the outset, I would like to join other delegations in congratulating you on your appointment as the chair of the 52nd Joint Advisory Group.

I would also like to extend our appreciation to Executive Director Madam Arancha Gonzalez and the ITC team for their hard work, including the publication of the Annual Report 2017.

Japan aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Canada on behalf of the donor countries. In my intervention, I would like to highlight some of Japan's key points of interest.

Japan shares the view that ensuring all people in all countries can benefit from trade and technological progress is essential in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We welcome the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 'Trade Routes to Sustainable and Inclusive Development' and appreciate the continuous work of ITC to promote "good trade" with further emphasis on MSMEs, women and young entrepreneurs, as well as displaced people.

In particular, Japan supports ITC's focus on women's empowerment and capacity building to promote women's participation in trade. We thank you again, Arancha, for your participation in WAW! (the World Assembly for Women) in both 2016 and 2017. You made valuable contributions as a role model for women leaders and helped to enrich the discussions on women's empowerment in various fields.

Japan also appreciates ITC's work related to e-commerce, especially in post-conflict and fragile states. E-commerce ultimately helps to protect the dignity of refugees and displaced persons by providing them with the means to connect their skills to markets and improve their livelihoods and economic resilience. Japan has been promoting the approach of "Strengthening the Humanitarian-Development Nexus", and we are happy to have been able to support ITC's projects in this area. We commend the efforts of ITC staff to implement the relevant projects despite difficult situations on the ground.

On the management side, Japan welcomes the continuous efforts of ITC's Independent Evaluation Unit to embed evaluation within ITC's results framework and to promote accountability, learning and evidence-based decision-making in the management of ITC's policies, programmes and projects.

Over the past three years the cooperation between ITC and the Government of Japan, including our Mission, has been significantly strengthened. We look forward to seeing such cooperation expand further in the coming years.

Thank you.