

OPENING STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. NEGASH KEBRET BOTORA,
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UN,
CHAIR OF THE 51ST SESSION OF THE JOINT ADVISORY GROUP

Executive Director Arancha González
Director-General Azevêdo,
Secretary-General Kituyi
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the 51st session of the ITC's Joint Advisory Group.

It has been an exciting year being the Chair of the JAG. As you can see in the 2016 Annual Report before you, ITC has continued to deliver for those who need it the most. One only has to look at the upward trajectory in its assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa, LDCs, LLDCs and the Small economies to know that ITC is an organisation that (indeed responds to the needs of its beneficiaries with impact.

Many things have changed in the global arena since last year, but what remains is a need for an organisation such as ITC that works with MSMEs to help them to trade, create jobs and realize their full potential as contributors to inclusive growth.

ITC's work, whether on economic empowerment for women and youth, building agri-processing value chains, creating e-solutions or improving countries' business environment, is intricately linked to the UN Global Goals. It is deeply connected to the issues that we discuss here in the WTO, and to the priorities that many of your countries have set out. This type of assistance is invaluable.

Under the stewardship of Arancha González and her management team and with the dedication of its staff, ITC has continued to deliver on its targets. ITC is a key actor on trade and development and is now even more well known in all of our countries than it was just 4 years ago. Everyone knows 'ITC'.

I take the opportunity to thank Arancha González for inviting me to be part of the ITC family for the past year. I have been promised that I will remain an 'honorary ITC elder'. As I leave my role as the Chair, I ask funders for their continued support and collaboration with ITC. It is good value for your money!

I now call upon Her Excellency Ms. Frances Mary Lisson, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the World Trade Organization, to take up her position as Chair of the 51st session of the Joint Advisory Group.