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## ITC and CCI France: A cooperation to benefit SMEs and entrepreneurs in developing and least developed countries

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Geneva - The International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie France (CCI France) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen cooperation between the two organizations in relation to provision of trade-related technical assistance to developing and least developed countries.

One of the main focuses of the ITC-CCI France partnership will be to develop technical-assistance programmes aimed at supporting the expansion of exports for small and medium-sized enterprises in Africa. ITC and CCI France will also develop programmes to help young entrepreneurs and to support the implementation of competitive-intelligence programmes to assist trade support institutions in developing and least developed countries.

This partnership fits into a plan that includes the sharing of tools, networks and methodologies for developments in various fields such as economics, regional trade or competitive intelligence.

This collaboration is also meant to generate fund raising activities on both public and private sides. "The partnership between CCI France and ITC will create the basis for an excellent platform, which will ensure a complementarity and therefore will improve greatly the impact we can have in developing and least developed countries," said Mr. Jean-Marie Paugam, ITC's Deputy Executive Director.

Ms. Judith Jiguet, CCI France's Director-General, said: "The enhanced collaboration between CCI France and ITC will represent a great opportunity for the involved countries and their industries to benefit from the crossed competencies of these two organisations, and therefore to strengthen their presence on the international market.

CCI France, based in Paris, is the national public institution which organizes and leads the various French Chambers of Commerce and Industry. CCI France's role is to coordinate and support the actions of the chambers, in relation to entrepreneurship, enhancing the capabilities of the individual member companies including their ability to collect and benefit from, innovation, export, infrastructure management and training and education. CCI France also coordinates the international activity of the network of the French chambers of commerce and industry in partnership with UCCIFE, the association for French chambers of commerce and industries abroad.

ITC is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations, and is devoted to helping small- and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries become more competitive in global markets and thus to speed up sustainable economic development and contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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