

**WORLD EXPORT DEVELOPMENT FORUM 2007**  
**Bringing Down the Barriers –**  
**Creating a Dynamic Export Development Agenda**

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**Monday, 8 October 2007**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Official Opening

Patricia R. Francis, Executive Director of ITC

“The fastest growing markets for developing countries are developing countries themselves.” With this declaration Ms Patricia R. Francis, Executive Director, opened the first ITC World Export Development Forum, bringing together trade strategists from some 40 developing countries for discussions on how to bring down international barriers. At the same time as reporting growth, however, she also noted the challenges: two percent of the world’s adult population owns more than half of the world’s wealth, while half of Earth’s population together own only one percent of global wealth.

Non-tariff barriers against imports are becoming more “innovative” and globalization is becoming increasingly important, she pointed out. Through its partners on the ground, ITC is trying to be a conduit of useful ideas to SMEs and business at large. It is working in post-conflict societies such as Sierra Leone and Liberia, with pharmaceutical companies in developing countries trying to prove to developed markets that their markets reach international standards, on services in Latin America, and in more than 30 countries on national export strategies.

But she noted that if developing countries want to harness “export impact for good” they need to work differently. “We have to go beyond export promotion and trade policy, if we want to create a dynamic export environment,” she said.

Anton Said, World Export Development Forum Coordinator, noted three innovations from the earlier Forums: a pre-event publication of papers from five leading specialists (*Trade: What If...* ) and a CD-Rom from last year’s event entitled *Alleviating Poverty through Trade*; a thumbdrive for each participant containing all the printed material and papers from earlier sessions; plus keynote speeches by major figures in export development and practical roundtable discussions designed to produce results for strategy-makers.