

MEETING OF THE JOINT ADVISORY GROUP ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE (FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION)

- Thank you Chair for the opportunity to make some brief comments on behalf of the Australian delegation. Allow me to join others in congratulating you for taking on your role as Chair of the 48<sup>th</sup> session, and thanking your predecessor for her work.
- This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ITC; 50 years of work building sustainable export sectors, strengthening economies and empowering individuals to improve their livelihoods. I congratulate ITC for this achievement and encourage all in the organisation to continue your efforts.
- At this first JAG for ITC Executive Director Arancha Gonzalez, allow me on behalf of my delegation to congratulate you on your appointment. The energy and drive that you have taken to the job are obvious to all, and we look forward to you leading an already very effective team at the ITC and helping it build further on its considerable achievements.
- As the Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop has indicated, aid for trade is a key feature of the Australian aid program, along with other efforts to promote economic growth in our developing country partners. This is in recognition that economic growth is the most powerful long-term solution to poverty. No country has achieved high and lasting growth without participating in international trade.
- Australia's aid for trade program will be focused on helping the poor to find jobs, build livelihoods and – in the long term – become less reliant on aid.
- In this context, Australia is pleased to be supporting the ITC to deliver a project that is increasing women's economic empowerment in the Pacific through trade. Pacific Island countries face unique and considerable challenges in taking advantage of market access opportunities. The \$3 million Women and Trade Programme will be helping bilum weavers in PNG and farmers and cooks in Vanuatu to improve their businesses and connect with international markets. We look forward to implementation of this program, and encourage ITC to continue looking to the Pacific as an area where the organisation can make a significant impact.
- Australia is also working bilaterally to help our development partners identify internal constraints to trade. In this context, we welcome the efforts that ITC has made in the past year to increase its focus on the

## Australian Statement – Check Against Delivery

individual needs of developing countries. Development is not one size fits all. ITC's work on tools to better assess specific country needs and its efforts adapting larger programs such as the Women and Trade Programme to the unique circumstances in the Pacific are to be commended.

- We welcome ITC's work to support developing country participation in trade in services. Services trade itself clearly offers great opportunities for developing countries to participate in high value-added activities, generate new jobs, and contribute to poverty reduction efforts. Australia was pleased to have provided funding for an 8-9 May 2014 ITC workshop at the WTO on LDC services trade, which examined the challenges and successes services exporters face in LDCs and developing countries, from a private sector perspective. We would encourage further engagement by ITC on these issues.
- We encourage ITC to continue its focus on where it can make the biggest difference and where it adds the most value among the many donors and organisations involved in Aid for Trade. ITC's collaborative approach and experience engaging with trade support institutions and the private sector means that there is strong buy in and, as a consequence, greater likelihood of more sustainable outcomes.
- We have listened carefully to recent announcements that ITC plans to substantially increase the scale of its work globally through rapidly growing its funding base. Australia has an interest in ITC continuing its strong performance and delivering results for developing countries, so we will be listening carefully for further information on how this will be implemented. Other organisations seeking to increase the scale of their work have done so progressively, looking to build wherever possible on existing strengths, consolidating small programs into larger ones, and focusing first and foremost on delivering results for developing countries. We are confident that ITC will be keeping such considerations in mind, and we look forward to working closely with ITC and other Members as these plans unfold.
- Australia looks forward to continuing to work with ITC to build on its existing successes. My delegation offers once again offers its congratulations to the ITC on its 50<sup>th</sup> year.
- Thank you