

Montenegro Statement at the 49th Annual Meeting of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre

Statement delivered by PR, Ambassador Zorica Maric-Djordjevic

Geneva

June 26, 2015

Thank you, Chair.

Montenegro is very pleased to attend the 49th Annual Meeting of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre (ITC). Montenegro wishes to extend its thanks to all of those that have contributed to the organization of this event, the work of the ITC over the past year and the production of the 2014 ITC Annual Report. ITC contributions to international trade and development are greatly received.

Montenegro first wishes to congratulate the ITC on its 50th anniversary; and to congratulate Executive Director Arancha Gonzales on the many successes that she has secured during her first full calendar year in charge. At the outset Montenegro would like to express its support to the important development that the ITC has undertaken to strengthen its operation and evaluation policies since 2013. In addition, Montenegro fully supports the ITC Strategic Plan 2015-2017 and its six strategic focus areas, including its pragmatic approach in providing services for its members.

It is in this context that I would like to emphasize the ability of the ITC to adjust to the most pressing needs of the countries in collaboration with both the WTO and the UNCTAD. As recently as

last week the ITC dispatched an expert to Montenegro to work with our Customs Administration Office in identifying the challenges facing our fast track TFA priorities. This ITC operation will serve as foundation for the follow up ITTC technical assistance that will focus on assisting our National team for implementation of the TFA in the upcoming mounts. We believe that the support provided by the ITTC and ITC will lead to Montenegro joining increased number of countries accepting and ratifying the Protocol amending TFA before 10th Ministerial meeting in Nairobi.

Mr. Chairman, Montenegro appreciates that in the line with the UN post-2015 development agenda, ITC is intensifying efforts on women's empowerment and gender equality, youth development, environmental sustainability, as well as other interventions areas. Of particular importance is the ITC's continued commitment to promote the interests of women in all of its work. In this regard, Montenegro is pleased to observe that in 2014 42% of participants in ITC workshops were women; and that in 2014 the ITC was also able to assist 362 women-owned enterprises in improving export-related skills or connecting with new potential buyers. Montenegro firmly believes in the importance of promoting the interests of women in matters of international trade and development around the world, supporting all efforts by the ITC to this effect.

As has been seen in this year's Annual Report, the ITC continues to make valuable contributions to SMEs in developing countries around the world, having provided 497 capacity-building workshops in 2014 alone. By all accounts, this is a great success that Montenegro applauds as SMEs continue to be the engine of a modern economy.

Finally, Montenegro wishes to ask Executive Director Gonzales what is her biggest concern in operation of ITC? In addition we would appreciate if the Executive Director could share the immediate plans of the “task force” set up to provide programme/project design to ensure “coherence and efficiency of the program development”.

Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the WTO looks forward to continuing constructive engagement with the Executive Director and her team in partnering the efforts for the progress of the international trade and development in 2015.