

## **51st Session of the Joint Advisory Group of ITC**

**H.E. Dr. Isatou Touray Minister of Trade, Regional Integration, Economic Affairs and Employment of Gambia,**

**H.E. Mr. Albert M. Muchanga, African Union Commissioner for Trade and Industry**

**Director General Azevêdo, of World Trade Organisation**

**Secretary General Kituyi, UNCTAD**

**H. E. Mr. Negash Kebret Batora, Ambassador,  
Permanent Mission of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
Director General Azevêdo, of World Trade Organisation**

**H. E. Ms. Frances Mary Lisson,  
Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Australia to the World Trade Organisation.**

**Executive Director of ITC Arancha González,**

It gives me immense pleasure to participate in 51<sup>st</sup> Joint Advisory Group meeting of ITC.

Pakistan greatly acknowledges the commendable work being delivered by ITC around the world to achieve inclusive growth by building the capacity small and medium enterprises and enabling them to connect to international markets. Annual report for 2016 clearly shows the quality of this work in providing technical assistance and capacity building globally and delivering innovative tools for improving competitiveness of goods from developing countries specially LDCs.

ITC has been supporting trade and private sector development in Pakistan since 2004 through two Trade-Related Technical Assistance projects funded by the European Union (EU).

In 2004-2007, ITC increased awareness and knowledge of the private sector, trade support institutions and policy makers about WTO issues, established WTO reference Centers in the country, conducted sector-specific studies to identify export potentials of the automotive,

footwear, furniture, pharmaceutical and sports goods sectors, and provided advisory support for strengthening Pakistan's capacity in the Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiations.

Since 2011, ITC has been strengthening the institutional capacity of the Pakistan Institute for Trade and Development (PITAD) through mentorship and training of trainers, the production of a training curriculum and certificate on International Trade Law and Commercial Diplomacy. ITC has also provided advisory support to the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and produced evidence-based research papers which have informed Pakistan's policy reform for export enhancement in key sectors including leather, textile and garments, pharmaceutical and surgical instruments industry, horticulture, dairy products and livestock. Research also focused on the trade benefits from EU/GSP+.

Pakistan appreciates and values the assistance provided by the ITC in deepening the dialogue and discussions on Trade Facilitation Agreement in Pakistan. ITC provided assistance to build capacity of all stakeholders in engaging with TFA related processes nationally and at multilateral level. This includes support for facilitation our national ratification of the protocol of amendments and notifications to the WTO and the evaluation of financial and technical assistance required for Category C provisions.

Pakistan also benefitted from ITC technical assistance for improving national consultation process, including the involvement of private sector, in policy formulation and capacity-building to promote the efficient implementation of the TFA. We look forward to further assistance from ITC to strengthen the capacity of trade support institutions to undertake trade facilitation efforts.

Earlier this year, Executive Director Arancha González undertook a visit to Pakistan. She met Prime Minister of Pakistan, and visited provincial headquarters of Punjab and Sindh. She also had meetings with business community and chambers of commerce. During her visit, ITC **Shetrade** initiative was launched which will go a long way in helping women entrepreneurs of Pakistan to enter the global markets. ITC is also working on an initiative with the Government of Punjab with the objective to help Pakistani enterprises overcome relevant barriers through the provision of appropriate “e Solutions”. Another important work being done by ITC is providing advisory support for a benchmarking exercise that will result in a benchmark and a roadmap for reforms in TDO (Trade Development Organization) of Pakistan. All these efforts of ITC will go a long way in enhancing our trade competitiveness.

We would also like to take this opportunity and acknowledge the work done by ITC in preparation of a project proposal for EU funded GRASP (Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress) project which is a six year program that contributes to the reduction of poverty through development of rural SMEs thereby creating gender inclusive employment and income opportunities in the rural areas of Sindh and Balochistan provinces in Pakistan through targeted support to both the public and private sector.

Until recently, smaller businesses have mostly participated in global trade by plugging into a large multinational corporation’s supply chain. It is now clear that technology and the Internet are creating a parallel model for emerging global trade. A business of any size can reach consumers around the world through an Internet connection, intermediary services and logistical providers. This new model has powerful economic and social consequences for individuals, families and communities. ITC has also recognized this rise of small business trade

fueled by technology and is contributing tremendously in helping SMEs to adopt to this changing business environment. We being part of FEDs (Friends of Ecommerce for development) have greatly benefited from their work in this regard.

We wish the best to ITC and look forward to many more partnerships.

Thank you.