

**Statement delivered by Sri Lanka at the Informal Meeting of
the Joint Advisory Group (JAG) on the ITC on 26th January 2015.**

Sri Lanka wishes to thank Mrs. Arancha González, the Executive Director of the ITC and her able team sincerely for the excellent cooperation they extend with regard to trade-related capacity building in developing countries. We would also like to convey our deepest gratitude to all the donors, who enable the ITC to continue what it does in terms of capacity building. While Sri Lanka has been a beneficiary of the ITC cooperation for many years, I would like to highlight some of its recent projects, which continue to support our stakeholders, who are engaged in international trade.

The ITC conducted the first of its NTM Survey series on Sri Lanka in 2010, soon after we managed to end nearly three decades of terrorism, which became a severe burden on our nation, including its economy. The survey highlighted a number of NTMs encountered by our business community on both sides of the border. In fact, the survey findings laid an excellent platform or a basis in launching Aid-For-Trade projects.

Based on the survey results, the ITC and the STDF have initiated a joint project, which aims at improving the existing SPS infrastructure in Sri Lanka, particularly for the benefit of the fresh fruits and vegetable sector.

The ITC has also been assisting Sri Lanka Export Development Board, the premier export promotion agency in the country, on several fronts. One of the most recent projects involves drafting a national export strategy for the next five years.

The ITC is currently working with the European Union Delegation in Colombo and the Department of Commerce of Sri Lanka for formulation and implementation of a nation-wide project for trade-related capacity building. This brings together a very wide cross-section of stakeholders, who represent both the private and the state sectors.

All this cooperation has been possible due to the generous contribution extended by the funding or the donor community. My delegation, therefore, wishes to place on record its sincere gratitude to both donors and the ITC for the great cooperation they together have been extending to Sri Lanka.

Thank you very much.