

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY UGANDA DURING THE JOINT ADVISORY GROUP (JAG) MEETING SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE ON 26 JUNE 2015

Thank you, Mm Chair, for giving me this opportunity.

My delegation is pleased to join colleagues in participating in this important meeting. Mm Chair, first my delegation congratulates you on the assumption of the Chairpersonship of the 49th Session of JAG for ITC. You will count on my delegation for support as you perform your functions in the capacity of Chairperson of JAG.

My delegation would like also to commend the outgone Chairperson of the 48th Session, H. E. Ms. Mariam MD Sallah, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Malaysia for the work well done in the previous year. My delegation further commends the Director General, Mr. Roberto Azevedo, of WTO, and the Secretary General, Mr. Mugisha Kituyi, of UNCTAD, for the very constructive and inspiring statements they have respectively made in relation to ITC work.

As we are all aware, the International Trade Centre has been, and continues to play an important role in the aid for trade agenda. We welcome this report. We also welcome the statement of the Executive Director. The report gives us a holistic picture over the past 12 months and covers all areas of importance, including case stories. It is also a response to the 2014 Evaluation of the Organisation. According to the WTO, not all developing countries participate equally in international trade. LDCs have the smallest slice of the world trade, and as a result, the potential for trade in supporting development has not yet been fully realised.

Mr. Chairman,

Because of this background, ITC has creatively designed projects that seek to make a positive contribution on the aforementioned situation. Take for instance the project being implemented with our colleagues, the Asian LDCs, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Nepal. There is recognition, that despite the DFQF market access, utilization has sometimes been a challenge. What this three-year program seeks to do is to ensure that there is full utilisation by diminishing the obstacles which SMEs from these six LDCs face in penetrating the Chinese market. Key steps in the project include demand-side surveys in China and supply-side surveys in the Asian LDCs; the creation of an awareness-raising roundtable on export potential and trade-related constraints vis-à-vis China. All these are meant to help SMEs build familiarity with Chinese import regulations, customs procedures, certification requirements and market entry strategies, and subsequently connect to buyers. This kind of approach to doing business goes beyond mere economic interests to empowerment. It recognizes the importance of prospering thy neighbor. We would recommend this kind of approach to be taken as a best practice by all our partners who are currently providing DFQF.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to highlight some undertakings that ITC has carried out in my country, Uganda. They are actually many, such as: The one on Information Communication Technology, the survey on

Non Tariff Measures, interventions in coffee and Cotton, and the Support to the East African Business Council that led to the conclusion of the Protocol to allow movement of natural persons in the supply of services. There are many others that I cannot mention due to limitations of space and time. I shall only speak about the interventions in Coffee:

We have to realize that, for Uganda coffee is a strategic crop. It used to be popularly known as cash crop. It employs about 3.5m people in Uganda. Therefore to empower these people is as to empower the nation. This is exactly what ITC has done under the Netherlands Trust Fund (NTF) II Uganda Coffee Project. In 2013 more than 5000 farmers benefited from this project. They received training on verification of the 4C Code of Conduct. Through training, under NUCAFE (National Union of Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprises), farmers learned how to efficiently prune coffee plants, use fertilizer, pick coffee beans in such a way that preserves the branches, dry the beans on clean tarpaulins and store them properly before sending them for processing. This has resulted in very high quality coffee beans, which now can fetch more than four times the previous price. At the start of the project NUCAFE had only one buyer, Caffè River in Italy. By the end of the project, it was now selling to six buyers. Presently there are more than 12 coffee companies from around the world buying NUCAFE's coffee. With the help of ITC-trained independent financial counselors, 40 farmers' associations, representing around 8,000 farming households, were trained on how to develop business plans, with the view to accessing loans from banks. Fifteen associations were able to secure credit. The aim of the project was to strengthen NUCAFE's ability to train and support farmers to become self-sustaining entrepreneurs and exporters. It has worked. Today our farmers who used to depend on handouts are in a position to cater for their essential expenses such as paying school fees, affording health care and paying for other socio-economic needs.

To conclude, Chair, I would like to say the following: we would like to extend our appreciation to the Executive Director, Ms. Gonzalez Arancha for her able leadership and stewardship of the team at ITC. Clearly ITC is delivering in its obligations to ensure trade impact on development. We would like to extend our profound appreciation to the partners who have generously provided funding each year to enable ITC deliver on its mandate, without which we probably would not be celebrating the milestones in our respective countries. We urge you to continue doing so.

We appreciate the work that ITC, with the generous support of the Government of Australia has done on services. The high level meeting on services held in February was very successful and we have started receiving notifications. There is one area, which has still yet to be addressed. Many of our domestic services suppliers need to be massively sensitized on this positive outcome. On a few occasions, Geneva manages to deliver positive outcomes but this does not trickle down to the intended beneficiaries. We would propose that any further interventions and or projects in this area should be designed to address this issue in-country. Our people need to get prepared so that as soon as members notify we can take advantage of the benefits that the waiver process has provided.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.
