

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY ZIMBAWE AT THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE JOINT ADVISORY GROUP MEETING: 2 JUNE 2019.

Thank you Chairperson

At the outset let me thank the ITC for their report and previous speakers for their interventions. I acknowledge the great achievements made by the ITC as outlined in their 2018 Annual report and as we heard today, and highly commend them for yet another successful year and for implementing practical solutions to market access and structural related challenges faced by developing countries such as our own. The ITC programs have also promoted inclusive growth through increasing trade opportunities for Youth, Women, and MSMEs.

Zimbabwe has in the past benefited effectively from a number of ITC projects and programs which include, trade portals, cotton to clothing and leather value chains, supply side interventions targeted at MSMEs and the private sector, provision of equipment and skills on handling SPS issues and improving standards, and capacity building, amongst others.

The ITC, through the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has initiated a program to address challenges faced by cross border traders at the Chirundu Border post between Zimbabwe and Zambia. The objective of this program is to enhance the capacity of cross border traders by reducing customs bribery and other forms of corruption as well harassment of traders.

Zimbabwe, as one of the pilot countries in the African region is set to benefit from the UK Trade Partnership Program that is at its inception and will be implemented by the ITC in January 2020. The objective of this program is to ensure traders maximise their benefits from EU/UK Economic Partnership Agreements by improving their competitiveness. The strategy to achieve this is capacity building as well as increasing awareness of traders on how to benefit from EPA trade preferences.

The ITC is also implementing the AIM for Results project in Zimbabwe, which is meant to improve the performance and efficiency of Zimbabwe's trade promotion agency, ZIMTRADE.

We look forward to implementation of much bigger export- oriented value addition projects that are still at planning stage.

I would be remiss if I fail to acknowledge the continued technical assistance and funding that we have had from donor partners, in collaboration with the ITC. We greatly appreciate this support and the interventions by the ITC which have been very effective in the process of structural transformation and have built our trade- related capacity and trade competitiveness.

Lastly chair, we express our deep appreciation to the donor partners for their pledge to increase their support for ITC activities.

We associate ourselves with the statements made by the Secretary General for COMESA, Her Excellency Ms Chileshe Mpundu K apwepwe and by the Ambassador for Benin on behalf of the Africa Group.

I THANK YOU.