

**Statement by the Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to
the WTO and other international economic organizations at the
joint advisory group meeting**

Geneva, 20 July 2023

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, I am delighted to highlight the fruitful partnership that Kazakhstan has maintained with the International Trade Centre (ITC) over the years, marked by a series of impactful projects and initiatives.

Since 2020, ITC has been supporting Kazakhstan through the EU-funded regional project, Ready4Trade Central Asia. Within this framework, ITC's assistance has been instrumental in facilitating intra-regional and international trade, propelling Kazakhstan's status as a vital transit hub between East and West, and bolstering regional trade cooperation in Central Asia.

Undoubtedly, the work carried out by ITC in Kazakhstan under this project holds great importance. It has not only facilitated more efficient and inclusive trade within the region and beyond but has also contributed significantly to the development of Kazakhstan's potential as a strategic trading partner.

I would like to share some of the achievements and developments resulting from this collaboration:

- Together with ITC, we successfully launched the Kazakhstan Trade Portal, which is administered by QazTrade. This portal provides easy access to information on cross-border trade procedures for over 40 product groups, and since its launch, it has been visited by over 4,000 users. Furthermore, the information from the Kazakhstan Trade Portal is channelled to the Central Asia Gateway – a new regional trade information portal developed by Ready4Trade, which combines data from five national trade facilitation portals in Central Asia.
- ITC supports us in implementing initiatives fostering digitalization and paperless trade. We are currently working towards

modernization of our existing electronic queue management system and the digitalization of certificates of origin processes.

- In collaboration with UNCTAD, we have developed and presented to the Ministry of Trade and Integration recommendations for the reform and update of Kazakhstan's e-commerce-related legislation. The project continues to extend support in implementing these recommendations.
- As to the private sector, the project assisted SMEs in their e-commerce activities, resulting in over 40 Kazakh SMEs collectively reporting online sales of approximately USD 500,000 in 2022 and these numbers are growing. These achievements are particularly remarkable for micro-producers who joined the project with limited digital skills and online sales experience.
- Furthermore, SMEs have been supported to comply with cross-border trade requirements. This has been done through individual coaching as well as on-line and off-line group trainings. The online trainings are available on the Virtual Learning Space (VLS) platform – QazTrade Academy – launched in partnership with QazTrade.

To conclude, I would like to extend my appreciation to ITC for co-organizing two successful international events hosted in Kazakhstan. One of these events was the Business Forum held during the 2nd EU-Central Asia Economic Forum in Almaty. It was a great honour to have Pamela Coke-Hamilton join us – her invaluable expertise and insights contributed immense value to the event. Additionally, jointly with ITC and the WTO, we organized two highly successful sessions at the Astana International Forum in June. These sessions examined digitalization's trade impact in the region and explored opportunities and challenges related to WTO accession and membership.

These achievements represent just a fraction of the tangible outcomes generated by ITC and its project in Kazakhstan. We look forward to our continued fruitful collaboration with ITC and to accomplishing many more milestones in the years to come.

Thank you for your attention.