

Statement by India at 53rd Session of the Joint Advisory Group of the International Trade Centre (ITC) delivered by Ambassador Puneet Agrawal, Deputy Permanent Representative on 02nd July 2019 at the World Trade Organisation, Geneva

Thank You Madam Chair, H.E. The Permanent Representative of Finland,

Director General of the World Trade Organisation

Secretary General of UNCTAD

Executive Director of the International Trade Centre,

H.E. Mr. U Aung Htoo, Deputy Minister of the Republic of Myanmar,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, India would like extend its gratitude to the International Trade Centre for organising the 53rd Session of the Joint Advisory Group of the International Trade Centre. We also thank the ITC Secretariat for the preparation of the documents for the meeting, particularly the detailed Annual Report of the Centre for the year 2018.

Madam Chair,

2. India sincerely appreciates the constructive role played by ITC in promoting trade as a means of economic development of the developing countries particularly the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Land Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and economies in transition.

3. ITC's role in developing South-South linkages, supporting regional economic integration, strengthening trade and investment support institutions, connecting to international value chains amongst others have been praiseworthy and significant.

4. The Export Potential Map launched by ITC enables governments and organizations seeking to support private-sector export growth to focus financial and human resources on the sectors and markets with the greatest potential for success. India was one of the leading countries to make use this service in 2018.

5. The cooperation between India and ITC has been significant in recent years. India is both a donor and a partner for ITC. The India - ITC partnership is exemplified by Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (SITA) a project implemented by ITC to improve competitiveness of select value chains in five Eastern African countries namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, all priority partner countries for India – through promoting Trade and Investment partnerships between Institutions’ and Businesses from India. We are pleased to note that in 2018, ITC through its Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (SITA) initiative continued to increase business linkages between India and Eastern Africa.

6. ITC has partnered with the Centre for WTO Studies (CWS) at the New Delhi-based Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) to train trade of officials from Afghanistan, principally from the country’s Ministry of Industry and Commerce, but also from business and academia, on WTO issues and on Indian best practices for public-private cooperation on trade policy.

Madam Chair,

7. Development partnership occupies a paramount place in India’s foreign policy. India's external development assistance programmes in developing countries have increased significantly in their scope and coverage in the past few years. The assistance is based on two main pillars; first, development cooperation is rooted in the idea of partnership that is working for mutual benefit and mutual prosperity. Second pillar of India’s development cooperation is that our partners determine and decide the priorities and contours of their development projects. This fundamentally differentiates our “partnership model” from the traditional “donor-recipient model”.

Madam Chair,

8. India has been one of the nine core funders of ITC in 2018. Our contribution of 50,000 USD to the ITC Trust Fund, although modest, is under window 1 which provides flexibility to ITC on the utilisation of the amount.

9. We look forward to leveraging ITC’s expertise towards further dissemination of India’s Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme (DFTP) for Least Developed Countries.

10. India is keen to working constructively and having a deeper level of engagement with the International Trade Centre.

Thank you, Madam Chair.