



**Statement By Ambassador Caroline Bwanali – Mussa  
of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Malawi  
to the UN Office and other International  
Organizations in Geneva At The 57<sup>th</sup> Joint Advisory  
Group of the ITC**

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**Room S1, World Trade Organization, Geneva**

Thank you, Madam Chair, for giving Malawi the floor.

At the outset, I would like to join colleagues in congratulating you for your accession to the Chairship of the 57th session of the Joint Advisory Group. At the same time, I would like to thank the outgoing Chair for the excellent work done under her leadership. I assure you of my delegation's full support.

I would also like to commend the International Trade Centre (ITC) for the remarkable results achieved in 2022 under the leadership of Ms. Pamela Coke Hamilton. My delegation extends sincere gratitude to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for their continuous and invaluable support rendered to the ITC.

Madam Chair,

It is great that we have gathered today to reflect on the activities and achievements of ITC in 2022. ITC had done commendable work in building resilience and strengthen the trade competitiveness of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in its first year of implementation of its Strategic Plan for 2022–2025.

As Malawi, we acknowledge the longstanding partnership and support we have received from the ITC over the years. ITCs dedication to promoting trade and economic development has greatly benefitted our nation.

The ITC's initiatives have been instrumental in various areas crucial to our economic growth and development. Specifically, we have witnessed ITCs support in trade data and information, cross-border trade facilitation for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and the inclusion of women in regional integration efforts.

One of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063 is the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). We commend the ITC for its vital role in supporting its implementation. The Africa Trade Observatory, created by

the ITC, has been instrumental in providing the necessary data and information to the African Union and Member States. Such evidence-based trade policies are essential for the success of the AfCFTA.

The She Trade initiative has been an empowering force for women entrepreneurs in Malawi, enabling them to seize the trade opportunities created by the AfCFTA. In 2022, the Malawi chapter of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Federation of Women in Business partnered with the She Trade initiative to address gaps in market access information on regional markets, market requirements and standards, and regional supply chains. The initiative addressed the challenges women face in participating in regional integration and engaging in e-commerce, while fostering gender inclusivity in trade.

The COMESA Cross Border Trade Initiative (CBTI) program, implemented by ITC, has facilitated cross-border trade for numerous small and medium-sized enterprises in Malawi. With over 1.6 million MSMEs in our country, this program holds tremendous potential for economic growth and prosperity.

As we navigate through post-pandemic recovery, geopolitical tensions, and the adverse effects of climate change, we recognize the importance of ITC's work in supporting developing and least developed countries. We firmly believe that ITC plays a pivotal role in advancing inclusive economic growth and sustainable development. Our commitment to this cause remains steadfast, and we eagerly anticipate more programs from the ITC that foster women and youth empowerment while enhancing the competitiveness of our MSMEs and connecting them to global value chains.

In conclusion, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the community of development partners who have contributed to ITC's valuable mandate. As we look to the future, I urge for increased and new support towards the work of the ITC. Together, we can achieve remarkable strides in trade and development that benefit all, especially those in need.

Thank you for your kind attention.