

Statement by Nepal at the 56th joint advisory group meeting of the ITC

13 September 2022

- Thank you, Madam Chair, for convening this meeting and giving me the floor.
- Let me begin by congratulating you, Chair, for this new responsibility and wish you a successful tenure. Similarly, I wish to thank the outgoing Chair, Ambassador of the Netherland for his contribution in the past.
- The delegation of Nepal commends Ms Pamela Coke-Hamilton and her entire team for the achievements made in such a difficult situation of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- My delegation takes a good note of ITC's continuous efforts and contribution in enhancing trade capacity of developing and least developed countries including Nepal, through various means.
- ITC has become an excellent institution to partner with mainly in building our trade capacity and enhancing export competitiveness.
- For instance, wide range of activities the institution is operating as highlighted by Executive Director Ms Hamilton and as mentioned in the annual report give clear picture of its delivery and a positive message of hope and good prospects with inspiration to us even in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ITC's continued engagement with Nepal's trade sector development and its valuable contribution have become highly popular among the beneficiaries in the country.
- Such engagement has become instrumental not only to deliver the targeted result but also for transferring skills and knowledge through partnership.
- The paradigm shift in digital economy and e-commerce during the COVID-19 pandemic has made going digital a compulsion to benefit and survive in the changing context of global trading system. However, the LDCs and LLDCs have not been able to participate in and benefit from the digital economy and e-commerce due to huge digital divide.

- In this context, additional support and interventions are expected from all our development partners to bridge such huge digital gap especially in digital infrastructure, and human and institutional capacity building.
- Furthermore, technology transfer, market intelligence and capacity development for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, supporting to implement National Trade Integration Strategies would be some potential areas of cooperation between ITC and Nepal in future.
- Nepal expects ITC to continue such supports in the context of Nepal's graduation from its LDC status.
- My delegation extends sincere appreciation to all donors supporting ITC's initiatives and interventions without which all these achievements would not be possible.
- Finally, deeper country engagement and partnership especially engaging domestic institutions, in particular government agencies responsible, would make any intervention more result focused.
- It would also help build trust between people and government of the beneficiary countries, enhance ownership, and ensure sustainability of all the interventions made.
- Nepal looks forward to further enhanced collaboration and partnership between the Government of Nepal and ITC in the days ahead.
- I thank you Chair.