



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR LYLE DAVIDSON, COUNSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 134: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET 2016-2017: REVISED ESTIMATES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 21 October 2015)**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 134: Proposed Program Budget 2016-2017: Revised Estimates for the International Trade Centre. The Group would like to thank Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General: Controller, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General, as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing its related report.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China would like to reaffirm the importance it attaches to the work carried out by the International Trade Centre for the benefit of developing countries. In the context of appropriate policies and rules, international trade can be an important tool for economic growth and development, social inclusion and environmental preservation.

The International Trade Centre plays a crucial role in assisting developing countries to foster the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises, strengthen productive capacity building and gain enhanced trade and market intelligence information, in order to enable them to fully harness the benefits of trade. The Group particularly appreciates the focus placed by the ITC on less developed countries, landlocked developing countries, Small Island Developing States, sub-Saharan Africa, and countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. In this context, the Group is particularly encouraged by the setting up of an ITC office in Addis Ababa and hopes that this will lead to increased interaction with stakeholders on the ground.

With regard to the proposed budget for the 2016-2017, the Group of 77 and China is pleased to note that recent evaluations of the International Trade Centre have concluded that the entity "is in good health and delivers valuable services on the ground". In this regard, the Group has taken note of the proposed simplified budget procedure by the ITC and will be seeking further information on the issue in our informal deliberations.

The Group also welcomes the fact that, due to its joint financing arrangement, the ITC has been left out of the premature benefit realization of Umoja and will be able to objectively assess the benefits of its implementation from next November. We also commend the ITC for having adopted a strategic plan for 2015-2017 that takes into account the Sustainable Development Goals and seeks to align itself with the Quadriennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

During informal consultations on this item, the Group of 77 and China will also seek to clarify issues pertaining to the low rate of compliance with the requirement for advance booking and purchase of tickets, in order to promote a more efficient and effective use of the Centre's resources.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China remains committed to strengthening the development pillar of this organization and would like to assure of its constructive participation in the upcoming deliberations on this agenda item.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.