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## ITC LAUNCHES ONLINE COTTON EXPORTER'S GUIDE

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The International Trade Centre (ITC) today launched a dynamic, interactive trilingual version of its Cotton Exporter's Guide as part of its drive to increase the exchange of information in the sector and improve the skills and abilities of developing countries in cotton trading and marketing.

"Our aim is to reach out to cotton stakeholders around the world and stimulate cotton trade, especially in the poorest African countries," said Ms. Patricia R. Francis, ITC's Executive Director.

The new online Cotton Exporter's Guide features an open source content management platform that will enable users to update information on recent trends in cotton trade, thus contributing to the future expansion of the guide. Other features include a forum where registered users can take part in discussions and share information and views with fellow-operators in the sector.

"The completion of the on-line version of the Cotton Exporter's Guide is an important step in further enhancing our capacity-building activities in cotton trading and marketing," said Matthias Knappe, ITC's Programme Manager for Cotton, Textiles and Clothing.

Other key elements of ITC's technical assistance in cotton include the development of national and regional sector strategies, encouraging south-south cooperation along the entire cotton-to-clothing value chain, and promotion of African cotton in world markets.

The development of the Cotton Exporter's Guide, including its on-line version, was financed by the Government of Denmark. It is available in English, French and Spanish at these web addresses: <http://www.cottonguide.org/>; <http://www.guidedecoton.org/>; <http://www.guiadealgodon.org/>

The guide provides a comprehensive view of all aspects of the cotton value chain from a market perspective, including an overview of the world cotton market (production, consumption and trade), analysis of factors influencing supply and demand, market trends, and major issues affecting the sector, including trade policy and World Trade Organization (WTO) issues.

ITC is the joint agency of the WTO and the United Nations, with a mandate to help businesses in developing countries become more competitive in global markets in order to speed economic progress and meet the UN's development goals.

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