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Draft Intervention for CTS Webinar on 'LDC Services Export Performance and Facilitating Implementation of Preferences notified under the LDC Services Waiver' to

commercially meaningful and that much more predictable and certain. Many of these professions were committed by India for the first time in any trade agreement.

Further, India also offered very liberal, GATS plus market access openings in several service sectors with full commitments in modes 1 and 2 for most sectors and with 100% foreign investment under Mode 3. In computer and related services, India offered preferences at 2-digit level (CPC 84) considering the rapid technological advancement in this field.

Implementation and utilisation of preferences granted by India:

- d. Regarding the waiver of visa fees for LDC applicants, as per the information received from our Missions, from December 2015 to date, a total of 1,50,017 LDC applicants have availed the waiver of visa fees. As mentioned earlier, we were the only country which offered such a waiver, a very significant and commercially meaningful concession.
- e. As regards our offer on technical assistance and capacity building, this preference has been effectively utilised by the LDCs. Capacity building is one of the major activities under India's Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. From 2015-16 to 2019-20, India has offered 23,833 slots to LDCs under ITEC. ITEC slots offered to LDCs have consistently been more than 25% of the total ITEC slots, in accordance with our commitment. From 2018 onwards, new modalities such as e-ITEC have also been included in the bouquet of ITEC offerings. e-ITEC is a modality of ITEC programme wherein training is imparted in partner countries by Indian Institutes online in real time. In 2020-21, we had 1,417 participants from LDCs availing the e-ITEC facility.
- f. India has also taken a number of other novel initiatives in this regard.
 - o India launched the e-VidyaBharti (Tele-education) and the e-ArogyaBharti (Tele-medicine) Projects (e-VBAB) on 7th October, 2019. The tele-education portal would provide access for African students to more than 500 courses in various disciplines including engineering and technology, education, mathematics and sciences, humanities and arts and teacher training. The portal would also offer 15000 scholarships to African students to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate courses from premier public and private Universities of India.
 - o A tele-medicine centre and a tele-education centre have been set up in Uganda under the Pan-African E-Network Project. A tele-medicine centre was set up in

and service suppliers where there is a perceived requirement for training and capacity building.

Concluding remarks:

We have offered concessions to LDCs in the true letter and spirit of the development