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**Statement by the Government of Japan
to the 115th Session of the
International Coffee Council on
28 September 2015**

Mr Chairman,
Mr Executive Director,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, let us start by extending our sincere appreciation to you all for giving us an opportunity to make a statement today for the first time after Japan's return as a Member of the ICO. We also appreciate the warm welcome from some Members. Our appreciation also goes to the Italian Government for its strong demonstration of hospitality and cooperation for these important meetings of the Organization. We would also like to congratulate the Russian Federation for its accession to the ICO.

Mr Executive Director,

It is not too much to say that your dedicated approach has encouraged Japan to return to this Organization. You visited Japan around this time last year at the invitation of the All Japan Coffee Association (AJCA). At that time, you met Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and other key government officials. And you earnestly expressed your expectation for Japan's return to the ICO. One year has passed since then, and today, we are pleased to say that Japan comes back to the ICO at the timing around the memorable day of the International Coffee Day (Oct. 1).

As you may know, Japan is the 4th largest importer and consumer of coffee in the world. Japan began to import coffee more than 100 years ago. Around the 1980's, the consumption of coffee exceeded the consumption of green tea, which is Japan's traditional beverage. Thanks to strenuous efforts of the Japanese private sector, Japan's import of coffee exceeded 450,000 tons of green beans equivalent in 2014. That means every Japanese drinks more than one cup of coffee a day. You will find a coffee shop at every street corner in Japan. All of these facts tell that coffee has become a familiar drink in our daily living.

On the other hand, the price of coffee has fluctuated since 2010 because of decreasing and fluctuating production against increasing demand. We understand that the key mission of the ICO is to work towards improvement of coffee productivity, stabilization of the price and distribution, and enhancement of skills and livelihoods of producers. This corresponds to Japan's interest.

The Government of Japan places great importance on the partnership with the private sector for the development and stabilization of the international coffee market. We would like to further strengthen a variety of activities through the ICO and our cooperation with the public and private sectors of the related countries, while further enhancing the partnership with the All Japan Coffee Association (AJCA) which represents the Japanese private sector.

It is our sincere hope that the ICO continues to play a key role in various areas of cooperation in the international community such as production and distribution of coffee as well as support to coffee producers, leading to better quality and stable supply of coffee around the world. Let us close our remarks by expressing Japan's determination to advance our cooperation with the ICO to achieve these goals.

Thank you for your attention.