



**INTERNATIONAL
COFFEE
ORGANIZATION**

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**Communication from the
Government of Switzerland**

1. The Executive Director attaches a communication from the Government of Switzerland, containing an expression of interest in hosting the headquarters of the International Coffee Organization.



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London, 28 June 2024

Communication of the Swiss Confederation: candidature as host country of the ICO

Dear Executive Director,

Switzerland is a longstanding member of the International Coffee Organization (ICO). As an active importing member, Switzerland has been committed to the mission of the ICO since its accession in 1964. Ever since, Switzerland has been actively contributing to the further development of the organization with a focus on governance, sustainability and a stronger engagement with the private sector. The last prominent examples of Swiss leadership in the ICO were the working group lead with regard to negotiations on the new 2022 International Coffee Agreement as well as the promotion of closer ties with the private sector through the support of the Coffee Public Private Task Force.

Switzerland is an important coffee hub where an estimated 55% of the worldwide green coffee trade is taking place via Swiss based trading companies. Many roasters and coffee processing companies have their headquarters and/or producing facilities in Switzerland. Switzerland has also a long track record when it comes to sustainability in coffee: we have been working for a long time on very specific development projects benefiting coffee smallholders in partner countries. Furthermore, Switzerland very recently underlined its commitment to a sustainable coffee sector by launching the Swiss Sustainable Coffee Platform, a multistakeholder initiative bringing together important players from the Swiss coffee industry, the Swiss government, civil society and academia.

As a neutral country with a longstanding humanitarian tradition, Switzerland has been home to many international organizations for over a century. With more than 180 permanent missions in Geneva, Switzerland offers an inclusive platform for political dialogue ensuring the participation of smaller countries with lesser resources. In terms of potential synergies with the coffee sector, Switzerland currently provides a rich trade, environment and sustainability cluster including organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and numerous UN organizations and NGOs. Last but not least, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Liaison Office in Geneva is closely cooperating with partners on FAO's corporate goal and the wider Sustainable Development Agenda.

Taking into account this established ecosystem in Switzerland and following discussions on the future seat of the ICO held at the 136th and 137th International Coffee Councils, I am honoured and delighted that, after internal consultations, Switzerland is hereby announcing its candidacy as the ICO's future host country. My capital is working on putting together a concrete proposal including a partial contribution to the cost of renting headquarters in Geneva as well as one-off financial support for office infrastructure per ICO staff member.

Switzerland will approach the ICO in due course with more details on its offer. In the meantime, I would welcome any questions you or any member country may have.

Please accept, Executive Director, the assurances of my highest consideration.

P.P. 

Markus Leitner

Ambassador of Switzerland to the United Kingdom