

WP Council 344/24 Rev. 1

30 August 2024 Original: English



International Coffee Council 138th Session 12 September 2024 London, United Kingdom Status of non-member countries that have signed the ICA 2022

Background

- 1. Following the approval of the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) 2022 at the 133rd Special Session of the Council and its opening for signature on 6 October 2022, several countries that are currently not Members of the ICA 2007 have expressed their interest in signing and/or already signed the ICA 2022.¹
- 2. For those non-member countries that: (i) have completed at least the first step signature of the procedures to join the 2022 Agreement;² and (ii) are willing to start paying voluntary contributions to the ICO before the entry into force of the ICA 2022, the Secretariat would like to submit a proposal to grant them transitional Observer status and enable their active participation in certain activities and meetings of the Organization and its bodies.
- 3. Please note that an additional document, the legal opinion of Volterra Fietta, a public international law firm, has been attached (**Annex I**).

Action

The Council is requested to consider the draft decision.

¹ Non-member countries invited to the 133^{rd} Special Session of the Council have the right to join the ICA 2022 prior to its entry into force.

² Further information on the procedures to join the ICA 2022 are contained in document ED 2409/22 and subsequent revisions.



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International Coffee Council 138th Session 12 September 2024 London, United Kingdom Status of non-member countries that have signed the ICA 2022

Decision of the Council

Status of non-member countries that have signed the ICA 2022

WHEREAS:

The International Coffee Council invited non-member countries to attend its 133rd Special Session during which the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) 2022 was approved, making them eligible to sign said Agreement;

The International Coffee Agreement 2022 was opened for signature on 6 October 2022 by means of ICC Resolution 478;

Some countries that have never been Members of the ICA 2007 or any other International Coffee Agreement have been: (i) completing the procedures to join the 2022 Agreement; and (ii) would be willing to start contributing to ICO activities and its budget before the entry into force thereof;

Former ICO Members with no outstanding contributions may wish to start the procedures to re-join the Organization under the ICA 2022.

THE INTERNATIONAL COFFEE COUNCIL

Decides that:

- 1. The abovementioned non-member countries shall be granted Observer status³ upon the signature of the ICA 2022 and payment of voluntary contributions to the ICO Coffee Sustainability Projects Trust Fund⁴ in a given coffee year.⁵
- 2. Eligible countries shall be extended the following benefits:
 - (a) Participation as an Observer in meetings of the Council, as well as meetings of ICO bodies and committees,⁶ through the submission of credentials whenever applicable;
 - (b) Access to the World Coffee Statistics Database, as well as all statistical reports and publications produced by the Secretariat;
 - (c) Access to technical assistance from the ICO Statistics Department;
 - (d) Participation in open meetings of the Coffee Public-Private Task Force (CPPTF) and all meetings of its Technical Workstreams, as well as in the CEOs and Global Leaders Forum;⁷
 - (e) Eligibility to become a Member of the CPPTF if appointed and approved by the Council;⁷
 - (f) Eligibility to become a beneficiary of ICO/CPPTF projects and activities if approved by the Council.⁷
- 3. Countries shall also be responsible for meeting the following obligation:
 - (a) Submission of data regarding production, consumption, stocks and trade of coffee as per the terms applicable to ICO Members.⁸
- 4. Non-member countries' voluntary contributions shall be calculated based on the average volume of their respective exports or imports to all destinations in the preceding four calendar years.⁹
- 5. Non-member countries' transitional Observer status shall be reviewed every coffee year.
- 6. Ceasing to pay such voluntary contributions shall result in the suspension of a country's transitional Observer status but will not constitute debts owed to the Organization.

³ As per paragraph 3 of Article 11 of the ICA 2007 and document <u>ICC-129-7</u>, containing the Terms of Reference of the CPPTF.

⁴ As per paragraph 5 of Rule 8 of the Financial Rules and Regulations (ICC-102-8) and document FA-179/18 (please contact the Secretariat for the relevant password).

^{5 &#}x27;Other Funds' currently active (Financial Rules and Regulations, Rule 8, Paragraphs 5 and 6) include the ICO Coffee Sustainability Projects Trust Fund.

⁶ As per Rule 5 of the Rules of the Organization (ICC-102-7) and documents ICC-125-7 and ICC-125-14.

⁷ Please refer to document <u>ICC-129-7</u> for the Terms of Reference of the CPPTF.

⁸ As per Articles 3 and 32 of the ICA 2007 and documents ICC-102-10 and ICC-102-9 Rev. 5.

⁹ As per paragraph 3 of Article 12 of the ICA 2007.



The public international law firm

Memorandum

To:	Ms Tomoko Hayashi, International Coffee Organization ("ICO")
From:	Gunjan Sharma
Re:	Question 1: Is each paragraph of the draft WP-Council resolution 344/24 concerning the status of non-member countries compliant with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents dealing with the participation of member and non-member States in the activities of the Organization?
Date:	30 August 2024

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This memorandum answers Question 1 posed by ICO to Volterra Fietta. Namely:

Is each paragraph of the draft WP-Council resolution 344/24 concerning the status of non-member countries [("**Draft Resolution**", attached as Annex A)] compliant with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents dealing with the participation of member and non-member States in the activities of the Organization?

- 2. As set forth in full in **Section II** below, the answer is: Yes, each of the six operative paragraphs of the Draft Resolution is compliant with the ICA 2007 and the existing ICO documents.
- 3. The Draft Resolution is proposed to be adopted by the International Coffee Council ("ICC"). It provides for the participation of certain non-member States in the ICO's activities as observer States until the International Coffee Agreement 2022 (the "ICA 2022") comes into force and replaces the ICA 2007. Each of the six operative paragraphs of the Draft Resolution is compliant with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents, as follows:
 - a. Paragraph 1 (Granting observer status): the ICC can, in compliance with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents, create and grant transitional observer status conditional on signing the ICA 2022 and "voluntary contributions" to the ICO Coffee Sustainability Projects Trust Fund. Such a power is both (a) an inherent power provided for by the ICC's role as the governing body of the ICO; and (b) logically implied by the ICC's express power to permit observers to attend meetings on a meeting-by-meeting basis;
 - b. Paragraph 2 (Benefits of observers): similarly, the ICC can, in compliance with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents, provide transitional observers access to the meetings of ICO committees and bodies as part of its express

Draft Resolution, paragraph 1. The term "voluntary contributions" is used in international law to distinguish between (i) contributions which States are legally obliged to pay; and (ii) other types of

Draft Resolution, paragraph 1. The term "voluntary contributions" is used in international law to distinguish between (i) contributions which States are legally obliged to pay; and (ii) other types of contributions (e.g., contributions volunteered for specific benefits, *ad hoc* contributions, etc.) (*see* Henry G. Schermers & Niels M. Blokker, *International Institutional Law* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 5th ed, 2011), §966). The contributions discussed in the Draft Resolution are voluntary because non-member countries can choose whether to pay the contribution and receive the benefit of transitional observer status.

- authority to invite non-member countries to such meetings, as well as provide technical assistance and share data with transitional observers;
- c. Paragraph 3 (Obligations of observers): the ICC can, in compliance with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents, require as a condition of transitional observer status an obligation to share data similar to that imposed on the Members;
- d. Paragraph 4 (Voluntary contributions by observers): the ICC can, in compliance with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents, require that transitional observers pay a "voluntary contributions" based on previous export/import volumes;
- e. Paragraph 5 (Yearly review observer status): the ICC can, in compliance with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents, stipulate that the transitional observer status is reviewed each coffee year; and
- f. Paragraph 6 (Non-payment and suspension observer status): the ICC can, in compliance with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO documents, suspend the transitional observer status if that observer does not pay its "voluntary contributions".³

II. THE DRAFT RESOLUTION IS COMPLIANT WITH THE ICA 2007 AND EXISTING ICO DOCUMENTS

This Section confirms that each of the six operative paragraphs of the Draft
Resolution (as defined above) are compliant with the ICA 2007 and existing ICO
documents.

A. Paragraph 1: Observer status upon signing ICA 2022 and payment of voluntary contributions

5. Paragraph 1 of the Draft Resolution grants transitional observer status to certain States that are currently not members of ICO, upon the fulfilment of the following two

² Draft Resolution, paragraph 4.

Draft Resolution, paragraphs 1 and 4.

conditions: (i) signature of the ICA 2022; and (ii) "voluntary contributions" to the ICO Coffee Sustainability Projects Trust Fund (the "CSP-TF") in a given coffee year. The Draft Resolution, in footnotes, provides that such observer status shall be "as per" Article 11(3) of the ICA 2007 and the Terms of Reference of the Coffee Public-Private Task Force (the "CPPTF").

- 6. Both of those documents provide that observers (which can include but is not limited to invited non-member countries) can attend meetings of, respectively the ICC and the CPPTF, by invitation only as decided on a meeting-to-meeting basis. The CPPTF Terms of Reference also provide that an observer shall have no voting rights.
- 7. The Draft Resolution provides that non-member countries can become continuous observers to the ICO and not merely observe on a meeting-to-meeting basis. This is not strictly expressly provided for in the ICA 2007 nor in the CPPTF Terms of Reference. That does not mean that the first paragraph is not compliant if the ICO's documents, however. Instead, the ICC is "the highest authority" of the ICO. It is expressly permitted "to perform the functions necessary to carry out the provisions of [the ICA 2007]". This is a reference to the concept of "inherent powers" or "implied powers", under which the governing bodies of international organisations have the power to perform functions that, albeit not expressly provided for, support

Draft Resolution, paragraph 1.

See Financial Rules and Financial Regulations of the International Coffee Organization, Approved by the ICC on 28 March 2011, ICC-102-8 ("ICO Financial Rules and Regulations"), Rule 8(5) ("The Executive Director may request the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the establishment of trust funds and special accounts. The Committee will review the request and send it to the Council with its recommendation regarding a decision").

⁶ I.e. from 1 October to 30 September (see ICA 2007, Article 2(3)).

See ICA 2007, Article 11(3) ("[t]he Council may invite any non-member country . . . to attend any of its sessions as an observer. . .").

See Terms of Reference, Establishment of a Public-Private Task Force and related Technical Workstreams for the implementation of Resolution 465 and the London Declaration, Amended and approved version 16 April 2021, ICC-129-7 ("CPPTF Terms of Reference"). These terms of reference provided that observers can attend the CPPTF's meetings upon invitation, but do not have voting rights (see CPPTF Terms of Reference, page 5). The CPPTF Terms of Reference also provide that "ICO Members and Secretariat, as well as CPPTF members, have the authority to invite likeminded and interested external organisations/individuals as Observers to extend the reach & coverage of the Task Force" (CPPTF Terms of Reference, page 6. See also CPPTF Terms of Reference, page 9).

⁹ See ICA 2007, Article 6(3).

See ICA 2007, Article 9 ("All powers specifically conferred by this Agreement shall be vested in the Council, which shall perform the functions necessary to carry out the provisions of this Agreement").

the international organisation's purpose and functions.¹¹ The ICC has the requisite authority, then, to pass paragraph 1 and create transitional observer status as that is reasonably in line with the objective of the ICO as set out in Article 1 of the ICA 2007, "promoting international cooperation on coffee matters".¹²

- 8. Furthermore, as noted above, the ICA 2007, the Rules of the International Coffee Organization¹³ and the terms of reference for the CPPTF do include provisions permitting incidental, meeting-by-meeting attendance by observers to the Council and CPPTF, respectively.¹⁴ The authority to permit observers at one meeting encompasses, logically and legally, the authority to permit transitional observers at several meetings, with conditions.
- 9. Moreover, requiring "voluntary contributions" ¹⁵ to the CSP-TF from transitional observers is compatible with the ICA 2007 and the existing ICO documents. The CSP-TF is administered in accordance with the ICO Financial Rules and Regulations. ¹⁶ Contributions to this fund include those made "on a voluntary basis" and the Executive Director is expected to invite "Member countries, international organizations and the wider donor community . . . to make contributions". ¹⁷ These rules and regulations therefore do not prevent the ICO from requiring voluntary contributions to this fund in exchange for transitional observer status.

See Henry G. Schermers & Niels M. Blokker, *International Institutional Law* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 5th ed, 2011), §232.

ICA 2007, Article 1(1). Preamble, paragraph 6 ("Considering that collaboration between Members, international organizations, the private sector and all other stakeholders can contribute to the development of the coffee sector").

See Rules of the International Coffee Organization, 27 April 2019, ICC-102-7 (the "ICO Rules").

See Article 11(3) of the ICA 2007 and Rule 5 of the ICO Rules.

Draft Resolution, paragraph 1.

See Establishment of a Coffee Sustainability Projects Trust Fund (CSP-TF), 10 April 2018, FA-179/18, paragraphs 2 and 8; Establishment of the Coffee Sustainability Projects Trust Fund (CS-TF), ICO, slide 10, available at: https://icocoffee.org/documents/cy2017-18/Presentations/fac-trust-fund-e.pdf, last accessed 27 August 2024. See also ICO Financial Rules and Regulations, Rules 8(5)-(6). See further ICO Financial Rules and Regulations, Rule 9(2).

Establishment of a Coffee Sustainability Projects Trust Fund (CSP-TF), 10 April 2018, FA-179/18, paragraphs 9 and 11.

B. Paragraph 2: Observers' benefits

- 10. Paragraph 2 of the Draft Resolution grants the following benefits to transitional observers:
 - a. participation in meetings of the ICC, ICO bodies and committees;
 - access to the World Coffee Statistics Database, statistical reports and publications produced by the Secretariat;
 - c. access to technical assistance from the ICO Statistics Department (which Volterra Fietta understands will be corrected to "Statistics Section"); 18
 - d. participation in open meetings of the CPPTF, all meetings of its Technical Workstreams and in the CEO and Global Leaders Forum;
 - e. eligibility to become a Member of the CPPTF; and
 - f. eligibility to become a beneficiary of ICO/CPPTF projects and activities if approved by the ICC.
- 11. This paragraph is compatible with the ICA 2007 and other existing ICO documents.
- 12. The ICO's rules give the ICC (or its Members, which can act through the ICC) power to invite observers to meetings of the ICC, ICO bodies and committees (including the CPPTF). The ICC has the power to "establish and dissolve Committees and subsidiary bodies, as appropriate . . ." including to "establish such rules and regulations . . . as are necessary to carry out the provisions of [the ICA 2007]". With regards to the ICC's own meetings, the ICC has the power to "invite any non-member country" to "attend any of [the ICC's] sessions as an observer". Non-member countries may also attend other meetings of the ICO, such as the meetings of the CPPTF (as an observer upon invitation from, for example, ICO members, Task

The use of the name "Statistics Section" is not material to Volterra Fietta's legal analysis.

See ICA 2007, Article 9(2) (except that it cannot dissolve the ICC, the Finance and Administration Committee, the Promotion and Market Development Committee, the Projects Committee, the Private Sector Consultative Board, the World Coffee Conference and the Consultative Forum on Coffee Sector Finance).

²⁰ See ICA 2007, Article 9(3).

²¹ See ICA 2007, Article 11(3).

Force members or the ICO Secretariat),²² Technical Workstreams of the CPPTF (on invitation by any Task Force member, TWS Facilitator or the ICO Secretariat),²³ the World Coffee Conference²⁴ and the Consultative Forum on Coffee Sector Finance.²⁵

- 13. These powers further are not limited in the applicable rules of procedure of these bodies/committees. ²⁶ For example, the CPPTF Terms of Reference do not proscribe who may or may not attend the CEO and Global Leaders Forum.
- 14. Further, the ICA's rules do not prohibit access to the Secretariat's statistical information and technical assistance from the ICO Statistics Department for the Observers. The ICA 2007 recognises that the ICO will "act as a centre for the collection, exchange and publication". The ICA 2007 states that "no information shall be published which might serve to identify the operations of persons or companies producing, processing or marketing coffee". This demonstrates that, as long as certain privacy concerns are satisfied, statistical information can otherwise be made available publicly or otherwise disseminated to non-member countries. Furthermore, although the provisions concerning technical assistance are drafted to apply to Members of the ICO, there is nothing that prohibits the ICO from providing technical assistance also to non-member countries.
- 15. The ICO's rules also allow the ICC to make transitional observers eligible to become members of the CPPTF. As mentioned above, the ICC has power to establish/dissolve bodies of the ICO and prescribe rules applicable to those bodies. Under these powers,

See CPPTF Terms of Reference, pages 5 and 6.

See CPPTF Terms of Reference, page 6.

²⁴ See ICA 2007, Article 30(1).

²⁵ See ICA 2007, Article 31(2).

See CPPTF Terms of Reference, pages 5 and 6; ICA 2007, Articles 30(1) and 31(2).

²⁷ ICA 2007, Article 32(1).

²⁸ ICA 2007, Article 32(2).

See ICA 2007, Articles 32(4)-(5) ("(4) If a Member fails to supply or finds difficulty in supplying within a reasonable time statistical and other information required by the Council for the proper functioning of the Organization, the Council may require the Member concerned to explain the reasons for non-compliance. The Member may also inform the Council of its difficulty and request technical assistance. (5) If it is found that technical assistance is needed in the matter, or if a Member has not furnished, for two consecutive years, the statistical information required under paragraph (2) of this Article and has not sought the assistance of the Council or has not explained the reasons for non-compliance, the Council may take initiatives likely to lead such a Member to furnish the required information").

the ICC approved the CPPTF Terms of Reference in April 2021, which currently state that members of the CPPTF can be private sector members or ICO members.³⁰ The ICC can therefore now determine another category of membership of the CPPTF, specific for the transitional observers.

16. The ICO's rules also allow transitional observers to become beneficiaries of ICO/CPPTF projects and activities if approved by the ICC. The benefits of ICO/CPPTF projects are not limited to Members. Indeed, one of the objectives of the ICA 2007 is "developing, evaluating and seeking finance for projects that benefit Members *and the world coffee economy*" (emphasis added). Further, under the ICA 2007, ICO Members and the Executive Director may submit project proposals for consideration by the ICC. The ICC determines the composition and mandate of the committee in charge of projects. There is no limit on these powers in the CPPTF Terms of Reference.

C. Paragraph 3: Observers' obligation to submit data

17. Paragraph 3 of the Draft Resolution provides that non-member countries granted transitional observer status must submit "data regarding production, consumption, stocks and trade of coffee as per the terms applicable to ICO Members", as per Articles 3 and 32 of the ICA 2007³⁴ and the 2022 ICO Rules on Statistics of Certificates of Origin and the 2011 ICO Rules on Statistics Statistical Reports. ³⁵

See CPPTF Terms of Reference, page 6 ("Join as member of CPPTF: a. In case of private sector: present formal letter to the ICO Executive Director and ex-officio Chairperson of the CPPTF; sign London Declaration; acknowledge and subscribe to the CPPTF Theory of Change with problem & vision statement and the overall Roadmap; Assign a Sherpa; b. In case of ICO members: internal ICO selection procedure through regional consultations to nominate new member, who acknowledges and subscribes to the CPPTF Theory of Change with problem & vision statement and the overall Roadmap and assign a Sherpa; c. In both cases: proposal presented to CPPTF for discussion and approval will be reviewed to ensure overall public and private sector balance and ratio of CPPTF membership is maintained").

³¹ ICA 2007, Article 1(8).

³² See ICA 2007, Article 28(1).

³³ See ICA 2007, Article 28(4).

³⁴ See ICA 2007, Articles 3(2) and 32.

See Rules on Statistics of Statistical Reports, Approved by the ICC on 28 March 2011, ICC-102-10; Rules on Statistics of Certificates of Origin, Revised and approved by the ICC on 7 October 2022, ICC-102-9 Rev. 5.

18. This paragraph is compatible with ICA 2007 and other existing ICO documents. The fact that the provisions on data regarding production, consumption, stocks and trade of coffee are aimed at Members of the ICO does not prevent the ICC from also applying these provisions to non-member countries with transitional observer status. These obligations can be conferred on non-member countries granted transitional observer status.

D. Paragraph 4: Method of calculating transitional observers' voluntary contributions

- 19. Paragraph 4 of the Draft Resolution provides that the "voluntary contributions" ³⁶ payable by non-member countries granted transitional observer status (a reference to the "voluntary contributions" in paragraph 1 of the Draft Resolution) are calculated "based on the average volume of their respective exports or imports to all destinations in the preceding four calendar years", as per Article 12(3) of the ICA 2007.³⁷
- 20. This paragraph is compatible with the ICA 2007 and other existing ICO documents. Neither the documentation setting up the CSP-TF nor the Financial Rules and Financial Regulations of the ICO provide for a precise value of any funds that must be payable to the CSP-TF or payable to the ICO by way of voluntary contribution.³⁸ The ICC therefore has the authority to direct how those amounts will be determined.

E. Paragraph 5: Yearly review of transitional observer status

- 21. Paragraph 5 of the Draft Resolution provides that the status of non-member countries as transitional observers shall be reviewed every coffee year.
- 22. This paragraph is compatible with the ICA 2007 and other existing ICO documents.

 These documents do not include a prohibition against such an annual review of

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Draft Resolution, paragraph 4.

See ICA 2007, Article 12(3) ("The remaining votes of exporting Members shall be divided among such Members in proportion to the average volume of their respective exports of coffee to all destinations in the preceding four calendar years"). Although this does not change the analysis above, Volterra Fietta understands that the Draft Resolution is in fact paraphrasing both Articles 12(3) and (4) (the latter stating: "The remaining votes of importing Members shall be divided among such Members in proportion to the average volume of their respective imports of coffee in the preceding four calendar years").

See Establishment of a Coffee Sustainability Projects Trust Fund (CSP-TF), 10 April 2018, FA-179/18, paragraphs 9 and 10; ICO Financial Rules and Regulations, Rules 8 and 9.

observer status of non-member countries. The ICC has the inherent power, however, to both establish transitional observer status and the conditions for it. The timing of such review, each coffee year, is both compatible with and consistent with the operations of the ICO in regard to other matters.³⁹

F. Paragraph 6: Cessation payment voluntary contribution by transitional observers

- 23. Paragraph 6 of the Draft Resolution provides that if a non-member country that has been granted transitional observer status stops paying its voluntary contribution, such status is suspended, without owing a debt to the ICO.
- 24. This paragraph is compatible with the ICA 2007 and other existing ICO documents. As noted above in **Section II.A**, the ICC has the authority to create transitional observer status for non-member countries. This includes the authority to decide that such status will be withheld if such a transitional observer does not pay its voluntary contributions.

Inter alia, electing a Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the ICC (see ICA 2007, Article 10(1)); determining the distribution of votes in the ICC (see ICA 2007, Article 12(6)); approving the Administrative Budget and assessing each Member's contribution to it (see ICA 2007, Article 20(1));

receiving payable contributions to the Administrative Budget (see ICA 2007, Article 21(1)); approving annual work plans for the ICO, including planned results, deliverables, and associated budget forecasts