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Geneva, Switzerland

**Statement by the Executive Director of
the International Coffee Organization,
Dr Vanúcia Nogueira, made at the
opening ceremony of the 142nd Session
of the Council**

Ambassador Ivo Germann,

Representatives of the Swiss Government and Geneva authorities,

Minister for Trade of Cameroon, Mr Atangana,

My dear friends Dorothy and Tanuja,

Representatives of the International Trade Centre and the WTO, as well as other international organizations represented here,

ICO delegates,

Dear partners,

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are in Geneva this week to talk about coffee, and to address and discuss the challenges facing this sector, as is defined in our International Coffee Agreement as the scope of the ICO's mandate. Over the course of these three days, we will have with us representatives from around 55 ICO Member States and 45 different private-sector organizations, including agencies, development banks, industry bodies, consultancy firms and NGOs, acting as our observers. Over these three days, we will have around 61 countries or nations represented in one way or another.

These figures demonstrate the importance of the coffee sector, the priority of pre-competitive dialogue and the search for viable, scalable solutions that can make the sector's supply chain fairer every day for all stakeholders – public and private – including the millions of producers spread across dozens of countries. These figures also demonstrate the relevance of this Organization when we have to address such sensitive issues as a market that is growing, albeit in different countries with very different cultures and customs; prices that remain above the historical average of recent decades, yet with an extremely high level of volatility; and production costs that are rising due to inflation, wars, regulations and climate change.

We are here to address all of this. This, ladies and gentlemen, is multilateralism.

Geneva is hosting us for our Autumn 2026 discussions – an autumn which is still very warm. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Swiss Government and the people of Geneva, who are also welcoming us. The city of multilateral diplomacy has so kindly opened its doors to welcome us, and we are sure to have days that are both very fruitful and very enjoyable.

As the Director of the Organization's Secretariat, I would like to thank everyone present for their support and for the immensely well-thought-out, constructive ideas we have received, and I am confident that we will continue to work together. Our team is here to support you in your needs and also to share our activities.

Over the coming days we will have a very full agenda combining administrative and technical matters, as we have done over the last few years, and on which we have received very productive feedback. I hope we will have some excellent moments, with excellent discussions and a focus on reaching consensus – which does not necessarily mean seeking unanimity when necessary – as this is the role and responsibility of all of us here today as local and international leaders.

Coffee can and does generate income for many countries and their populations, contributing to global economic development. Coffee supports the environment, education, health and food security for communities.

Together, we can contribute to the future of millions of people across all hemispheres, ensuring that this is achieved from seed to cup, as we are part of the solution, not the problem.

Thank you very much.