

95th Session of the International Coffee Council - 22 to 25 May 2006

The Council Session was accompanied by meetings of the Executive Board, Promotion Committee, Private Sector Consultative Board and Statistics Committee.

One of the key matters discussed was the question of developing new ideas and procedures in the context of the future of the International Coffee Agreement and the ICO, given that the current Agreement expires on 30 September 2007. Proposals and ideas were received from a number of Members and were processed into a preliminary summary of proposals with an indication of the type of action that may be needed. This will be used as a basis for Members to make more specific suggestions for consideration at the next Session of the Council from 25 to 29 September 2006.

Ideas will also be studied from presentations made at the 2nd World Coffee Conference held in Salvador in September 2005. The final report on the Conference by its Chairman, Mr. Roberto Rodrigues, Minister of Agriculture of Brazil, was presented to the Council on 22 May.

The Council approved three new coffee development projects which will be submitted in due course to the Common Fund for Commodities to seek financial support. These projects are:

- Cost-Benefit Analysis of Sustainable Practices in Coffee: A Programme for Building Management Capacity
- Enhancing potential gourmet coffee production for tourism at local level in Central America
- Breeding coffee plants with durable resistance to Coffee Leaf Rust, anthracnose and other diseases

In addition, the Executive Director reported that three projects were formally launched this year with a total value of almost US\$20 million:

- Diversification of production in marginal coffee plantations in the State of Veracruz, Mexico - launched in March in Veracruz, Mexico.
- Pilot rehabilitation of the coffee sectors in Honduras and Nicaragua - launched in both these countries in April
- Pilot rehabilitation of neglected coffee plantations into small family production units in Angola, launched in Luanda, Angola in May.

Mr. Osorio noted that these three projects were for the direct benefit of small coffee farmers in the countries involved and reflected some key priorities of the Organization, namely diversification of production to reduce risk, quality improvement, and improved processing to avoid environmental pollution.

With respect to these priorities, the delegates attended a presentation by the Coffee Quality Institute (USA) on its programmes for encouraging high quality coffee production and a workshop on the potential for diversification in coffee exporting countries organized by the Natural Resources Institute of the United Kingdom (NRI). This workshop was chaired by Mr. G.V. Krishna Rau, Chairman of the Coffee Board of India.

Finally, the Council approved a Resolution setting conditions for the accession to the International Coffee Agreement of Timor-Leste, which would enter the Organization as a new coffee exporting Member.