



Organización Internacional del Café
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PRESS RELEASE

**ICO Executive Director's
first official visit to Brazil**

The Executive Director of the International Coffee Organization (ICO) released today the following statement.

“From 21 February to 1 March 2003, the Executive Director visited Brazil, the world’s largest coffee producing country, at the invitation of the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture and the *Conselho dos Exportadores de Café Verde do Brasil* (CECAFÉ). This was the first official visit made by Mr. Osorio to Brazil in his capacity of Executive Director of the ICO and his first opportunity to meet high-level representatives of the new Brazilian Government. The visit coincided with a major celebration organized by CECAFÉ to commemorate 275 years since the introduction of coffee to Brazil.

During the visit, Mr. Osorio was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Celso Amorim; the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Roberto Rodrigues; and the Secretary for Production and Marketing and the Director of the Coffee Department at the Ministry of Agriculture, Mr. Linneu Carlos da Costa Lima and Mr. Jaime Junqueira Payne, respectively. The Executive Director was also able to hold working sessions to discuss coffee issues with representatives of the export sector, the growers, and the roasting industry *Associação Brasileira da Indústria do Café* (ABIC), who have just announced a new programme to promote consumption of coffee in Brazil, with a target of 20 million bags a year.

During the course of these meetings and visits, the Executive Director received full support and backing for the programmes currently initiated by the International Coffee Organization, particularly in the areas of improvement of quality, promotion of consumption, and diversification with the aim of greater added value. Particular emphasis was placed on the need for appropriate action both on promotion and quality in order to secure a better balance in the world market and more satisfactory remuneration for producers.

Mr. Osorio also was able to visit a number of coffee areas in the State of Minas Gerais (Guaxupé, Patrocínio and Poços de Caldas) and in the State of Bahia (Barreiras), where he participated in events bringing together large numbers of coffee farmers. He was able to study the latest modern technologies for coffee production, and finally assisted in a presentation to the Minister of Agriculture of speciality coffees by the Brazilian Specialty Coffee Association.

***About the ICO:** Established as an intergovernmental organization in 1963 to serve the international coffee community, the ICO is the focus for international cooperation on coffee matters, coordinating activities with other international agencies and bringing together producing and consuming Governments and private sector representatives to exchange views and address policy issues. In October 2001, the latest International Coffee Agreement entered into force, with new objectives including promoting quality, promoting coffee consumption and encouraging the development of a sustainable coffee economy. The ICO provides the following services: up-to-date information and statistics; innovative projects to benefit the world coffee economy; economic studies; and promotion of coffee consumption in emerging markets.*

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