



International Coffee Organization  
Organización Internacional del Café  
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Organisation Internationale du Café

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**International Coffee Council welcomes  
U.S. decision to rejoin the ICO**

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

At the opening Session of the International Coffee Council taking place at the ICO headquarters in London from 21 to 24 September 2004, the 73 Member Governments warmly welcomed the decision by the United States Government to rejoin the Organization.

Speaking at the Council Session, the representative of the United States, Mr. Philip Wall of the State Department, said that the United States had started the formal process of accession to the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) 2001 and hoped to have it completed as soon as possible. He expressed his thanks for the assistance and guidance provided by the ICO Secretariat and the Executive Director. He added that many Members had long urged the U.S. to take this step and the U.S. looked forward to continuing its work with producing countries as well as working with fellow consuming countries on the vital issues affecting the coffee industry:

*“For years we have been working through our development programs to assist coffee producers achieve economic stability and sustainability. We understand the difficulties that have resulted from lower coffee prices, although these have firmed up recently. We have and will continue to work with our trading partners to address the underlying causes. The ICO provides an important forum for promoting coherence in addressing the difficulties, and identifying the opportunities in the coffee industry. It is also an opportunity for us to expand our dialogue on issues affecting our bilateral and multilateral partners from development to trade to foreign affairs. We intend to be active participants in this forum and we look forward to an open and productive dialogue”.*

The Spokesperson for the European Community, Mr. Enzo Barattini said that the E.C. warmly welcomed the decision by the United States to begin the formal process of accession to the ICA 2001: *“This is a very important development for the Organization and for the global coffee community as a whole. We would like to thank the U.S. Administration for having taken this important decision after a long absence from the ICA”*.

Representatives of Brazil, Colombia, OAMCAF and Honduras also made statements welcoming the U.S. decision and highlighted the political significance of this decision which would enhance multilateral cooperation in the field of coffee.

***About the ICO:** The International Coffee Organization is an intergovernmental organization created under the auspices of the United Nations to serve the international coffee community. Established in 1963, the ICO is unique in bringing 73 producing and consuming countries together to exchange views and address policy issues. Average world coffee exports amount to some US\$9.5 billion worth of coffee, and average world imports amount to some US\$10 billion worth of coffee each year. The work of ICO includes: a Coffee Quality-Improvement Programme, up-to-date information and statistics; innovative projects to benefit the world coffee economy; economic studies; and promotion of coffee consumption in traditional and emerging markets.*

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