



INTERNATIONAL COFFEE ORGANIZATION
ORGANIZACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DEL CAFÉ
ORGANIZAÇÃO INTERNACIONAL DO CAFÉ
ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE DU CAFÉ

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**Communication from the President of
the National Coffee Council of Brazil,
Mr Gilson Ximenes**

Background

The attached document contains a communication from the President of the National Coffee Council of Brazil, Mr Gilson Ximenes.

Action

The PSCB is requested to take note of this document.

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE
NATIONAL COFFEE COUNCIL OF BRAZIL
MR GILSON XIMENES**

At present, in Varginha, one of the major cities in southern Minas Gerais, a movement known as 'SOS Coffee', is under way. The aim is to alert political leaders and the Brazilian Government, to the need for the adoption of public policies designed to safeguard Brazilian coffee growing and the jobs dependent on this activity: 2.2 million directly and over 8 million indirectly.

The main demands include a guaranteed minimum price that is remunerative, the conversion of the financial debt of coffee growers into the equivalent in bags of coffee, and a reduction in interest rates on the debt. Around 20,000 people have already signed up on the site of the movement, in a demonstration of support and solidarity.

In addition to the National Coffee Council, other bodies representing producers in the State of Minas Gerais are taking part in the organization of this movement, including the Federation of Agriculture and Livestock of the State of Minas Gerais (FAEMG) the body representing producer unions; OCEMG SESCOOP / MG, the body representing producer cooperatives; and SICOOB Sistema Crediminas, representing rural credit cooperatives.

To conclude, I would like to suggest a thought for reflection by all Members of the ICO. Since the end of the economic clauses of the International Coffee Agreement, producing countries have seen their coffee sectors in crisis and are unable to implement public policies to remedy the situation. I am not calling for a return to the past, but I think that at a time when the guidelines of the world economy are being challenged, we also need to review the concepts applied to the global coffee economy.

I think that, using the idea of a forum on market mechanisms now under discussion by the ICO, this initiative could be extended to a forum on policies to support the world coffee economy. This could, perhaps, also be discussed at the next World Coffee Conference. I hope this challenge meets with a response in this Organization. As the major leader of coffee farmers in Brazil, I do not envisage the continuation of the ICO simply as an organization for the distribution and exchange of information, and the coordination of promotion activities. It must do much more than that: it must seek effective solutions for the failed model that brings poverty, misery and violence to the producing nations.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Gilson Ximenes
President
National Coffee Council of Brazil