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**Statement by the Chair of the
International Coffee Council, Mr
Massimiliano Fabian, made at the
opening ceremony of the 135th
Session of the Council**

Honourable delegates,

Dear Members and observers,

Welcome to the 135th Session of the International Coffee Council and my first as Chair. It is for me an honour and a great pleasure to be here with you today.

I would like to start by expressing my sincere gratitude to each one of you for your active participation in the activities of the Organization since we last met in Bogotá, Colombia. I also wanted to extend a special thank you to the Executive Director and the staff of the Secretariat for their dedication to ensuring the ICO successfully fulfils its mandate. Your commitment and diligence are much appreciated.

As an entrepreneur, I am impressed by the remarkable progress made by the ICO in the past few months. We are more focused and driven by efficiency than ever. Public-private dialogue is increasingly consolidated and this fruitful exchange of ideas will become even stronger with the entry into force of the International Coffee Agreement 2022. Every result achieved is a testament to the outstanding efforts of all coffee stakeholders engaging with the ICO and dedicating themselves to the cause of ensuring a sustainable and profitable global coffee sector.

Today we are offered the great opportunity to address the challenges that confront us together – from a new regulatory framework and price volatility to the need to increase the quality of life and income for all.

For this, we need to continue building an environment that fosters innovation, research, and the growth of the coffee sector. One that pursues a zero-waste approach and seeks to transform every residue or leftover into an opportunity, new jobs, and more profit.

At this 135th Session of the Council, my appeal to all coffee producing and consuming countries is to keep collaborating for the benefit of the sector, knowing that by sharing expertise, resources and promoting the principle of circular economy we are contributing to the creation of a brighter future for coffee stakeholders and the next coffee generation.

I am confident that today all discussions and decisions will be made in a spirit of partnership and with renewed determination and enthusiasm. Thank you once again for your commitment to the ICO and the coffee industry and for the valuable contributions that will be certainly shared here today.