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**Statement by the representative of  
El Salvador to the 110<sup>th</sup> Session  
of the International Coffee Council**

### **Background**

The attached document contains a statement by the representative of El Salvador to the 110<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Coffee Council.

### **Action**

The Council is invited to take note of this document.

**STATEMENT BY EL SALVADOR  
COFFEE LEAF RUST SITUATION IN EL SALVADOR**

The Delegation of El Salvador presents its greetings to the distinguished representatives of the International Coffee Organization and Members of the International Coffee Council and wishes to make a statement on the situation of coffee leaf rust in our country.

Although the occurrence of coffee leaf rust in El Salvador dates back to 1979, for the first time in its history, the six mountain ranges that comprise the country's coffee growing areas were all affected by an outbreak of this disease, at different levels and in varying degrees of infestation, during crop year 2012/13.

Preliminary estimates by El Salvador's coffee growers indicate that in crop year 2013/14 production will be the lowest recorded in the last 33 years, mainly as a result of the devastating outbreak of coffee leaf rust and the bi-annual nature of the crop.

Potential losses have been estimated at around 125,000 quintals of green coffee, which, at today's prices (US\$150.00/qq), implies a loss of around US\$18.75 million.

Moreover, it is estimated that in 2013 coffee farms may lose 30% – 60% of their foliage, affecting future crops.

Although production is estimated at around two million quintals for crop year 2013/14 the crop may be 10% – 30% smaller as a result of this outbreak.

Unfortunately, this situation has already led to the loss of around 20,000 jobs in crop year 2012/13 when the crop is still being harvested.

According to the *Consejo Salvadoreño del Café* (Salvadoran Coffee Council), production in coffee year 2010/11 was 2,560,050 quintals. There has been a considerable decrease in crop size since then, and production in crop years 2011/12 and 2012/13 was 1,624,211 and 1,907,600, respectively.

The El Salvador Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock has launched a 'Programme of Integrated Coffee Leaf Rust Control in the Country's Coffee Growing Areas', which is already being implemented at national level and has a planned duration of 12 months.

Total investment for this programme is estimated at US\$3 million and it is designed to benefit an estimated 17,342 coffee growers, who will be supplied with coffee leaf rust control packages, consisting of a technical package containing agro-chemicals and spraying equipment, together with technical assistance and training.

Producers with coffee areas larger than 17.5 hectares will be supplied with inputs to be applied in around 50% of the coffee area, covering a maximum of 35 hectares.

Cooperative groups will be supplied with agro-chemicals to treat 50% of the total coffee area (where this exceeds 35 hectares); otherwise they will be supplied with the incentive to treat 100% of the area.

It should be noted that a regional response to the problem has also been developed, since coffee leaf rust affects the entire Central American region.

In the Declaration issued by the Extraordinary Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Central American Integration System (SICA) held in Costa Rica on 20 February 2013, the following aspects of the coffee leaf rust problem in the region were highlighted:

*'Climate variability during 2012, particularly lower levels of precipitation and rainfall distribution, as well as higher than average temperatures during the rainfall season brought about by climate change, created conditions for the development and severity of the coffee leaf rust outbreak in the coffee producing countries of Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean, leading to lower coffee production and quality levels, and thereby affecting employment, foreign exchange earnings, income and resource availability, all of which are essential in maintaining food security and the economy in the rural areas of these countries'.*

In view of this situation an appeal was made to the international community, especially to technical and agricultural cooperation bodies, to support national and regional strategies for the recovery of this important economic activity, taking immediate measures to deal with the situation caused by the current outbreak, as well as developing attention and protection activities for the most vulnerable populations.

As El Salvador is not a member country of the Common Fund for Commodities, it could not be considered as a beneficiary for the financing of projects within the ICO framework and therefore welcomes the initiative of the present Executive Director to seek alternative sources of funding, which could be of great benefit in situations like the one we are now describing.

We are grateful for the Council Resolution expressing solidarity and support for the national and regional measures currently being taken by Central American Member countries to combat coffee leaf rust.

We reiterate the importance of counting on the cooperation of the Secretariat to evaluate the social and economic impact of this outbreak of coffee leaf rust, as well as to seek financial and technical resources for the future recovery of the sector and the sustainability of coffee production in the region, taking into account the impact of climate change and other relevant factors.

The Salvadoran delegation also makes itself immediately available to cooperate in the organisation of the Executive Director's visit to the region to verify *in situ* the gravity of the situation and duly report to the Council. This visit will clearly demonstrate support for the efforts being made by the region's countries to deal with this coffee crisis.

Finally, we appeal to the international community to provide assistance to the Central American countries affected, through the cooperation mechanisms established for this purpose, including technical training, information exchange and best practices and the provision of varieties of coffee resistant to coffee leaf rust.