



**INTERNATIONAL  
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ORGANIZATION**

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International Coffee Council  
119<sup>th</sup> Session  
13 – 17 March 2017  
London, United Kingdom

**Post of Executive Director**

**Presentation by Mr Remigi Winzap,  
Switzerland**

### **Background**

A copy of the presentation made to the 119<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council by Mr Remigi Winzap of Switzerland, is attached.

### **Action**

The Council is requested to take note of this document.

Madam Chairperson,

Your Excellencies, *Excellences, Excelencias,*

Distinguished Delegates, *Chers Délégués, Distinguidos Delegados*

- It is a great pleasure and honour to address you today.
  
- I would like to start by thanking all the Members of the International Coffee Organization for giving me the opportunity today to personally outline the key aspects of my candidature for the post of Executive Director of the International Coffee Organization.
  
- However, before I begin my presentation, let me start by paying my heartfelt respects to Mr Robério Silva. He served this Organization with dedication and has very sadly and unexpectedly passed away much too early. We all owe it to him to carry forward his work in the best interests of this Organization and its membership.
  
- It is in this spirit that I will present my candidature today.

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- My presentation is split into **two parts**:
    - **First**, I will give you the reasons why I am standing for the position of Executive Director of the International Coffee Organization;
    - **And Second**, I would like to sketch out my plan to take the ICO to the next level over the coming five years.
    - **After that**, I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

- So, who am I and what is my motivation to become the next ED of the ICO?
  - First of all, I am Swiss and I was born in the Swiss Alps.
  - My father was a farmer – but not a “*cafetalero*”, he was not a coffee grower as the climate - at least up to now – is not suitable for planting crops in the area I was born.
  - From my origins, I therefore understand very well what it means when livelihood depends on climate, on weather - and on markets.
  - Today, the prospect of re-connecting with my agricultural past as the ED of an agricultural commodity organization is a strong motivation for me. It has played a great role in my decision to apply for this post.
  - However, my interest in the position reaches far beyond my origins. I want to become the next ED of the ICO:
    - First, because of the specificity of coffee. Coffee is a sector that brings together regions, countries and people.
    - Second, because coffee is a sector of high economic and political relevance. It is the world’s most widely traded tropical commodity, produced in over 50 countries. It supports one hundred and twenty million people worldwide, the vast majority of whom are smallholders in developing countries. Stakes in the coffee industry are therefore high, especially for producers but

also for processors, traders, retailers and consumers as well as for governments.

- Third, because the coffee industry is a key area for making the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development a success. And I would very much like to contribute and be part of such success.
  - And last but not least because of the prospect of heading an international organization which matters to Members all over the world, from the South and from the North.
- My candidature builds upon a strong commitment within my country at the government level, as well as at the level of the Swiss private sector, to strengthen a sustainable coffee industry.
- Switzerland is strongly engaged in taking up the coffee sector's challenges by supporting the sustainability of the coffee industry. Switzerland has been an early supporter of the 4C Initiative and continues to be actively engaged through partnerships with IDH (the sustainable trade initiative) and the umbrella organization ISEAL (International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance), where the Global Coffee Platform acts as a full member.
  - Switzerland has a major coffee processing industry and is proud to host the most important trading hub for coffee worldwide. More than 50% of raw coffee traded outside producing countries is traded out of Switzerland.

- In addition, in Switzerland, we have a privileged access to international organizations and access to a strong financial sector, including key players in the area of development and impact finance which is highly relevant for coffee smallholders.
- My candidature also builds upon a strong commitment by Switzerland to the ICO.
  - Switzerland has been a committed member of the ICO for more than 50 years.
  - Most recently Switzerland held the Chairmanship of the Council in the coffee years 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 and Switzerland has consistently and constructively participated in all sub-committees of the Council as well as in many ad-hoc working groups over the years.
- My candidature however does not only rely on what others, like the Swiss government and the Swiss private sector, do. My candidature is rooted in what I could bring to the ED position, to the ICO and to you the Members.

#### Distinguished Delegates

- Today, I do not want to go into details of my CV, which you have received.
- Instead, let me suggest five questions which you may wish to answer when you chose the next ED of the ICO. I will try to answer these same questions in a way which allows you to evaluate whether my bid for the

ED position makes sense for the ICO that you want – and for an ICO that will be focused and which will be able to deliver strongly.

- **My first question is: Are you looking for somebody who can work with and for all Member States?**

➤ If so, then I would certainly be a good choice:

- I have broad experience as a bridge builder between North and South
  - I was responsible for the Swiss trade related cooperation with developing countries for several years;
  - I co-chaired until recently the Trade and Development Group of the Francophonie. - *J'ai assumé la Présidence de ce groupe de travail à Genève conjointement avec mon collègue, l'Ambassadeur du Bénin;*
  - *Y además, yo tengo una esposa y un hijo que son mexicanos.*
- In addition to that, I am a negotiator – and I am an honest broker:
  - I have chaired difficult negotiations, in particular the ones that have been entrusted to me by 164 WTO Members from the developing and developed world. One negotiation was on Trade Facilitation, the first multilateral agreement the WTO concluded - and which entered into force three weeks ago. Something I am very happy about, and proud of.

- **My second question is: Are you looking for a strategic thinker and a manager for the Secretariat of the ICO?**

➤ If so, then you could feel comfortable with me:

- For more than a decade, I have been strongly involved in the trade and development policy definition of the Swiss Government.
- I have over 30 years of management experience.
- For several years, I was in charge of Switzerland's relationship with the ICO, the other international commodities organizations as well as with UNCTAD, UNIDO and the ITC.
- I was in charge of trade-related cooperation with developing and transition countries and in this capacity, I successfully managed a CHF 35 million annual budget (GBP 28 million).
- Most recently, I headed the Swiss Mission to WTO and UNCTAD as the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the WTO, UNCTAD, EFTA, ITC and UN/ECE.

- **My third question is: Are you looking for a professional from the coffee industry in ICO's top management?**

➤ If so, I fully share your point that this is an important factor:

- I had full responsibility for Switzerland's membership of the ICO for four years in my earlier career.
- And while I have a solid understanding of the challenges of the coffee sector, I am very clear in my mind that the new Chief Operating Officer will need to complement my profile and be a coffee professional with a specialized understanding of all technical aspects of the coffee industry.
- I strongly believe in teamwork and complementarity and I am determined to make it happen within the ICO's secretariat.

- **My fourth question is: Are you looking for someone who can connect the ICO with stakeholders and partners?**

➤ If so, then I can assure you that this is a strength of mine - I am a networker:

- My ambition is to connect people and to have everybody pulling on the same strand. Members and their industries should benefit from best practices gathered around the globe.
- If you choose to entrust me with the job at the helm of the ICO, you would not just meet me in London – but we would meet in your countryside, engaging with farmers. We would meet in



your factories discussing with workers. And we would meet in the offices of the CEOs and of governments in your countries in order to strengthen the ICO's impact throughout the coffee value chain.

- I also have a strong personal relationship with the top management of international organizations like WTO, UNCTAD and ITC.
- Furthermore, I know how to join forces with international organizations, in particular the ones which are executing projects. I have worked with the World Bank, UNCTAD, UNIDO, ITC, WTO and others.
- **My fifth question is: Are you looking for somebody who can mobilize financing for the coffee sector?**
  - If so, then I can assure you that this is an area I would put great effort into.
    - Indeed, this is a crucial area if we take the implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development seriously, – and that's what I do.
    - To meet the investment needs of the Sustainable Development Goals, investment sources of all kinds have to be tapped and aligned as much as possible: public and private, national and global.

- I would reach out to the International Financial Institutions, in particular the Multilateral Development Banks, such as
  - The Asian Development Bank (ADB)
  - The Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), and
  - The African Development Bank (AfDB).
- In this context, I would also like to mention the fact that Switzerland has a long history in both sustainability and finance. As a financial centre, in Switzerland some CHF 192 billion of assets are already managed along sustainability principles.
- I have put forward five questions which seem to me important when choosing the next ED. I am convinced I can live up to the expectations you will rightly demand of the incoming ED.
- **Let me now turn to the second part of my presentation which focuses on my plan to take the ICO to the next level over the coming five years.**
- First, let me briefly flag some of the challenges the coffee industry is facing and then elaborate on how, in the light of the challenges, I would deliver on ICO's mandate, should I be chosen as the ED of the ICO.
- We all know that the coffee industry is facing many challenges which – if not tackled decisively - ultimately risk undermining growth and jobs. Some challenges are global, and in my view the central one is global, namely climate change and the mitigation of its consequences (like drought and the threat of pests and diseases). Others have to be seen more in a

regional or national context (fighting ecosystem degradation; addressing shortage of labour force; generation of additional income for smallholders; empowering women; provision of medical insurance to coffee farmers; etc, etc.). It is important that local and global agendas complement each other.

- Furthermore, there are production and market related challenges, linked to quantity and quality of production, to price volatility and to traceability requirements. There are financing issues along the supply chain; and there is the issue of distribution of income.
- There are also challenges related to trade policies as well as technological challenges.
- What these challenges have in common is that they need to be better understood and to be addressed by a strong, value adding ICO, with an ED and a staff which is highly motivated to support its Members effectively.
- The International Coffee Organization's mission is to strengthen the global coffee sector and to promote its sustainable expansion in a market-based environment for the benefit of all participants in the coffee sector. The way the ICO delivers on this mission depends to a critical extent on the Executive Director and his staff and on the way the Secretariat interacts with its Members and stakeholders outside the Organization.
- The relationship between the Secretariat and its Members must be one of trust and support, in which the Secretariat serves all Members equally in an effective, efficient and transparent manner and with a strong focus

on delivering high quality outputs on commonly defined objectives and on the basis of a strong strategic orientation.

- Let me assure you that as the ED of the ICO, I would commit all my faculties and energy to living up to this endeavour together with a well-organized Secretariat.

In particular:

- I would start by evaluating the current capacities of the Secretariat without delay, in particular in the priority areas identified by you, the Members, over the past year in the ongoing strategic review process.
- I would place great emphasis on ensuring that the ICO would have the means to realize its Members' ambitions. In this context, I have in particular statistical and analytical support in mind. In this area, the ICO has an important role. And it has to play this role with excellence. Accurate statistics and first class, independent analysis are the backbone for accurate decision-making and a must in the XXIst century.
- In parallel, I would immediately start the process of filling the vacancies which have occurred in the Secretariat over the past turbulent months in order to ensure that a fully staffed, well-balanced and motivated team is again in a position to deliver the high-quality output expected by Members and stakeholders, and to maintain and strengthen the ICO's reputation of independence, professionalism, strong technical expertise and broad knowledge of the coffee industry.

- In this context, a key appointment and the first and foremost priority will be the post of the Chief Operating Officer, with a person who would have a profile complementary to mine.
- I would also immediately engage very closely with exporting and importing Members in order to swiftly establish a new five-year Action Plan with timelines and key performance indicators. This on the basis of the commonly defined strategic orientation.
- Over the next decade, the ICO needs to be among the key actors when it comes to supporting and fostering good economic, social, environmental and institutional practices that will help coffee growers around the world to reach ambitious sustainability and productivity objectives. In order to achieve this, the ICO needs to pro-actively strengthen the links between public and private partners alike and act as a broker between different actors.
- Furthermore, I would strive to identify and use the synergies between the ICO's convening power, its in-house knowledge and its ability to provide technical assistance or to guide producing Members in securing funds or gaining access to technical assistance projects provided by other actors also.
- The ICO has to be at the very centre of the dialogue within the coffee industry, the place of choice where actors want meet in a neutral setting that favours the finding of solutions: the place where the relevant actors from the whole coffee supply chain are keen to address the important issues.

- Closely linked to this, I would reach out to public and private actors as well as to other international organizations to seek cooperation on analytical work, on financing and on sustainability initiatives with a view to strengthening the coffee sector.
  - My guideline in all of these activities would be the overall strategy of the Organization.
  - And last but not least, I would seek to improve and further strengthen the ties between the Secretariat, the Members and stakeholders from the private sector and civil society while making sure, at all times, that the Organization retains its full autonomy and independence.
- By selecting me as the Executive Director, Members can be assured that I would deliver:
    - A strong, efficient and effective Secretariat,
    - committed to serving all Members of the Organization,
    - in the interests of a strong, healthy, sustainable and proud coffee sector.

*Thank you very much for your attention; I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.*