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

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London, United Kingdom

Post of Executive Director

Submission from Mr G.V. Krishna Rau, India

Background

At its 106th Session in March 2011, the Council decided that candidates for the post of Executive Director could make written submissions which should reach the Secretariat by the suggested date of 1 July 2011, to enable these to be translated and circulated and give Members sufficient time to consider these in their capitals (see document ICC-106-15 Rev. 1). The attached written submission has been received from Mr G.V. Krishna Rau of India, in addition to his nomination and curriculum vitae which were circulated in March 2011 in document ICC-106-14.

Action

The Council is requested to consider this document.

30 June 2011

Submission of G. V. Krishna Rau for consideration of his candidature for the post of Executive Director, International Coffee Organisation

I extend warm greetings to the members of the International Coffee Organization. I am a candidate for the post of Executive Director of ICO, nominated by Government of India. This submission is being made in addition to the Curriculum Vitae submitted to ICO in March 2011.

The world coffee economy is at the threshold of far reaching changes. Climate change and its effects on coffee production, shortage of work force in producing regions, increasing costs of inputs have emerged as the main challenges to the producing regions. Stringent environmental and food health regulations in some of the consuming regions along with steady increase in demand pose challenges of a different nature.

My long years of administrative experience in the Government sector and my most recent work in the coffee sector are my strengths that would enable me to address the challenges before the global coffee community with required depth, sensitivity and maturity. I request the members of the ICO to support my candidature for the post of Executive Director, ICO.

A) My Background:

I belong to an agricultural family. I hold a postgraduate degree in Geology. I have served as a Geologist in Geological Survey of India for four years before joining the Indian Administrative Service in 1982. By virtue of my postings in the IAS, I have gained experience in sectors ranging from coffee to rural development to urban land management, industry, irrigation, food, health and welfare. I managed distinctly diverse stakeholder groups as well as large resources from the Government and also World Bank funded projects. My work required me to deliver both on policies and programmes. In the initial years I worked at the cutting edge level and implemented the welfare and development programmes as well as discharged regulatory functions. I managed the interface between the Government and varied stakeholder groups like the rural and urban poor, NGOs, elected representatives and the private sector. Moving forward in my career, I gained experience in policy formulation at the state and national level. My work

in coffee sector gave me an opportunity to actively participate in and effectively contribute to the work of ICO for 5 years between 2005-2010.

Conducting general elections, census operations and dealing with cases of public unrest are other challenging assignments that required management of large pool of human resources. Executing the World Bank funded projects in health and irrigation sectors gave me the experience in globally accepted procurement procedures and standards of project execution.

I have further sharpened my skills broadened my understanding of various sectors by being trained in Public Private Partnerships, Public Finance, Infrastructure Finance, World Bank Procurement Procedures, Administrative Law, Global Warming, Green Technologies and Carbon trading, WTO and Foreign Trade and e governance.

B) My Experience in Coffee sector: 5 years. (From May 2005 to May 2010)

As Chairman, Coffee Board, some of my most notable contributions are:

a. Developed Coffee Debt Relief Package and obtained Government sanction for waiver of about $ 80 million equivalent debt of the small coffee growers.
b. Introduced for the first time, 'Rainfall Insurance Scheme for Coffee Growers (RISC)' with a subsidy of 50% of the premium for small growers. Several thousands of coffee growers got the benefit by way of payouts due to erratic rains.
c. Brought 20,000 hectares of degraded lands under coffee by raising the shade trees and then planting the coffee under shade, in remote tribal areas and organised the training in coffee cultivation to thousands of tribal people.
d. Actively promoted domestic consumption of Coffee as one of the main planks of developing a sustainable Indian coffee industry. Coffee consumption increased from 75000 MTs to 102,000 MTs, an increase of 33.33% in 5 years.
e. Introduced incentives for value addition and export of value added coffees. The share of value added coffees increased from 19% to 40% of the total coffee exports in 5 years.

My other important initiatives and achievements include:

a. Growers lost millions of coffee plants to the White Stem Borer pest during 2002 – 2005 and were in no position to undertake new planting in the gaps. Soon after joining in 2005, I planned and organised 12 million coffee seedlings through the small grower collectives and supplied to the growers in the very first year to enable them to fill the gaps. This helped in stabilising the coffee production on the face several odds.
b. Guided coffee industry in the country in the conduct of the hugely successful India International Coffee Festivals in 2007 and 2009. Funds for these events ($250,000 each) were raised fully from the coffee industry and new products were launched at both the events.
c. Prepared the Five Year (2007 to 2012) development plan for the coffee sector in India, doubling the Government outlay to the coffee sector.
d. Formulated highly calibrated need based support programmes to assist the coffee sector, with emphasis on small coffee growers, as 99% of the coffee growers in the country are small growers.
e. Authored a paper *'Indian Coffee: Production and Marketing Challenges',* which was published in India Commodity Year Book 2009.
f. I created 'Coffee Swami' as the mascot for Coffees of India and carried the messages on 'coffee and health' and other promotion messages as 'Coffee Gyan' (Coffee knowledge) by Coffee Swami.
g. I was instrumental in developing the Coffee Leaf Rust project assisted by Common Fund for Commodities, which is now under implementation in India and Four African countries.
h. Represented India at ICO for five years and took active part in all its activities, including participation in the World Coffee Conferences 2005 and 2010.

C) The strengths I bring to the post of ED:

I have a passion for coffee, a deep understanding of global coffee economy and ecology, with the ability to formulate strategies to address the issues confronting the coffee sector. In close coordination with all stakeholders I can actively promote the development of sustainable coffee economy safeguarding the interests of all stakeholders along the value chain.

I bring with me 32 years of rich experience in the Government, including 5 years in coffee sector, with marked emphasis on equity and welfare. I also bring with me the experience of working with political executives, parliamentarians, other civil servants, NGOs, private sector and general public. My experience of functioning at executive, policy formulation and advisory roles and continuous liaison with Government at different levels and coordination with several organisations and NGOs is invaluable. My work in the coffee sector formulating several innovative interventions and obtaining resources for these initiatives both from the Government and the industry as required, gave me an excellent insight in the functioning of coffee sector. My exposure to the different coffee producing countries and region specific issues to different regions helps me to readily identify those issues and address such requirements with understanding while working towards establishing a sustainable coffee economy.

D) My vision for the future role of ICO:

The primary objective of International Coffee Agreement 2007 is to promote sustainable development of global coffee economy through international cooperation, with special concern for the weakest and the poorest in the chain.

The objective of sustainable coffee economy is to be achieved consistent with the principles and objectives of sustainable development contained in Agenda 21 of the UNCED in Rio, 1992 and those adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, 2002. This involves ensuring economic, environmental and social sustainability. The programmes should help improve

the economic viability of coffee growers, aim at improving the living standards especially in the producing regions, give importance to and promote adaptation and mitigation strategies to cope with climate change, promotion of environment friendly pest and disease control mechanisms etc.
ICO can facilitate and promote exchange of information in matters of research and development of new post harvest technologies in pulping, washing and those in plant breeding etc. This helps improve the productivity and quality of coffee. Encouraging both horizontal and vertical diversification in the producing areas would also help the growers to hedge their risks partially.

Increased consumption and market development especially in the exporting countries has to be pursued to provide long-term sustainability for the benefit of all stakeholders. This has potential to yield multiple benefits to the coffee sector. It would make the producers aware of the consumer preferences leading to quality improvement, providing alternate markets, helps gaining experience in making and marketing value added products and in turn stimulating the small and medium entrepreneurs creating far greater number of jobs than the on-farm jobs.

Quality enhancement by improved processing practices, storage and transportation as well as through dissemination of different preparation methods appropriate to the high quality of coffee coupled with promotion of coffee quality programme of the ICO would greatly help promote sustainability. Empowering the growers to know their coffee by capacity building at grower level can create lasting commitment and passion for coffee quality among the growers. Improved quality will also stimulate demand and better prices for the producers.

In most producing countries with the dismantling of the controlled marketing systems after liberalisation, small growers have become more vulnerable due to their inability to deal with the market. Organising small growers collectives is an imperative as that would enable them access technology, credit as well as the markets. ICO can play an important role in encouraging formation and

empowerment of such grower collectives and disseminating information on best practices in coffee sector. Capacity building is an acute need. This can be addressed with the active participation and commitment of all stakeholders.
The devastating losses suffered by the coffee production systems due to natural calamities or war or conflicts, especially resulting in severe adverse impact on livelihoods need to be dealt with appropriate rehabilitation programmes. In all these approaches the poorest and weakest should be accorded priority.

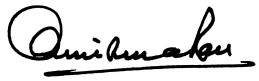
Projects ICO recommends can be made use of as excellent vehicles and opportunity to direct the efforts and resources towards the objective of promoting sustainable coffee economy. They also provide opportunity to test and demonstrate the best practices from different regions and disseminate them in other regions. Projects can also be used as incentives to encourage interventions that lead to building capacities among the stakeholders who need such support. Research Projects can also be identified to address the emerging challenges to find solutions. Significant part of the production in most producing countries comes from very small growers. The initiatives of ICO and projects if targeted towards small and vulnerable stakeholders, will also contribute towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

While dealing with the new and emerging markets, mere promotion activities will take too long to start giving results. In such areas it is necessary that promotion and market development through various capacity building activities will give faster results. Promotion and Market Development Committee is a potential platform to develop collaborative programmes with the interested private sector participants to undertake such promotion and market development activities.

ICO has been doing an excellent work in collecting, processing, analysing and sharing the coffee statistics. There is continuing demand to expand the scope of the statistics and their analysis. The work of the statistics committee and the studies ICO conducts will help the members to develop the shared understanding of the emerging issues from time to time.

With a view to direct the programmes and activities of the ICO towards achieving its objectives, it is necessary to effectively utilise the various subsidiary/ advisory bodies of ICO to channelize the energies and resources toward these objectives. The Consultative Forum on Coffee Sector Finance (CFCSF) is very crucial to generate new ideas and in identifying possible alternative means and sources of funding. I see a great opportunity in the Consultative Forum. Similarly PSCB is also a very dynamic body that can identify the critical issues from time to time and offer suggestions to tackle them. The work of the ICO would be that much enriched with the active and constructive contribution from these bodies.

Cooperation with other international bodies having interest in coffee with regular and proactive interface with them is crucial. Maintaining regular contacts with organisations like CFC, UNCTAD, FAO, GEF etc would greatly help in the work of ICO. Contributions from institutions like ISIC, GENOME project and other national and international research institutes actively involved in coffee research will have to be factored for obtaining balanced outcomes.



(G. V. KRISHNA RAU)

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