

Salvador da Bahia, 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, 2005.

Ladies and Gentlemen  
Participants in the II World Coffee Conference

We - small scale coffee producers, rural workers, members of producer cooperatives, labor unions, NGOs and academics - traveled thousands of kilometers from four continents to Salvador in order to represent millions of people struggling every day to survive. We are demanding a truly sustainable coffee sector.

During the past three days we have shared our challenges, experiences, proposals and dreams. We became keenly aware that we are confronted with many of the same obstacles in our different countries. We also reflected deeply on the recent changes in production and trade at the international level.

We want to remind you that the coffee crisis is not over. After the most difficult period passed, many stakeholders are focused on the production, processing and trade of coffee. We want to stress that our problems continue without a solution.

For a truly sustainable coffee sector, all who take part in coffee production must share its wealth: small-scale producers, permanent and seasonal rural workers, industry and retail workers.

Many say that the solutions to the crisis are only associated with methods of production, including increased investment in substitutes for local coffee varieties, use of toxic fertilizers and pesticides, and mechanization - all aimed at greater productivity. This vision, which focuses on trading and production, is prohibitively expensive for millions of small-scale farmers. It punishes rural workers and has negative impacts on the environment. It also allows for the consolidation of production and marketing by a small group of companies that do not practice social responsibility but make decisions that impact millions of people while they reap the lion's share of the benefits of the trade. This vision is not sustainable.

The challenges associated with coffee are similar to those confronting other commodities like sugar, cotton and other crops. These sectors are also heavily influenced by the concentration of resources and wealth, the effects of which are aggravated by distortions from speculative investments.

Real sustainability of the coffee sector should not be viewed through an economic lens alone but must include ethical and political perspectives.

From an ethical perspective, the citizenship rights of people who participate in wealth generation must be guaranteed. Those rights are: stability of prices; recognition of efforts to protect the rural landscape and biological diversity by improving cultivation, harvest and post-harvesting practices; recognition of the basic rights of rural workers, including the fundamental rights of association and collective bargaining, particularly for seasonal rural workers who face the worst working and living conditions.

From a political perspective, it is essential that governments agree to and implement public policies that guarantee the rights of coffee producers and rural workers. It should be possible to develop a sustainable model based on food security and sovereignty.

In conclusion, we expect the World Coffee Conference to acknowledge our key concerns:

*International Coffee Agreement (ICA):* we propose that the renegotiation of the ICA incorporate the issue of sustainability from the perspective of all actors involved in the coffee chain and sanction space for direct political representation by small scale farmers and rural workers organizations.

*Support for Sustainable Development:* we propose that the ICO coordinates development projects for the coffee sector. Governments must allocate resources for the improvement of the coffee sector, principally in developing countries. These programs must ensure that family farmers are the direct recipients of the support.

*Support by producer countries for coffee sector:* we propose that producer country governments commit themselves to implementing programs that target the coffee sector, specifically programs benefiting small scale farmers and rural workers that depend on public policy the most. It is crucial to guarantee debt refinancing, availability of affordable credit for working capital and long term capital investment, support of capacity building programs for small scale farmers and rural workers, access to market information, and promotion of small scale farmer access to markets. Governments should also ratify, publicize and effectively implement all relevant ILO Conventions, particularly Convention 184. Finally, we propose that producer countries engage in discussion and policy coordination that seek to establish the basis for fair trade between nations.

We commit ourselves to continuing this dialogue, to presenting the challenges we face, and to proposing solutions to the coffee crisis.

CONTAG/FETAGS, Brasil

Karnataka Growers Federation, India

Oromia Cooperative Union, Ethiopia

Sidamo Cooperative Union, Ethiopia

Junta Nacional del Café, Peru

FEDECOCAGUA, Guatemala

Foro del Café, El Salvador

Frente Solidario, Central America

Global Alliance on Commodities and Coffee - GLACC

União Internacional dos Trabalhadores da Alimentação e Agricultura – UITA/REL

Koffie Coalitie - Netherlands

Oxfam International