



Coffee Community lays groundwork for mainstream sustainable coffee

London, UK, 23 April 2007 - On April 18 and 19, 2007, members of the recently established Common Code for the Coffee Community Association (4C) met for its first General Assembly in London, UK.

The 4C is the product of four years of intense multi-stakeholder dialogue, field work and concept testing with a vast network of interested parties and experts. In bringing together the three key groups within the global coffee community – the farmers, the coffee trade and companies, and NGOs and trade unions – the 4C has created a platform that is hopeful in its mission, unique in its representation and unparalleled in its scope.

The 4C is based on a voluntary code of conduct comprising basic social, environmental and economic practices in coffee production, processing and trading. It includes support services which provide access to training, promote good agricultural and management practices, facilitate information exchange and respect and strengthen the self-organisation of farmers.

At the meeting, the first Executive Board was elected as follows:

- Joaquim Leite, Export Director of Cooperativa Regional de Cafeicultores em Guaxupé Ltda. (Cooxupé) and member of the National Coffee Council of Brazil;
- Albrecht Schwarzkopf, Christian Initiative Romero (CIR);
- Roel Vaessen, Secretary General of the European Coffee Federation (ECF).

“With the 4C, producers, trade and industry and civil society have joined forces to improve the situation of the 25 million coffee farmers primarily from the developing world”, says Joaquim Leite, the newly elected President of the Executive Board and member of the producers’ group.

Roel Vaessen, the trade and industry Executive Board member, commented that “with this initiative, the coffee community responds to the increasing consumer demand for sustainably produced coffee.”

Albrecht Schwarzkopf, Executive Board member representing the civil society organisations, stated that the “4C concept, at its core, was initiated to improve the livelihoods of the huge number of small scale coffee producers and workers, while at the same time protecting the environment. Even though there is still a lot of work to do, the 4C is a step towards sustainability for the entire sector, while building on shared responsibilities along the chain.”

Members joining the inaugural 4C Association General Assembly meeting in London came from as far way as Colombia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Brazil, Kenya and others. The availability of 4C coffee on the market is expected for the start of the coming coffee year, which begins in autumn.

For further information www.sustainable-coffee.net

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Background note for editors:

The 4C Association is a tri-partite, multi-stakeholder organization comprised of more than 50 members representing the most important constituencies within the international coffee community including coffee producers from Africa, Latin America and Asia, the global coffee trade and roasting industry, civil society organisations (NGOs and trade unions), governmental institutions and other supporters (a list of members is attached).

The Common Code for the Coffee Community project began as a public-private partnership initiated by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH and the German Coffee Association (DKV) in 2002. In 2004 SECO, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, joined the BMZ as public partner in financing the project, while the European Coffee Federation replaced the DKV as the private partner. During the development process, more than 100 representatives from over 25 countries actively participated in the design of the concept, the majority of them coffee producers. Various international organisations have been involved in the development and implementation of the Common Code for the Coffee Community, including the UN-affiliated International Coffee Organization (ICO), the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and several regional development banks.

Currently, the 4C Association is actively supported by GTZ on behalf of BMZ and SECO as well as the Flemish International Cooperation Agency (FICA).

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The Common Code for the Coffee Community Association is registered with the Register of Commerce in Geneva, CH-660-2928006-4. C/o CR Gestion & Fiduciaire SA, Route des Jeunes 9, 1227 Carouge-Geneva, Switzerland.