



SECRETARIAT GENERAL

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Imm. CAISTAB, 3<sup>ème</sup> Étage, Plateau  
B.P. V 210 Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire Tel. (225) 20 21 61 31/20 21 61 85  
E-mail : [sg@iaco-oiac.org](mailto:sg@iaco-oiac.org) Website: [www.iaco-oiac.org](http://www.iaco-oiac.org)

Document n° 378/20/E

## **Themes for IACO's 2020 Virtual High-Level Policy Forum, Accra (Ghana)**

### **Theme 1: Managing the COVID-19 pandemic impact on the coffee economy in Africa**

Agriculture continues to be Africa's largest employer of an increasingly young population of 1.1 billion. The rural population continues to increase, accentuating the problems of poverty. On this continent, there are 25 coffee producing countries with an estimated population of over 716 million and for some of these countries, coffee is an important agricultural product in terms of export earnings and smallholder incomes.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a dramatic public health crisis that is having a significant impact on economies around the world and particularly the African economy. This pandemic is likely to have a profound impact on the global coffee sector and particularly on the African coffee value chain; including production, domestic marketing, international trade, domestic coffee processing and consumption. Initiatives have been taken at the level of each member country to stem or even foster the resilience of the African coffee sector in the face of the global pandemic of COVID-19. In this regard, IACO has sought support from the EU through the African Union, to help build resilience for farmers in the IACO member states.

The forum of IACO Ministers, under the theme '**Managing the COVID-19 pandemic impact on the coffee economy in Africa**,' scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 as part of the 60<sup>th</sup> IACO Annual Meetings, will allow for the sharing of experiences from different countries and actions taken to address the impact of COVID-19, in order to maintain the growth dynamic of the coffee sector.

### **Theme 2: Value Addition to Coffee and Promoting Domestic Coffee Consumption in Africa.**

Most of the coffee exported by IACO member states is unprocessed. Africa exports 95% of coffee in its primary form, as a raw material. Processing activities, including roasting, to increase value-added development of the coffee industry, are still on a limited scale in Africa. The shares of locally processed green coffee remain insignificant compared to total exports. The only exception is Ethiopia whose domestic consumption competes with the export sector, accounting for almost half of its national green coffee production.

The United States and the European Union are the main export destinations of African coffee. The European Union accounts for (54%) of African coffee exports. Africa's main partners in Europe are: Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and Switzerland. IACO Member States have experienced the pandemic aftermath by the main trading partners (US and EU). They have been affected by the collapse in demand and the disruption of coffee supply chains. From October 2018/19 to August 2019/2020, exports from IACO Member States registered the downward trend observed in global coffee exports (-5.6%) due to COVID-19. Thus, '**Improving the Added Value of Coffee and Promoting Domestic Coffee Consumption in Africa**' are real challenges for African coffee producing countries.

The Forum of IACO Ministers, scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 as part of IACO's 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meetings, will allow the sharing of experiences from their respective countries and prospects so that African coffee farming can be profitable for countries and particularly for small producers—the weak link in the chain.