

United Nations General Assembly | Sixth Committee

Observer status for the International Coffee Organization
in the General Assembly
(Agenda item 179)

15 October 2024

(check against delivery)

Madam/Mister Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

[I thank you for your stewardship of the debates in this
Committee. I speak in my capacity as coordinator of the draft

It is no surprise, then, that the International Coffee Organization was established in 1963 under the aegis of the United Nations. Conversely, it is surprising that the Organization has not been invited yet to participate in the sessions of work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer.

I am here today in a mission to help remedy this glaring omission by introducing a draft resolution by which the General Assembly will grant observer status to the ICO. We thank the Secretary-

We are aware that this is a legal committee, whose judicious delegates will closely look into the conformity of the proposal with the UN rules. We are also mindful that some Member States have been voicing concerns over what they see as the risk of gradual erosion of the intergovernmental character of the United Nations.

UN General Assembly Decision 49/426 is the main legal instrument setting out requirements for the granting of observer status at the General Assembly. Basically, it confines observer status to States and intergovernmental organizations whose activities cover matters of interest to the Assembly.

First, it is beyond a shadow of doubt that the ICO is an organization of an intergovernmental character.

As the only intergovernmental organization dedicated to coffee, the ICO brings together the Governments of exporting and importing countries responsible for 93 per cent of world coffee production and 63 per cent of world consumption. It is composed by 42 exporting members and 7 importing members, one of which, the European Union, represents 27 Member States.

The intergovernmental nature of the ICO is also clear from the interpretation of articles 3 to 6 of the International Coffee Agreement of 1962, which laid the foundations of the organization. Those provisions limit the membership of the ICO to the contracting parties or groups of contracting parties, all of them Member States.

Second, it is indisputable that the International Coffee
2 U J D Q L] D W L R Q ¶ V D F W L Y L W L H V F R Y H U P D W V
Assembly. This is illustrated by its regular participation in multilateral activities related to agriculture, commodities and sustainable development. Its activities are intinsecally linked to the UN agenda, particularly with regard to sustainable development. Efficient, inclusive and sustainable coffee supply chains can contribute to the SDGs 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 12 and 15, among others.

Furthermore, we must bear in mind article 21 of the 1962 International Coffee Agreement, on the cooperation between the ICO and the United Nations and its specialized agencies and

There is no denying that the ICO meets the formal and substantial criteria to become an observer at the General Assembly.

Therefore, I kindly request the support of all the UN membership for the draft resolution tabled to this end. The corresponding L document has been already uploaded at the e-Delegate+ website and is open for co-sponsorship at the Sixth Committee e-sponsorship.

The Sixth Committee is scheduled to consider the draft resolution on November 8. It has one paragraph at the preamble, on the intent to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the ICO; and two operative paragraphs, one with an invitation for the ICO to participate in the General Assembly as an observer, and another with a request for the Secretary-General to ensure its implementation.

We look forward to its adoption by consensus without a vote.

Thank you for your attention.