



## **JOINT STATEMENT** *for immediate release*

Accra, Tuesday 25 October 2022

### **CÔTE D'IVOIRE-GHANA COCOA INITIATIVE (CIGCI) MEMBER COUNTRIES BOYCOTT WORLD COCOA FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIP MEETING IN BRUSSELS**

The member countries of the Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana Cocoa Initiative (CIGCI) as well as the secretariat itself will no longer be attending the World Cocoa Foundation partnership meetings in Brussels, Belgium on 26-27 October.

“Our members are not happy with the state of play, and we want to send a clear message that we will not undermine the livelihoods of farmers”. Said Alex Assanvo, Executive Secretary of the CIGCI. “We had welcomed good, constructive discussions with industry partners in Abidjan, Accra and again in Rome last month, and all agreed to comply with their commitments and support the Living Income Differential (LID). However, Le Conseil du Café Cacao (CCC) and the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) have noted with disappointment that the cocoa and chocolate industry is not completely following through on its commitments by trying to negotiate down the origin differential, which is a quality premium associated to all producing countries. The immediate consequence of which is the alteration of the beneficial effects of the LID on the price guaranteed to the millions of small cocoa producers in the two countries,” he said.

Earlier this year, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, through the CIGCI, took a decision to publish the origin differentials to have more transparency in the sector. In July 2022, a further decision was taken to no longer sell their cocoa with negative country differentials, which buyers had been using to offset the cost of the LID, since it came into effect at the beginning of the 2020/21 season. At the same time, a process was also launched with the industry to build a path for an economic pact that was signed by all the major companies.

Despite all these efforts, including the implementation of a national traceability system, and standards to ensure a level playing field to deliver sustainable cocoa, the CIGCI and its members have had no choice but to withdraw its participation in the upcoming World Cocoa Foundation meeting, and will focus instead on implementing measures to ensure a better price to farmers.



The partnership that we must seal together is that of mutual respect for our commitments to fighting to bring the millions of small farmers in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana (and those in Nigeria and Cameroon in the future) out of poverty.

In addition, le Conseil du Café Cacao and the Ghana Cocoa Board are considering together with the Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana Cocoa Initiative, to assess further measures to ensure no false claims on farmers living income and consolidate the implementation of the Living Income Differential price mechanism, based on developing a transparent and a sustainable cocoa value chain in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

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