

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

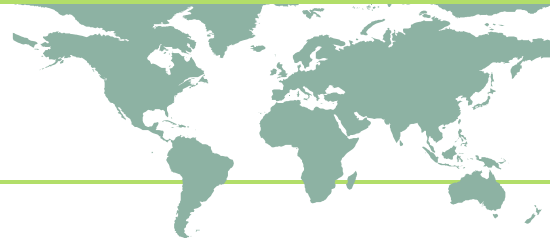
Geneva, 31 October 2014

Re: Letter of support to the PGI “Café de Colombia”

The Organisation for an International Geographical Indications Network – oriGIn – is the global coalition of Geographical Indications (GIs), representing today some 350 groups and two million producers from 40 countries. oriGIn advocates for the effective protection and enforcement of GIs at the national, regional and international level and promotes the recognition of the fundamental role of GIs in sustainable development.

“Café de Colombia” is a worldwide known GI recognised in Colombia since 2005 and protected today in 35 countries, including the European Union since 2007 via the Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the Protection of Geographical Indications and Designation of Origin for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs, today replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs on the protection of Geographical Indications and Designations of Origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs.

We are aware that the “Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia” filed cancellation actions at the Slovak Patent and Trademark Office against 2 marks: (i) POPRADSKA KAVA COLOMBIA ESPRESSO, which was registered on October 13, 2010, and (ii) POPRADSKA COLOMBIA ESPRESSO, filed on July 4, 2012. Following this, we believe that the decision of the Slovak Patent and Trademark Office to cancel both trademarks in class 30, based on



the Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) “Café de Colombia” protected in the 28 Member States of the European Union, is in line with the relevant EU legislation.

We are also aware that the above-mentioned decision that the Slovak Patent and Trademark Office has been appealed based on the alleged generic nature of the term "Colombia" with respect to coffee. **In this respect, we would like to point out that, based on article 6.1 of the EU Regulation 1151/2012, generic terms cannot be registered as protected designations of origin or protected geographical indications. As a matter of fact, at the time the PGI “Café de Colombia” was registered in the European Union, the name Colombia was not generic with respect to coffee within the EU. In this respect, it is worth recalling that an opposition procedure is provided by the same Regulation, under which interested parties have the chance to challenge a registration based on the generic nature of the name at issue. Moreover, according to article 13.2 of the same Regulation, once protected, designations of origin and geographical indications cannot become generic in the 28 Members of the European Union. As a result, since the time of its registration as PGI in the EU, the name Colombia cannot have become generic with respect to coffee within the EU.**

We hope our letter will be of help to clarify the legal issues at stake in the above-mentioned cases, and remain at your disposal for any further clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Massimo Vittori

Managing Director of oriGIn