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## **JOINT STATEMENT REGARDING SITUATION IN COTE D'IVOIRE <sup>1</sup>**

The situation in the Côte d'Ivoire involving international community sanctions and communications from His Excellency Mr Guillaume Soro have created a very testing environment for the cocoa trade.

Our concerns are for the welfare and safety of everyone living in Côte d'Ivoire at this difficult time. We hope for a quick and peaceful resolution to the current political tensions and related social unrest.

Our aim is to continue working with the population of Côte d'Ivoire and to strive to maintain a viable cocoa sector in the long term. We remain committed to the millions of cocoa farming communities, families and children whose livelihoods depend upon cocoa.

We have received communications in relation to the conduct of the cocoa business in Côte d'Ivoire to which we are in the process of responding in order to seek further clarification for our members. As can be expected in these circumstances, the trade issues involved in this respect are of a highly sensitive nature and will take time to resolve. The cocoa trade and industry is working closely together to address the challenges that this situation places before us and indeed the whole cocoa supply chain from farmer to consumer.

Time, patience and a common sense approach to the difficulties and delays that may arise are required, but most importantly, all those whose interests are impacted should remain calm in order that we sustain no long term damage to Ivorian farming communities and the cocoa industry.

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<sup>1</sup> The European Cocoa Association (ECA) based in Brussels is a trade association that groups the major companies involved in the cocoa bean trade and processing, in warehousing and related logistical activities in Europe. Together, ECA Members represent two-thirds of Europe's cocoa beans grinding, half of Europe's industrial chocolate production and 40% of the world production of cocoa liquor, butter and powder. On behalf of its members, ECA monitors and reports on development impacting the cocoa sector, both at regulatory and scientific levels. In addition, ECA is actively engaged in European and International fora related to the industry's contribution to a sustainable cocoa economy.

The Federation of Cocoa Commerce Limited is UK based and represents some 160 members engaged in the international cocoa sector. This diverse membership includes organisations and companies from cocoa producing countries, the cocoa processing and chocolate industry, cocoa trade, logistics providers, banks, brokers, insurance and others including the International Cocoa Organisation ("ICCO"). FCC activities are focused around the cocoa supply chain being an international contract authority. We support this cocoa contract with arbitration services and a number of other initiatives to enhance integrity in the cocoa supply chain.