

STATEMENT OF DOMINICAN SUGAR INDUSTRY ON

Seventh Periodic Review of Implementation of Recommendations in the U.S. Department of Labor's Public Report of Review of Submission 2011-03 (Dominican Republic)

September 13, 2022

The Dominican Sugar Industry (DSI),¹ which represents the three companies that export all sugar from the Dominican Republic, takes note of the latest review report issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

The DSI appreciates the recognition in the report that its companies have made improvements on issues raised by DOL, and continue to do so.

Among the most recent steps taken by the DSI were an initiative to bring the minimum wage in the sugar cane sector to parity with the minimum wage for the overall agricultural sector; contracting with a leading international ESG due diligence advisory services firm for an ongoing in-depth multi-month review of all operations for labor compliance issues; and the launching of an unprecedented engagement forum by the three companies with civil society groups active in advocacy for the rights of migrant workers – the first full meeting to be held on September 16.

The DSI also notes the report identifies that the sugar cane sector in the Dominican Republic includes other operations beyond those of the DSI. The DSI supports further efforts to engage all elements of the sector in enhancing the labor and living conditions for workers in sugar cane production in the country.

The findings and recommendations in the report are largely addressed to the Government of the Dominican Republic since the procedure being invoked by the U.S. Department of Labor is a government-to-government process under the DR-CAFTA agreement. The DSI fully supports such government-to-government engagement and is prepared to provide whatever input or cooperation would be helpful to advance that process.

The DSI further restates its full and enthusiastic commitment to assure the labor and living conditions in its sugar supply chain meet international norms, its commitment to continuous improvements through transparency and dialogue, and its willingness to fully engage with the Dominican government, other elements of the Dominican sugar cane sector, and interested outside stakeholders, to support further positive initiatives.

¹ Central Romana Corporation (CRC), Consorcio Azucarero de Empresas Industriales (CAEI), Consorcio Azucarero Central (CAC).