



# ica News

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Issue No 1/1997

Editor: Mary Treacy

## Eleventh ICA Specialised Organisation in Good Health

In November 1996 a new ICA specialised organisation was formed by three of the world's largest health co-operatives: UNIMED of Brasil; The JCCU Medical Committee, JCCU (Japan); the Espriu Foundation (Spain). The founding meeting, which was held in conjunction with the ICA Regional Assembly for the Americas, immediately elected a Board and adopted an action plan and rules.

Over sixty representatives from the nine organisations interested in becoming members of the organisation attended the meeting and elected Dr. Kato from Japan as Chair and Dr. Castilho from Brazil and Dr. Carreño from Spain as Board members. Once the remaining seven organisations applying have been accepted into membership a further three Board Members will be elected, preferably one from each of the regions.

The additional seven organisations applying for membership are: Usimed (Brazil); Swedcoop (Sweden); Coomeva (Colombia) and FEMEC (Colombia); DRUZAP (Slovakia), Centrosoyus (Russia) and OPHACO (Belgium).



*Ruben Villa from COCETA in Spain making an intervention at the founding meeting of the ICA's International Health Co-operative Organisation. Sitting at the top table from left are: Dr. Mallmann from UNIMED, Mats Ahnlund, Secretary of IHCO from ICA Secretariat, and the newly-elected Chairman of IHCO, Dr. Kato from the JCCU Medical Committee.*

While many of the new organisation's activities will be focused at the regional level, the Secretary of the new committee, Mats Ahnlund, the newly appointed Senior Membership Advisor at ICA, will co-ordinate activities at the global level, through the collection and dissemination of information about health co-ops, and through workshops and seminars organised in conjunction with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International

Labour Organisation (ILO), with whom a partnership has already been developed.

The first such seminar was held immediately after the founding meeting at which 50 participants listened to key-note speeches by representatives from the ILO, ICA and health co-operatives from around the World.

*(Source: International Health Co-operative Organisation Secretariat)*



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## UNIMED - A Unique Co-operative Model



by Zahid Qureshi of ICMIF

**S**antos, in Brazil's state of São Paulo, is Latin America's largest sea port. On 18 December 1967 it gained another distinction. To counteract the growing commercialisation of health services, the city's medical syndicate, led by Dr. Edmundo Castilho, set up the first Unimed co-operative. Before long, the "medical co-operation" of the 21 founding doctors was embraced by other associations and syndicates of doctors.

In 1972 Unimed do Brasil was set up to consolidate the system within a political and administrative structure providing nationwide guidelines. Today, Unimed is found in 3,700 or 70% of Brazilian municipalities, with 304 co-operatives bringing together some 73,000 doctors serving eight million users.

The Unimed Multico-operative Business Complex now includes Unimed co-operatives for users, Unimed savings and credit co-operatives inspired by Mondragon, Unimed Systems to coordinate information technology in the provision of services, Unimed Products and Health Services, the Unimed Study

Centre Foundation, Unimed Air for emergency services, and Unimed Insurance covering some 2.5 million clients. Products offered by Unimed Aseguradora include medical insurance, group life, income guarantee, loan insurance, reinsurance for operational risks of co-operatives, and a private pension plan. Unimed is spreading its model through joint action in other countries - Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, to name a few. Unimed is a unique model whose success is proven by numbers, says Dr. Castilho. "It is the result of hard work and vigorous ethics. We present this victorious model to fellow-co-operators in all countries of the world."

In June 1995, Unimed organised an International Forum on Health Care Co-operation in conjunction with the ICA and put forward a proposal to include health among the affairs of the ICA. With Dr. Castilho as the driving force and assistance from co-operative organisations in Japan and Spain, a new specialised organisation of the ICA is now created. The International

Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO) held its official founding meeting in San José, Costa Rica, 22 November 1996. Among IHCO's plans are to explore areas of collaboration with ICMIF, including the possibility of the insurance programmes of health co-operatives applying for membership of ICMIF.

### Latest Co-operative Health Care News

*MultiPlan, a New York-based health plan headed by a well-known co-operative builder has joined hands across the Caribbean with one of the world's largest co-operative health organizations, Cooperativa de Seguros de Vida de Puerto Rico (COSVI). COSVI and MultiPlan announced jointly that they are expanding to Puerto Rico adding to their network 74 hospitals, 120 other facilities and 4,000 physicians participating in COSVI's island-wide health plans. Some 20 million people have access to the MultiPlan.*

## Asia and the Pacific

### Fourth Co-operative Ministers' Conference

Ministers, government officials and co-op leaders from 21 countries participated in the ICA's fourth Co-operative Ministers' and Leaders' Conference in Chiang-mai, Thailand, from 19-22 March. The meeting reviewed progress on amending co-op legislation and policy in the region, and set objectives for further improvement. During the meeting of the regional Executive Committee, Yang Deshou of China was nominated as the region's candidate for election as ICA Vice-President at the General Assembly. B.S. Vishwanathan of India was elected chairman of the region's Executive Committee.

## The Americas



### Argentina Hosts International Seminar

In November 1996, the ICA Buenos Aires Project Office and the Instituto Provincial de Acción Cooperativa, Argentina, jointly organised an International Seminar on the "Argentine and Canadian Co-operative and Public

Banking Sector: its Articulation with Production".

The seminar, which was sponsored by the Confederación de la República de Argentina and the Canadian Co-operative Association, attracted delegates from Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay as well as the ICA Banking Committee for Latin America, CCA International Business Network, and the Credit Union Central of Canada.

One of the results was the signing of an agreement between CCA and the Argentine co-operative banks, Banco Mayo and Banco Creditcoop, to develop reciprocal commercial and technical missions aimed at creating binational import/export enterprises.

## Africa

### ICA Housing To Meet In Uganda

After the successful presentation of the achievements of co-operative housing by the Chairman of ICA Housing, Rolf Trodin, during the HABITAT II conference in Istanbul, ICA Housing has decided to continue with regional HABITAT-conferences. These are excellent occasions to show how co-operative housing can contribute to solutions of housing misery and shortage.

On the occasion of the ICA Board meeting, there will be a housing seminar on 17 - 18 April 1997 in Kampala, to discuss political pre-conditions, the legal framework, economic and social aspects as well as the financing of housing co-operatives.

The Ugandan Government should be motivated to introduce co-operative housing in the country through the promotion of the housing co-operative foundations, and the introduction of favourable conditions for land and infrastructure, as well as access to credit.

Successful examples from other African countries can help to illustrate why co-operative housing is a good solution to the problems of sub-standard and slum housing or homelessness. Fulfilling the pre-conditions for the establishment of co-operative housing is an important task. The Kampala seminar will be a contribution to a more transparent policy.

(Source: C. Hachmann, GDW, 20 March, 1997)

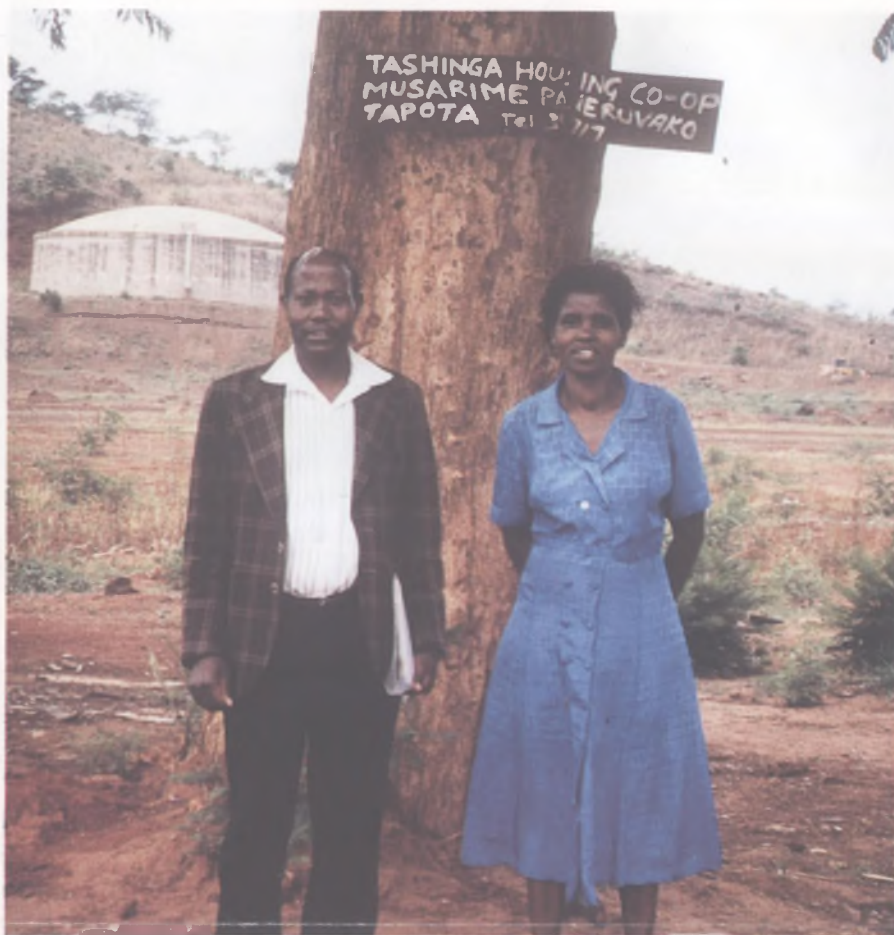
## Europe

### CICOPA Meeting In Budapest

A meeting of CICOPA was held in Budapest in October 1996. The proceedings were opened by the ICA President, Graham Melmoth, with a moment of silence in tribute to Yves Régis, who had led the organisation so dynamically until his death in September 1996.

Marian Rybar of Slovakia was unanimously elected as Interim-President until the 1997 General Assembly and the ICA Director-General, Bruce Thordarson agreed that Arsenio Invernizzi from the ICA Secretariat would be designated as Interim Secretary. Jean-Marie Courtois from France was co-opted as member of the Executive and Pierre Guiard-Schmid, also from France, was mandated to coordinate the CICOPA Development Programme.

## Zimbabwe - Domestic Workers Learn to Build



Two proud domestic workers of the Tashinga Co-operative building society.

by Astrid Kirchner, DESWOS

The traditional ways of earning a bit of money in Africa, Asia and Latin America are all too well known. Anyone who has ever visited Brasilia, Delhi or Nairobi has seen them, the street vendors, shoe shiners and clerks in the little sidewalk offices who for a charge take down letters for people who have never learned to read or write. To this group also belong the domestic workers, the live-in household help for the better-off who do the cooking, cleaning, gardening and more for their wealthy bosses.

As in Germany, the wages earned by domestic workers do

not exceed the limit at which their employers would be required to make social security contributions. But the domestic workers in the south suffer a much worse lot than those here at home. They are among the lowest paid of all workers. Most can neither read nor write and have never learned a trade. They have no social insurance and the wages they earn are not enough to support a family.

Domestic workers have only a shadow of a family life. Their shacks in the slums are so far away from their work that they live in small rooms in their employers' homes. They have only Saturday afternoons and Sundays off. This is when they finally find time for their fami-

lies, for church and, so that they can somehow make ends meet, for side jobs.

DESWOS has been working to help the members of the Tashinga co-operative building society. The word "Tashinga" means something like "to take control of your own life" and to improve your situation. For eight years now, all 224 families have been saving a small sum each month so that they, with help from the government, could purchase a suitable lot close to the city where they can build. Now they have finally found a site. With financial assistance from the European Union and DESWOS, they plan to put up 100 solidly-built houses so that the domestic workers and their families can come together under one roof during the week as well. The proximity to the city and to their employers means the workers can leave early and walk or take the bus to get to their jobs on time.

At the same time the DESWOS project wants to, so to speak, kill two birds with one stone, and offer these people new job prospects along with new lodgings. The co-operative society has made an arrangement with a local construction company whereby the company can take over management of the construction project if it agrees to take on more trainees. Domestic workers would be more than happy to trade in their current jobs for more meaningful and practical employment. In their view, household work is very unsatisfying and benefits only the rich. They would prefer to learn a productive trade, so that

in the evenings they could look back with pride at what they accomplished that day and, most importantly, so that their hard work would earn them a higher wage.

Both men and women are taken on as trainees in construction. They can learn to become masons, carpenters or simple labourers. Similar projects have shown that unskilled workers are ideal for producing building blocks and roofing tiles by hand. The tools and machines required are already available and the building materials are supplied. Bricks are pressed using hand-operated machines. This is hard, physical labour but is quite easy to learn. As such work is too strenuous for women, they may be employed making roofing tiles, where a fine touch and sure

instinct are required to properly work and shape the moist mixture of clay, cement and sisal hemp used in producing the tiles. Other DESWOS projects have demonstrated that women are particularly suited to such work. This project also provides compensation for wages which participants would have earned as domestic workers during the period of training.

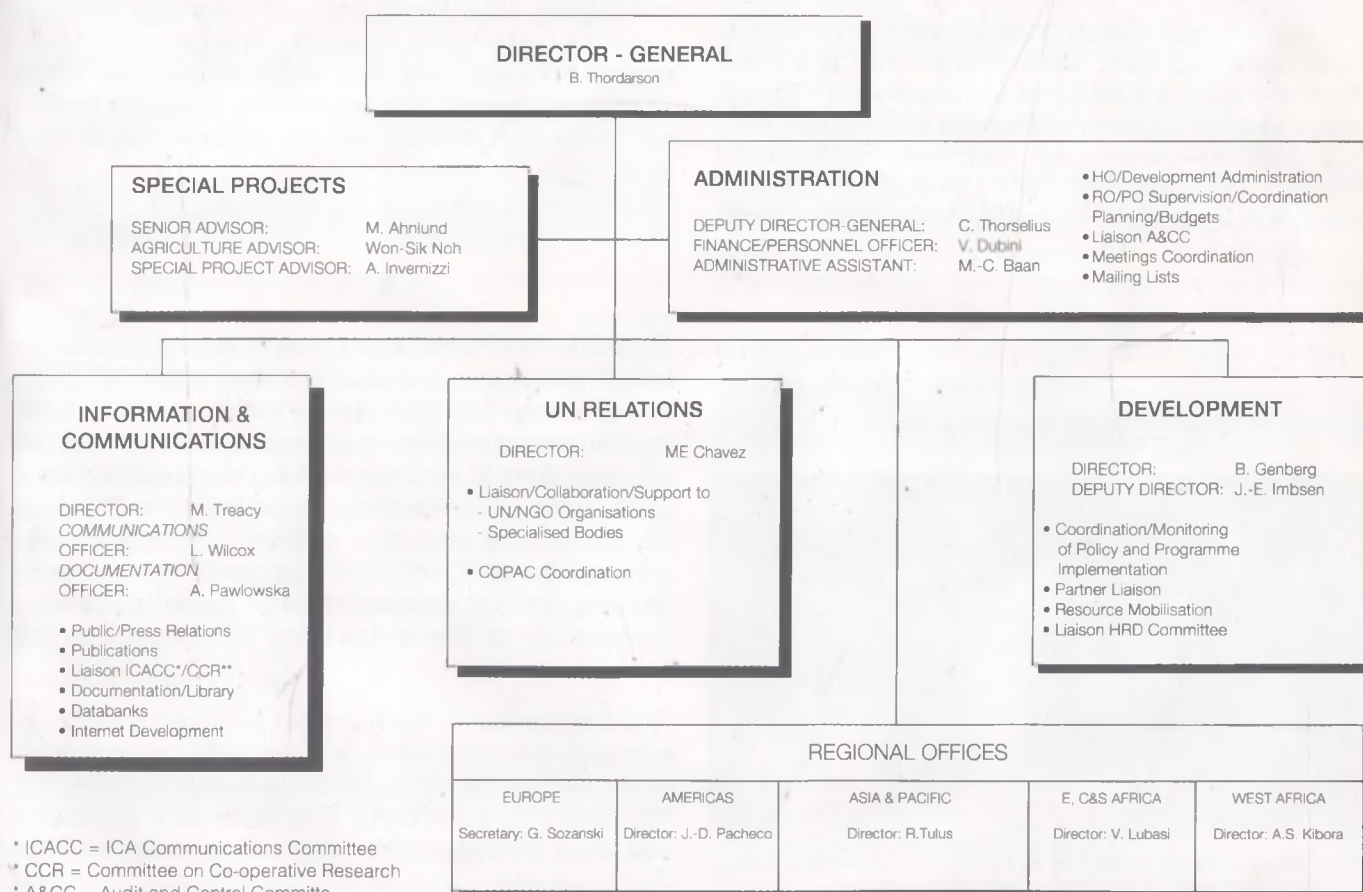
If all goes according to plan, trainees will be able to earn their livings producing building materials or working as masons once the project has ended. They will be able to help in the construction of additional houses for the co-operative society. The various mixtures of sand, cement, clay and water allows for the production of building materials for rich and poor alike. So it will be pos-



Dinner preparations are underway.

sible to satisfy the growing demand for homes. As the Tashinga project reaches fruition, the chances for domestic workers in Zimbabwe to improve their lives grow by the day.

## 1997 ICA STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS



## World Overview

### Canada

#### Success Stories

The Canadian Co-operative Secretariat and the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and Conseil Canadien de la Coopération have finalised a second edition of Co-operative Success Stories in Canada. This can be obtained free of charge from the Co-operative Secretariat. Fax: (+1-613) 759-7489.

#### Breaking Barriers to Build Co-operation

Co-operative educators, leaders and communicators from the USA, Canada and the Caribbean are invited to participate in the Association of Co-operative Educators (ACE) Annual Institute for 1997, which has as its theme "Breaking Barriers to Build Co-operation in the New Millennium".

The event will take place in Toronto from April 30 - May 2, and will include sessions on educating government; barriers faced by young people as they look to the co-operative model; education and training in the workplace; new generation co-ops; and a special session on "Thinking Outside the Box", which will challenge those whose minds are closed to new technology and new ideas.

The Institute will also provide an opportunity to visit co-operative and credit union Internet sites at a Cyber Bar and present a Best Ideas Showcase where participants can share innovative ideas with colleagues.

Further information from Betty Davey at CCA at Fax: (+1-613) 567 0658 or by E-mail [betty@coopcca.com](mailto:betty@coopcca.com).

### Finland

#### Environment Week in SOK



An environment week was arranged in the SOK Head Office from 13 to 21 February 1997 including an exhibition and panel discussion. During the week, experts gave up-to-date information and advice about environment issues. Main topics were environmental labelling, paper and cardboard recycling, energy saving techniques, biowaste collection and treatment and office cleaning equipment. The target group was SOK personnel in the first instance and the purpose was to raise environment awareness.

(Source: FCCA Finland, March 1997)

### India

#### Co-ops in a Liberalised Economy



The Prime Minister of India, Shri H. D. Deve Gowda meeting foreign dignitaries at the NCUI Congress.

The National Co-operative Union of India discussed the role of co-operatives in the liberalised economy during its 13th Congress which has gathered more than 3,500 representatives of grass-roots level societies. The Prime Minister, Shri H.D. Deve Gowda addressed the delegates insisting on the merits of co-operative efforts in all spheres of economic activity. The main topics reviewed by the Congresses concerned personnel management policies, structural reforms, gender integration, applicability of labour laws and the income tax for co-ops.

The first session of the Congress honoured foreign co-operators for outstanding achievements for the movement. Among awardees were Graham Melmoth, ICA President and Yves Régis, who received a posthumous tribute for his action to develop workers coops in India.

(Source: A. Pawlowska, ICA Geneva)

## World Overview

### Italy

#### Women Benefit from Affirmative Action

The 1992 affirmative action law on women's entrepreneurship (L.215/92) will soon become operational.

A fund of 40 thousand million lire will provide funding for projects promoting enterprise development by and for women. Italian co-operatives have been identified as one of the beneficiaries of the fund and have been urged to submit funding requests for relevant projects.

(Source: *Lega Informazioni No2/97*)

### Japan

#### Migros Chairman Visits Japan

Jules Kyburz, Chairman of the Board of the Federation of Migros Co-operatives, the largest retailer in Switzerland, visited Japan at the end of 1996 to help launch the Japanese version of the book "The Adventure of Migros" with a moving speech on the Migros philosophy and history. Mr. Kyburz took the opportunity to deepen relationships with the Japanese co-ops, visiting the headquarters of JCCU and visiting a han group, Co-op Kobe, the largest co-op in Japan, a department store, a food plant and the Co-operative College. Since Migros originally grew from a mobile sales business using delivery trucks he was particularly interested in joint purchase activities and home delivery services.

(Source: *Co-op Japan Information, December 96*)

### UK

#### Banking on an Historic Year

The Co-operative Bank is celebrating its 125th birthday in 1997, having been formed in 1872 as the loan and deposit department of the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS). The Bank's Annual Report for 1996 should show profits of £ 36.7 million, the best indication that the bank's ethical policy based on Co-operative Principles continues to demonstrate that the co-operative approach to business can equal success in today's competitive environment. The bank has identified seven stakeholder groups in addition to its shareholders - customers, staff, suppliers, community, society, past and future generations.

(Source: *Co-operative News*)

#### CWS Supports Co-operative College

CWS has placed a major vote of confidence in the Co-operative College by pledging to send 1,400 of its executives

and senior managers on a special course on Co-operative Values. The course will explore ways in which the Co-operative Identity and Principles can be put into practice while improving the society's business. The course follows a senior executives conference which was held at the College in January at which the new Chief Executive of CWS, Graham Melmoth, who is also President of ICA, launched a handbook entitled "Managing Change Through People".

(Source: *Co-operative News*)

#### Journalists Launch Media Agency Co-op

A media agency run on co-operative principles has been launched in the UK by four journalists, pooling a range of skills under one roof.

Set up with help from the local Co-operative Development Agency, the co-operative Media South West, aims to offer press, PR and research coverage for Devon and Cornwall while operating as a worker's co-op. Services available include writing, editing, design, photography, research and consultancy, plus producing publicity materials and in-house newspapers for local businesses.

(Source: *Co-operative News*)

### USA

#### The Value of Co-operation

The 1997 theme of the Co-operative Conference in the USA will be "The Value of Co-operation". The National Co-operative Business Association (NCBA), the National Co-operative Bank (NCB) and the Co-operative Development Foundation (CDF) are collaborating to present value-added opportunities for each organisation's membership during the two-day event to be held in Washington D.C. on April 23 and 24. For more information contact Dianna Vaughan at (+1-202) 638 6222 or E-mail [dvaughnan@ncba.org](mailto:dvaughnan@ncba.org)

(Source: *Co-operative Business Journal, February 1997*)

#### Future Co-op Leaders Programme

NCBA is looking for candidates for the 1997 class of its "Future Coop Leaders Program", an educational programme designed to develop co-operative leadership in order to build a stronger co-operative Community. The Programme provides scholarships for staff, directors and members of co-operatives to attend a training and educational event held annually in Washington, DC. Contact Leta Mach at NCBA for further information or send an E-mail to [lmach@ncba.org](mailto:lmach@ncba.org).

(Source: *Co-operative Business Journal, February 1997*)

## Co-op People

The Administrative Council of the Confédération des caisses populaires et d'Economie Des-jardins of Québec re-elected **Claude Béland** as President of the Mouvement des caisses Des-jardins (Canada) for a third three-year term of office in January of this year. Mr. Béland was first elected to this position in January 1987. Mr Béland is also Chairman of the International Co-operative Banking Association, a Specialised Body of the ICA, and a member of the ICA Board.

**Jan Fencel** has been re-elected as Chairman of the Association of Agricultural Co-operatives and Companies in the Czech Republic at the Annual General Meeting on 29 November 1996.

**MEP Pauline Green**, Leader of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, has been elected President of the next UK Co-operative Congress to be held in Cardiff from 25 to 27 May. (Source: *Co-operative News*, Jan. 1997)

**Nora Sobolow** has been appointed as the new Executive Director of the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA). She was seconded by the Credit Union Central of Canada and the two organisations are exploring opportunities for working more closely, especially in the area of government affairs and policy. Ms. Sovolow remains as Vice-

President, Government Affairs and Policy at CUCU. Her e-mail address is [nora@coopcca.com](mailto:nora@coopcca.com) (Source: *Inter Sector Volume 1 Winter 96/97*)

**Peter Vrisk** has been elected President of the Zadružna Zveza Slovenije, the Co-operative Union of Slovenia.

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## ICA CALENDAR

■ 7 - 8 April 1997  
Chairs & Secs of SBs  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 9 April 1997  
ICBA Board Meeting  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 - 18 April 1997  
ICA Housing Seminar  
Kampala, Uganda

■ 18 - 21 April 1997  
ICA Board Meeting  
Kampala, Uganda

■ 2 May 1997  
ICACC Executive  
Copenhagen, Denmark

■ 5 - 7 June 1997  
Global Women's Committee  
St. Petersburg, Russia

■ 13 - 14 June 1997  
ICA Housing Board  
Vienna, Austria

■ 11-13 September 1997  
Global Women's Committee  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 13 September 1997  
European Council  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 13 - 14 September 1997  
Health Committee Meetings  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 14 September 1997  
ICA Board  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 15 - 16 September 1997  
ICA General Assembly  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 15 - 16 September 1997  
Audit/Control  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 September 1997  
CICOPA, Fisheries  
Housing, HRD  
ICBA, Intercoop & ICAO  
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 18 September 1997  
CICOPA, HRD,  
Housing, ICBA & ICAO  
Geneva, Switzerland





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Issue No 2/1997

Editor: Mary Treacy

## ICA Board Meeting in Kampala, Uganda

The ICA Board Meeting in Kampala, Uganda, on April 18-19, was not only the first such meeting to be held in Uganda but also led to decisions which will have a major impact on the forthcoming General Assembly in September.

ICA President Graham Melmoth, who had to miss the meeting while leading a successful defence against a takeover attempt of the Co-operative Wholesale Society in the U.K., informed the Board in writing that his heavy domestic commitments had "sadly led me to the conclusion that I ought not to stand again for the Presidency in September".

The Board therefore decided to establish an Elections Committee consisting of the four regional nominees for Vice-President (Lars Hillbom, Roberto Rodrigues, Bernard Wolimbwa, and Yang Deshou) and the incumbent members who have decided not to seek re-election (Raija Itkonen, Ota Karen, Hasle Nielsen, and Graham Melmoth). The Committee will be responsible for reviewing potential candidates and presenting a proposal to the Board, so that the Board can subsequently make a recommendation to the GA in September. The Elections Committee will also promote candidates for the Board, with particular efforts to promote the nomination of women, and will supervise the election procedure in Geneva.



*ICA Board members meet with senior Government officials in Kampala.*

The Board completed its review of the recommendations made by the Special Board Committee on Rules and Finance, composed of Graham Melmoth, Raija Itkonen, Yehudah Paz, and Etienne Pflimlin. The Board decided to recommend to the General Assembly a number of rule changes, including an increase in the size of the Board from 16 to 20 members; an increase in the maximum national representation at the General Assembly from 20 to 25; the introduction of a new category of associate member; and a provision to co-opt up to four female Board members if deemed necessary. After reviewing possible

amendments to the subscription formula, the Committee proposed not to make any major changes, with the exception of amending the formula for housing co-ops, to which the Board agreed. The Board approved the ICA's 1996 financial statements, which show a small surplus, and the 1997 budget, which also projects a small surplus. In addition, the Board approved membership applications from 12 organisations. It reviewed policy papers and approved recommendations on three of the ICA's priority areas of activity - communications, development and membership services.



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### ICA General Assembly News

Some 500 representatives and observers are expected to participate in the ICA's biennial General Assembly, which will be held in Geneva on September 15-16, 1997, after a four-year absence from the ICA's home city. It was in Geneva in 1993 that the current Board was elected, and a feature of this year's meeting will be elections for a new Board, including the President, and members of the Audit and Control Committee.

Member organisations wishing to nominate a candidate for election to the Presidency or to the ICA Board should submit the name to the ICA Director before 15 June 1997. Candidates for President should include a brief statement about their vision for the ICA, in addition to the biographical details expected of all nominees.

As foreven when the ICA Rules underwent a major revision at the Tokyo Congress in 1992, they have been subjected to a further review during the last two

years to see if any modifications are needed on the basis of recent experience. The proposal being presented to the General Assembly by the Board concludes that the new regional structure is generally functioning well and requires no major change. Continued efforts, however, are needed to strengthen relations between ICA and the Specialised Bodies, and a number of changes are proposed. A new category of associate member is proposed in order to enable organisations not in a position to assume full membership to participate in ICA's global and regional activities. With a larger Board and General Assembly membership (see previous report), it is hoped that the representation of regions, sectors and women will be improved.

A special half-day session on 16 September will focus on the global dimension of co-operatives - how they have an opportunity to influence important international issues, and how they can better collaborate with

other allies in the civil society (including farmers' associations, trade unions, and mutuals).

Eleven of the ICA's 15 Specialised Bodies will hold meetings in conjunction with the General Assembly. In the case of the agriculture and women's groups, issue-oriented conferences will be held in addition to their statutory meetings. Other meetings include the ICA's European Council, a joint Seminar on Networking and Distance Learning organised by the HRD and Communications Committees and a new "Business Opportunity" luncheon in conjunction with the launching of a new sub-committee on Communications and Trade:

Member organisations have already received registration and hotel information. Documentation for the G A, printed in the next two editions of the ICA Review, will be sent to registered participants at the end of June. Further information is available from the ICA Secretariat on request.

#### Overcoming Distance

A Seminar on the potential of Electronic Networking for overcoming distance and the possibilities of using distance learning for Co-operative Education, Human Resource Development and Communications will be held at the ILO in Geneva on 17 September. Aspects covered will include interactive and distance learning, networking, using the Internet for research and lobbying and mobilising people via the Internet. For further information and registration contact Jan-Eirik Imbsen at the ICA, Fax: (+41 22) 798 41 22; e-mail [development@coop.org](mailto:development@coop.org). The Seminar will be supported by the ILO COOP-NET Programme.

#### ICA News now available in English, French and Spanish

If you are interested in receiving copies of the other language versions please drop a line to the ICA Secretariat. Either fax, e-mail or send a letter to the Communications Department at the address on the front page.

The ICA Review of International Co-operation is available in English and Spanish. For the Spanish version please also contact the ICA Secretariat for details of how to subscribe.

### European Council Meets in Italy

This spring's European Council meeting was hosted by the ICA's Italian member organisations in Rome on 21 March 1997. Among the items discussed were gender issues, which constitute an integral part of all European programmes. With the goal of encouraging a higher level of participation by European women co-operators in ICA activities and governing bodies, the Council decided to evaluate and analyse the answers to the ICA President's Gender Policy letter, as well as review the Rules for the European Region from a gender perspective.

In light of the ever-increasing impact of the European Union's enlargement on co-operatives, it was decided to organise a seminar dealing with this topic in



*ICA European Council welcomed in Rome by Luigi Marino, President of Confcooperative.*

November 1997. The invitation of the Czech co-operative movement to host the seminar was accepted.

Another item addressed was how to best represent European co-operatives, in order to avoid overlapping activities and to ensure smooth co-ordination with parallel institutions. To further discuss this issue, a Working

Group was set up under the chairmanship of Calixte Parpais, of Crédit Mutuel, France.

Council members agreed that the next Regional Assembly for Europe would be held 15 and 16 October 1998 in Paris.

The European Council will meet on 13 September 1997, prior to the ICA General Assembly in Geneva.

### ICACC Meets in Copenhagen



*Members of the ICACC meeting discuss future projects for the committee.*

The Executive of the ICACC met in Copenhagen on 1 May to discuss future plans which include: a joint seminar with the ILO and the ICA HRD Committee to be held in Geneva in conjunction with the 1997 General Assembly;

a seminar on Co-operatives and Lobbying to be held in 1998; and a workshop for journalists from East, Central and Southern Africa, to be held in the region in 1998, possibly in collaboration with the ILO.

### Research Cttee News

This year's ICA International Research Conference will be held at the University Residential Centre in Bertinoro near Bologna, Italy, on October 3-5, 1997. The conference title is "The Co-operative Advantage in a Civil Economy".

The 1998 Research Conference has been tentatively scheduled to take place in Cork, Ireland from 13-17 May 1998. The Committee also plans to hold a conference jointly with the ICA Global Women's Committee sometime later in 1998 on "Women, Entrepreneurship and Co-operatives".

### Belgium

#### Happy 50th, CIRIEC!

The 50th anniversary of CIRIEC, the International Centre of Research and Information on the Public and Co-operative Economy, will be celebrated 26 September 1997 in Brussels. A scientific colloquium addressing "The Public, Social and Co-operative Economy and the General Interest. Which Roles in the XXIst Century?" will be presented. Those interested in attending should contact CIRIEC at (+32 4) 366 27 46 or by e-mail at [ciriec@ulg.ac.be](mailto:ciriec@ulg.ac.be). Their web site can also be viewed at <http://www.ulg.ac.be/ciriec/ciriec.htm>.

### Canada

#### Second Annual Youth Unity Conference

Following the success of its Youth Unity Conference held in August 1996, the Co-operators Group will hold a second such conference this year. The conference aims to provide a forum for young adults, aged 18 to 21, to explore, express and listen to diverse views on Canadian unity. An evaluation of the last conference showed that 90 per cent of the attendees found the event "exceeding their expectations."

(Source: *ICMIF NetWork*, no. 20, February 1997)

#### New Newsletter for Co-op Connections

In the fall of 1996, the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) published its first issue of the Linkages Bulletin, a newsletter for the Co-op Connections Programme. The target audience of the bulletin is co-operatives and credit unions, both in Canada and overseas, involved in the Linkages Programme, as well as Canadian developmental education co-ordinators and CCA staff. The purpose of the Co-op Connections Programme is to link co-operatives and credit unions in Canada with those in countries where CCA is actively involved. Co-ops with similar challenges and services agree on a linkage, or a "co-op connection," for three years. During this period, they are able to participate in activities such as internships and exchanges, designed to benefit both partners. For further information, or to be added to the Linkages mailing list, please contact Laurie Tennian at (+1 613) 238-6711 or by e-mail at [laurie@coopcca.com](mailto:laurie@coopcca.com).

#### New Canadian Co-op Act

On 21 March 1997 Industry Minister John Manley

and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Minister, Ralph Goodale, introduced the *Canada Cooperatives Act*, designed to modernize laws governing federally incorporated, non-financial Canadian co-operatives. This Act strengthens and clarifies the corporate governance rules relating to co-operatives and gives them access to different sources of capital. As well, it provides benefits to small and large co-operatives by simplifying incorporation and providing clear standards for directors' liability. The co-operative sector, through the Canadian Co-operative Association, in collaboration with the *Conseil canadien de la coopération*, played a key role in drafting the legislation. Industry Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada used this draft to conduct a series of consultations and fine-tune the legislation.

(Source: *Government of Canada News Release*)

#### Desjardins: Economic Success and Social Responsibility

The 1996 annual report of the Mouvement des Caisses Desjardins shows that the Quebec-based financial co-operative movement increased its assets to 83 billion Canadian dollars and increased its operating surplus by 8.5 percent to 473 million Canadian dollars last year. The movement is the largest private employer in the province of Quebec. It is also the Canadian leader in direct payment, with over 28,000 point-of-sale terminals. The movement also published its annual "Socio-economic and Cooperative Audit Report", showing that it returned 89 million dollars to the communities it serves through a combination of patronage refunds (66 million dollars), gifts, sponsorships, and scholarships. 57 percent of the local caisses collaborate with other caisses, and 32 percent have links with other kinds of co-operatives in their communities.

(Source: *1996 Annual Report: Review of Operations*)

### Czech Republic

#### Housing Seminar in Prague

Last November over 40 participants met in Prague for a United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE) workshop for central and eastern European countries, organised by the Federal Union of German Housing Associations, an affiliation of housing co-operatives in collaboration with the Co-operative Section of CECODHAS (European Liaison Committee for Social Housing). The objective of the workshop was to offer information to those countries in transition, where co-operative structures have to be adapted to the needs of a market economy; and also

## World Overview

to draw attention to the fact that privatisation of state-owned housing can be transformed into new housing co-operatives. During the workshop, the Czech, Slovakian, Polish and Hungarian movements showed how successfully housing co-ops can carry on their work once legal preconditions are met. Nevertheless, problems such as increases in real estate and energy need to be solved. Saving schemes and favourable terms of credit can help to overcome some obstacles, but subsidies are also necessary for the lower income sections of society.

A follow-up of the workshop in Prague will be organised in Warsaw. The first draft of a new handbook for the foundation of new housing co-operatives was presented by GdW in Prague and will be finished for publication in Warsaw.

### Greece

#### Ambelakia, the Co-op's Birthplace

A small village in the mountains of Greece, Ambelakia is historically recognised as the home of the first co-operative. Formed in 1795, the co-op exported naturally dyed colourful cotton yarn all over Europe.

Dimitra, the Institute of Information, Training and Development, and the Cultural Association of Ambelakia are working together on a comprehensive rural regeneration project to secure and enhance the historic and economic prosperity of Ambelakia.

A multi-lingual interactive touch screen CD-ROM on the historical, architectural and economic development of Ambelakia, as well as a Visitors' Centre where the CD-ROM can be viewed, are being planned.

The project is partially funded by the RAPHAEL programme (The European Community Action in Support of Culture), which works for the preservation and increased awareness of cultural heritage. However, the programme is still in need of funding. Please contact the head office at (+30 41) 554 027 or be-mail at [dimitra@hol.gr](mailto:dimitra@hol.gr) for more information.

### UK

#### CWS Foils Attempted Takeover

In April an attempted take-over of the Co-operative Wholesale Society by Galileo, a company headed by

31 year-old old entrepreneur, Andrew Regan, was foiled thanks to the swift response of CWS officials. After a lengthy battle a last-minute injunction forced Galileo to abandon the launch of their hostile \$1.6 billion bid.

CWS Chief Executive, Graham Melmoth, said that the attempted bid failed mainly because CWS were able to prove that it was based on stolen documents. The CWS, which hired a team of private detectives to trace how information was being leaked, is now taking legal action against one of its executives, Allan Green, who allegedly handed confidential documents to Galileo.

According to the Manchester Guardian Weekly of 27 April, Galileo disclosed that it had been about to publish its long-awaited strategy for unlocking the multi-billion pound value of the CWS. It had intended to make formal proposals for the conversion of the CWS into a limited company, so that Galileo could then make an offer for the mutual society.

The court order obtained by the CWS forbade Mr Regan, Mr Green, Galileo or its parent company, Lanica, from using confidential CWS information. It also required them to disclose all the information they had and what they had used it for, and to return all papers to the CWS.

On April 22, a spokesman for Mr Regan said he would stand down as a director of Galileo as soon as the company was able to go public with its plans. It was seen in some quarters as the first sign of a crack between Mr Regan and his financial backers, led by Hambros Merchant Bank. Later Hambros made an unreserved apology to CWS over its conduct in the affair and is understood to have paid substantial damages.

Apologies have also been sent by lawyers Travers, Smith, Braithwaite who acted as legal advisers to Galileo and Larnica. Galileo have subsequently gone into voluntary liquidation.

The situation of CWS in Britain is clearly something that co-operators world-wide must face up to. According to Gary B. Hansen of Utah State University the Wall Street Journal recently published an article stating mutual insurance companies in the US are considering converting to stockholder companies in order to raise more capital for acquisitions, etc. If this path is followed, warns Hansen, it will mean that the policy holders will soon find themselves at the mercy of shareholders who are interested only in profits and dividends and not about the interests of the member-policy holders. These enterprises will

no longer be functioning as co-operatives or espousing co-operative values, he cautioned.

(Sources: *Manchester Guardian Weekly* and *Co-operative News cooperative-business listserv*)

### Co-op Party Celebrates Landslide

The Co-operative Party in the UK celebrated a landslide victory in the general election on 1 May which saw all 26 Labour/Co-operative candidates victorious. They now form the biggest-ever group of Co-op backed members of parliament. The wins came in England, Scotland and Wales, and included seats in traditional Conservative strongholds. Majorities for Co-op Party candidates ranged from 23,931 to 3,636. Dr. Peter Clarke, National Secretary of the Co-operative Party said that the sitting MPs are joined by a new branch of MPs who have come up through the Co-operative Party and understand the agenda. He said these new MPs would work with long-standing members to promote co-operative ideals. For the first time candidates had been clearly labelled as joint Labour/Co-op Party candidates, and the high press coverage that Andrew Regan's bid had given the movement had established the Co-op and its ideals firmly in the voter's mind according to Mr. Clark. The Galileo bid had shaken up the Movement, he said, and now it was time for reform. Larnica has put the movement firmly in the media spotlight and we need to keep ourselves there, he stressed.

## United States

### Lawsuit Against the AT&T Family FCU

On 24 February 1997 the US Supreme Court announced that it will hear arguments regarding a lawsuit against the AT&T Family Federal Credit Union (FCU), brought by bankers challenging its field of membership. The Court will review the decision made by the US Court of Appeals on 29 July 1996, ruling that the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) had acted beyond its scope of authority with the approval of membership expansions for the AT&T Family FCU to include multiple-employer groups. Bankers argue that the NCUA has been improperly interpreting the Credit Union Act since 1982 by allowing credit unions to include groups of employees with different employers. NCUA believes that the act allows these groupings, and that such groupings in a credit union provide strength through diversity. There is no court date as of yet, but a final decision by the Supreme Court is likely to

be handed down by the end of 1997 or early in 1998. (Source: *NCBA Cooperative Business Journal*, vol. 11, no. 2.)

### Co-operative Development Forum

The 1997 Co-operative Development Forum, sponsored by the Co-operative League of the USA (CLUSA) Institute for Co-operative Development, will be held 13 to 15 June in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Forum will be held in conjunction with the annual conference of the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils (NARC&DCs), which runs 14 to 18 June. The theme will be "The Co-operative Model, a Tool for Community Economic Development." The programme will focus on six major issues: co-operative approaches to community economic development: moderate income communities; co-operative approaches to community economic development: persistent poverty communities; meeting the needs of the growing elderly population; consumers and small businesses in the marketplace; technical resources; and financial resources.

Registration information for the 1997 Co-operative Development Forum and the NARC&DC annual conference is available from John Gauci, CLUSA Institute Executive Director, by telephone at (+1 202) 6386222, by fax at 6381374 or by e-mail at [jgauci@ncba.org](mailto:jgauci@ncba.org).

(Source: *NCBA News Release*)

### The 1997 Co-operative Conference

*The Value of Co-operation*, the theme for the Co-operative Conference, was amply demonstrated April 23-24 as the National Co-operative Business Association (NCBA), in conjunction with the National Co-operative Bank (NCB), and the Co-operative Development Foundation, held its annual meeting and conference in Washington, D.C. The conference programme focused on the benefits of working together through co-operation and featured the annual meetings of each organisation as well as special joint programming concerning educational sessions on co-operative development, mergers and crisis communications. NCBA President and CEO Russ Notar called the joint conference an "historic event".

At the NCBA annual meeting, delegates approved the 1997 Statement of Policy and various bylaw amendments. NCBA Chair, Tom Lyon, CEO of Co-operative Resources International, told the delegates "through the efforts of your diverse and engaged board and a well qualified staff, NCBA is, within its

## World Overview

limited resources, well positioned to advance the organisation's mission - to develop, advance and protect co-operative enterprise."

As in previous years, the Future Co-op Leaders Programme was part of the Co-operative Conference. The programme is designed to build leadership in US co-operatives by encouraging up-and-coming co-operators to attend the NCBA Co-operative Conference where they can meet and learn from other co-op leaders. Special activities were planned for the 18 future co-op leaders who were selected for this scholarship programme. The programme is funded, in part, by NCBA's Honored Co-operator Awards programme.

(Source: NCBA News Release, 28 April 1997)

## Zambia

### Zambian Co-ops to get new Lease of Life

The co-operative movement in Zambia which has been on the verge of collapse since the liberalisation of agricultural marketing in the country in 1992 may get a new lease of life if current government initiatives to revive the co-operative sector are implemented. After a miserable performance of the private sector in agricultural financing and marketing, the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries is contemplating reactivating co-operatives by amending

the Co-operatives Societies Act of 1970 and reviving the Co-operative Bank which was closed in 1995.

Government has since asked the co-operative movement to take stock of its performance since liberalisation, identify its weaknesses and strengths and come up with proposals for the way forward.

Agriculture Food and Fisheries Minister, Edith Nawakwi, told Parliament recently that government had stopped giving agricultural loans to individual farmers and was currently holding consultations on how to create an appropriate financing mechanism for farmers groups and co-operatives. Under this mechanism, deserving farmers' groups and co-operatives would be targeted for a wide range of financial services including capital investment support. During the last three years, the government had done away with co-operative institutions like the Credit Union and Savings Association (CUSA) and the Zambia Co-operative Federation's Finance Services in providing seasonal credit to about 600,000 small scale farmers who are mostly members of co-operatives. In March this year, Lima Bank which was a government owned agricultural financing company was closed due to liquidity problems while government bemoaned the loss of K26 billion, the equivalent of US \$20 million owed to it by Cavmont Merchant Bank and SGS - the two private institutions appointed by government to coordinate credit at the expense of co-operative institutions.

## ICA Meetings (cont'd)

### Housing Seminar

Less than ten months after the UN-HABITAT-II Conference in Istanbul, ICA Housing organised a conference during the Uganda Board Meeting, April 18 and 19. One of the goals of the conference was to present successful examples of co-operative housing and self-help schemes and to encourage the government of Uganda to prepare the necessary conditions for the foundation of new housing co-operatives.

The preconditions for economic growth and improved nutrition in the rural areas are good. There is intensive agriculture, fertile land, and in rural areas the Ugandan people are working hard to improve their standard of living. The ICA President for this region of Africa, Mr. Bernard Wolimbwa, who is also the Chairman of the Uganda Co-operative Alliance, did an excellent job preparing the housing seminar, which drew more than one hundred participants.

At the conference, the success of housing co-opera-



*The Mayor of Kampala and Rolf Trodin, Chairman of ICA the Housing Committee, discuss the housing situation in Uganda.*

tives in Kenya and Zimbabwe were shown as examples to help Uganda establish their own. Organisations of developmental assistance, such as NBBL and DESWOS, also presented examples of their successful work in South Africa.

## Co-op People

On 24 February 1997, **Dr. Ivan Prikryl** was elected President of the Co-operative Association of the Czech Republic. His previous post was as the President of the Union of Czech and Moravian Housing Co-operatives.

All 26 of Co-operative Party candidates were successful in the recent UK general elections. Before the election on 1 May, there were 15 Co-operative Party MPs in Britain. There are also 4 Co-operative Peers in the House of Lords, and 6 Co-operative Party Members of the European Parliament. The following are new MPs: **Dave Lepper** (Brighton Pavilion); **Doug Naysmith** (Bristol North West); **Phil Hope** (Corby); **Andy Love** (Edmonton); **Tony McWalter** (Hemel Hempstead); **Jim Dobbin** (Heywood & Middleton); **David Taylor** (Leicestershire North West); **Louise Ellman** (Liverpool Riverside); **Andy Reed** (Loughborough); **Linda Gilroy** (Plymouth Sutton);

**David Drew** (Stroud). The following were re-elected: **Angela Smith** (Basildon); **Jon Owen Jones** (Cardiff Central); **Alun Michael** (Cardiff South & Penarth); **George Foulkes** (Carrick, Cumnock & Doon Valley); **John McFall** (Dumbarton); **Alan Keen** (Feltham & Heston); **Ian Davidson** (Glasgow Pollock); **Tommy McAvoy** (Glasgow Rutherglen); **Barry Sheerman** (Huddersfield); **Mike Gapes** (Ilford South); **Don Touhig** (Islwyn); **Lewis Moonie** (Kirkcaldy); **Gordon McMaster** (Paisley South); **Ken Purchase** (Wolverhampton North East); **Dennis Turner** (Wolverhampton South East).

NCBA elected board members and officers to lead the membership association in the coming year. **Rod Nilsestuen**, **Ralph Paige**, and **Gonze Lee Twitty** were elected to three-year terms on the NCBA board of directors. **Andy Ferguson** was elected to represent individual members on

the NCBA board. The following officers were re-elected: chair, **Thomas Lyon**; 1st vice chair, **David Miller**; 2nd vice chair, **Pete Crear**; secretary, **Herb Levy**; and treasurer, **Dr. Ann Hoyt**. Four others elected to join these officers on the Executive are **Ralph Paige**, **Joe Leiber**, **Jeff Stroburg**, and **James Van Houten**. Board members also elected **Harvey Sigelbaum**, **Gail Sokoloff** and **Michael Treadwell** to serve on the board. **John C. Fisher** was elected to fill the two-year unexpired term of **C. William Swank**.

In December 1997, **Gabriella Sozanski** was appointed Secretary of the ICA's European Council.

**Corrigendum: it was Enzo Pezzini from CECOP, on the front page of the last ICA News, making the intervention on the founding meeting of IHCO.**

## ICA CALENDAR

■ 5 - 7 June 1997  
Global Women's Committee  
*St. Petersburg, Russia*

■ 13 - 14 June 1997  
ICA Housing Board  
*Vienna, Austria*

■ 11-13 September 1997  
Global Women's Committee  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 13 September 1997  
European Council  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 13 - 14 September 1997  
Health Committee Meetings  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 14 September 1997  
ICA Board Meeting  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 14 September 1997  
Consumer Cttee (ICCO)  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 14 September 1997  
ICACC Executive Cttee  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 15 - 16 September 1997  
ICA General Assembly  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 15-16 September 1997  
Audit & Control Committee  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 17 September 1997  
ICHRD/ICACC  
Joint Seminar on  
Distance Learning  
and Networking  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 17 September 1997  
CICOPA Meetings  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 17 September 1997  
ICA Fisheries Cttee Meetings  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 17 September 1997  
Housing Cttee (IHO)  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 17 September 1997  
Banking Committee (ICBA)  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 18 September 1997  
Agricultural Cttee (ICAO)  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 18 September 1997  
HRD Committee Meetings  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 19 September 1997  
ICAO Study Tour  
*Geneva, Switzerland*

■ 3-5 October 1997  
ICA Research Conference  
*Bertinoro, Italie*





## Argentine President Supports Co-operative Meeting



*Co-operative leaders at the seminar on Economic Growth with Social Development: The Co-operative Experience.*

The Co-operative Confederation of the Republic of Argentina (COOPERAR) and the ICA Project Office for the Southern Cone of Latin America held an international seminar on "Economic Growth with Social Development: The Co-operative Experience" from 17 - 18 June in Buenos Aires.

At the Seminar, several major agreements were signed between ICA and COOPERAR and the National Institute for Co-operative and Mutual Action (INACYM), as well as between COOPERAR and

the Provincial Institute for Co-operative Action (IPAC). Plans were formalized to both develop training activities and to strengthen commercial intersectoral networks among co-operatives.

The Seminar, which was declared to be of national interest by the President's Office, was sponsored by INACYM, IPAC, the National Secretariat of Social Development, the Ministry of Production and Employment of the Province of Buenos Aires, and supported by Credicoop, Mayo Banks, and Previsol AFJP.

It attracted over 400 participants including ICA Vice-President for the Americas, Roberto Rodrigues and Alternate Vice-President Miguel Cardozo, Director-General Bruce Thordarson and Senior Project Advisor, Arsenio Invernizzi of ICA, Geneva.

The Seminar's four plenary sessions established a foundation for strengthening relations between Argentine co-operatives and those from other parts of the world. A new vision of the public role of the co-operative economy was also developed.



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### ICA Housing continues Habitat Follow-up

The Executive of ICA Housing in its meeting in Vienna (Austria) in June, 1997 agreed on a plan for contributing to the follow-up of the Habitat Agenda adopted at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlement (Habitat II) in Istanbul. Regional seminars - one of which has already been held for East, Central and Southern Africa - will be held on how to promote the development of housing co-operatives. A package of materials is being developed to help organisations attending the seminar better understand how to start and manage a housing co-operative. The seminars will be tailored to needs of the region and will focus on regional issues. Their aim is to provide both a conceptual framework on how to establish housing co-operatives and tools to assist in the implementation.



The following seminars are currently planned: 17-18 September 1997 - Legal Frameworks for Housing Co-operatives, Geneva, Switzerland; November 1997 - Alternative Financing Systems, Mexico City, Mexico; and a Seminar in Asia in the Spring of 1998. For more information on the seminar programme, please contact Rolf Trodin, Chairman, ICA Housing.

### ICA Global Women's Committee Meets in St. Petersburg

The Executive Committee of the ICA Global Women's Committee met in St. Petersburg (Russia). The Executive Committee discussed issues relating to the strengthening of the Committee (reviewing the more than 50 nominations received), initiatives taken to improve gender balance and mainstreaming, as well as future activities - conferences and training programmes/projects. It also reviewed preparations for the Women's Conference it organised in St. Petersburg on the theme of "Women and Market Economy" and heard reports on activities undertaken since the last Executive Committee in Costa Rica.

The Committee also finalised preparations for the September 1997 Women's Conference in Geneva on the theme "Women, Co-operatives and the Community", which is to address some of the issues listed below:

- How have women contributed to the economy of and services provided to the communities in which they live through co-operatives - specific experiences of women's entrepreneurship.
- How have co-operatives at the community level responded to the specific needs of women - pro-



vision of day care, social care, family-friendly policies including any specific provision from female-headed households, etc.

- What is the status of women's participation in community level co-operatives - membership, women in decision-making, education and training possibilities for women, etc.
- What has been the overall influence of women in the co-operatives on the community - programmes, events, etc.
- How can co-operatives create partnerships with local authorities to meet the needs of women now and in the future?

## World Overview

### Canada

#### SWP Reports Landmark Year

Canada's largest co-operative, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, increased its net earnings in 1996 by 48 percent to 48.4 million Canadian dollars. It also successfully completed its conversion into a "publicly-traded co-operative". Under its equity conversion programme, existing member share capital was converted into Class A (voting) and Class B (non-voting) shares. The Class B shares, listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, increased in value during the year. Class A shares are held only by active farmer-members in order to maintain member control. Revenue-wise, SWP is now the 54th largest company in Canada.

(Source: Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Annual Report, 1996)

### India

#### News from *The Link*

\* The Central Registrar of Co-operative Societies has exempted the NCUI and its President from Sections 36 & 37 of the Multi State Co-operative Societies Act.

\* Kerala High Court stays a Government ordinance disbanding the Boards of 14 District Co-operative Banks in response to a petition filed by the affected Boards.

\* The Uttar Pradesh Government has enhanced the Registrar's powers while severely curbing co-operative autonomy.

\* Tamilnadu Government has announced intentions to amend the State Co-operative Act.

\* 31 Gujarat co-ops are reported to be affected by the CRB scam.

\* GOA co-operators unanimously decry draft new Goa State Co-operative Societies Act and demand a public debate.

For the full story, please contact: Sudarshan Srinivas, Managing Editor, *The Link*, C.I.P. Secretariat, IRMA Campus, PB No 60, Anand 388 001, Gujarat, India. Fax: (02692) 40188; E-mail [srini@fac.irm.ernet.in](mailto:srini@fac.irm.ernet.in); web site: <http://irma.irm.ernet.in/~cip/ciphome.html>

(Source: *The Link*, June 1997)

### Indonesia

#### Exhibition Celebrates Year of Co-ops

An Exhibition on International Co-operative and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) took place in Jakarta in July 1997 as part of a series of events to mark the Year of Co-operatives declared by President Soeharto in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Indonesian Co-operative Movement. Over 500 co-ops and SMEs from 27 Indonesian provinces and 100 from 15 other countries participated in the exhibition which was officially opened by the President and supported by ICAROAP during the Ministerial Meeting in April 1997. For more details, visit the exhibition homepage:

<http://www.rekkamedia.com/cooperative97>.

(Source: REKKA Media E-mail)

### Japan

#### Quake Victims Link Hands

Although still struggling to recover from the earthquake which hit Kobe in 1995, Co-op Kobe mobilised its local volunteer centre and raised 3,912,771 yen to help residents of Yunnan Province in mainland China which was struck by an earthquake on 3 February of 1996. This money was combined with contributions from the local NGO Liaison Committee for the Relief of Victims from the Kobe earthquake, the YMCA, the International Co-operation Centre and other groups to total of 22,230,000 yen, which was used for the reconstruction of five elementary schools destroyed in the quake. These are now consolidated into one complex which has been named the Li Jiang Friendship Centre Elementary School to commemorate the growing friendship between the two countries. The aid programme, as well as a series of cultural exchanges between schools in Japan and China have also strengthened ties.

(Source: *Co-op Japan Information*, June 1997)

#### Co-ops Help With Oil Spill Clean-up

The Japan Joint Committee of Co-operatives donated 2.6 million yen to the Conference Against the Oil Spill Disaster, a group established by ZENGYOREN, JCCU, ZENCHU and seven other

(see p.6)

## Empowerment of Small-scale Farmers in Bolivia

by Alexis Gendron, ICA Intern, Smith College Junior Year Programme in Geneva

The province of Chuquisaca outside the city of Sucre is one of the poorest regions of Bolivia, which itself is the second poorest country in Latin America. In this region, the ICA-FOPROPE project, Empowerment of Small-scale Farmers, began in September 1994. The programme is financially supported by the Finnish government and by community counterparts, such as the saving and credit co-operative COSAL, local authorities and local non-governmental organisations.

The president of Bolivia, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, in a September 1996 speech to the presidents of Latin America, stressed that all Latin American countries "should make accessible to the poorest parts of the population small loans and appropriate technology... instruments that could allow these people to free themselves from poverty." ICA, in conjunction with the Finnish government, instituted their programme with objectives that encompassed those of the Bolivian president. The main goal of the project is to empower rural small-scale producers by providing small loans and technical assistance; other objectives include a general improvement in living conditions, combatting migration to urban areas, and providing training and educational services to improve utilisation of scarce resources. The programme's most important aspect is the credit scheme; however, in order to overcome the technical and economic constraints of rural producers, the scheme is accompanied by training courses, information programmes and technical supervision at the



*The traditional flag of the peasant movement in Bolivia. Called "Wiphala"*

grass-root level. The credit scheme involves giving loans to small-scale farmers, limited to US\$ 50 to 200, which are used for commercial production and subsistence farming. The annual interest rate is 24 per cent, the lowest market price for this type of loan in Bolivia. Loans are typically repeated several times to the same families, but new access is contingent upon the repayment of the previous loan. The credit scheme began in May 1995, when the first US\$ 170,000 was put into the credit and guarantee fund of COSAL. Little demand existed in the beginning of the project, with only 31 per cent of the money in the fund circulating. However, demand has grown steadily, and in August 1996, 100 per cent of the money was in circulation. The fund grew to US\$ 300,000 by the end of 1996, but due to requests by new communities to enter the credit programme, along with heavy demand from participating communities, the fund was unable to grant loans to all who applied. However, with the extension of the programme by the Finnish govern-

ment through the year 2000, demand will be met and new communities will soon be able to participate.

ICA-FOPROPE and COSAL supply loans for a variety of different projects, but families mainly take loans to help with agricultural production. Agricultural loans are broken down into two categories in order to be better able to examine the results: loans in regions with irrigation and loans in areas of rain-fed irrigation. In areas with irrigation (all figures approximate), the production of families rose 35 per cent, the area of land under cultivation was extended by 30 per cent, and the average income increased 40 per cent. Food security remains the principal objective in regions of rain-fed agriculture, and the main function of loans is subsistence rather than commercial production. In all cases in these areas, the harvest value was slightly higher than the production costs, with the sales income covering all the financial inputs for production but covering only partially the labour costs. People

in the participating communities have also taken the initiative to borrow money for projects other than agriculture. In two communities women took loans to purchase sewing materials for the commercial production of clothing. They earned a monthly net revenue of \$US 50 to 60, \$US 20 to 30 higher than what they would have earned in the city as servants; this therefore successfully combats migration to the cities and prevents the separation of families. Other groups took loans to buy cattle and dairy cows, both of which proved to be sound investments.

Another important aspect of the programme is the training courses. These courses are available not only to the loan recipients, but to all members of the community. Organisation of the courses began in April of 1996, and currently 42 courses are being offered in the communities participating in the credit scheme. In addition, there are 26 courses offered in communities not involved in the scheme. Courses are given on better production techniques, co-operative organisation and management, administration and book-keeping, and other relevant topics.

Although the impact of the training courses is hard to measure qualitatively, it is certain that they help to guarantee profitability of loan investments, as well as provide the families with bet-



*Pospo village. The main street (Bolivia).*

ter technical knowledge to improve production and raise their quality of living.

The programme also incorporates feasibility studies to support the decentralisation of development resources in Bolivia. Studies are done on the micro-investments of municipalities, co-operatives and other institutions favorable to the communities. The goal of these studies is to create favourable developmental conditions in the villages and encourage the adoption of new technology. Another component of the project is support for trading and the commercialisation of handicrafts and agricultural products. Communities are given help in planning their production so as to maximize commercial profit.

In addition, the project supports rural co-operatives and works with co-operative organisers to help them maximize investments with the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency. There are also plans to support a women's service co-operative for the commercial production and sale of traditional textiles made in the communities.

It is unarguable that this project has had a very positive impact on the communities involved.

Both ICA-FOPROPE and COSAL believe that what is needed to continue the success of the project is a sustainable credit scheme, not simply a short-term programme. At present, the credit scheme is not self-sustainable, as it does not cover the costs of credit distribution, of recovering loans, nor of the technical supervision necessary to help families maximize the productive capacity of their loans. The scheme is effective due to external financial support during the first two years of the project, covering the cost of technical assistance as well as 50 per cent of the credit fund. With the extension of the project to the year 2000, self-sustainability may be reached with the implementation of other supplementary measures, such as an increase in credit co-operatives' total credit funds, more active and organised community representatives in the governing bodies of COSAL, and continued support at the grass-root level to supervise the loan destination and utilisation by the families. It is the hope of ICA-FOPROPE and COSAL that with the progressive implementation of these measures the credit scheme will one day be able to operate with no external assistance.



*The coop provides local women with a regular income.*

societies, to help local fishermen and residents remove oil following a Russian oil tanker spill off the Japanese coast in January 1996. Many co-ops established links with people in the affected areas and offered to help. For example, Co-op Sapporo in Hokkaido raised funds and collected relief supplies and sent 15 staff members to help with the clean-up operations. Co-op Yamanashi also sent volunteers, warm clothing and cleaning utensils and Fukui Co-op of Fukui Prefecture sent a volunteer to serve meals and provide relief supplies to those involved in the clean-up.

(Source: *Co-op Japan Information*, June 1997)

## Kazakhstan

### Kazak Co-operators Visit Geneva

A delegation from co-operatives in Kazakhstan visited the ICA Secretariat in Geneva in July 1997 to discuss working methods in Western Europe, financial management and the promotion of membership. The visitors met with Bruce Thordarson, Director-General, to discuss the principle aims of the organisation, with Mats Ahnlund to discuss member services and with Alina Pawlowska, who presented the database project on statistics.

The visitors particularly appreciated the guided tour of Mr. H. Corneli from Coop Geneva's distribution centre and discussions with Mr. Lechaire, Director of Coop Geneva, on competition and development strategy.



*The end of the tour - beginning of a friendship. The Kazak delegation meet with Coop Genève top management.*

Kazakhstan has developed a dynamic co-operative movement. The consumer co-operatives, which are to be found in rural areas, manage a huge network of stores and distribution centres, together with enterprises for the transformation of agricultural products and restaurants.

Owing to inflation and privatisation, the movement's market share dropped from 30% in 1990 to

6% in 1996. Its main priority is to overcome the crisis and to adapt to the environment where competition has become a keyword in order to provide the best service possible to its members.

## Korea

### NACF Training Courses

The National Agricultural Co-operative Federation (NACF) of Korea will organise a two-week international training course on agricultural marketing for 20 participants in late September. The course, which will be sponsored by NACF and the Korean Government, is part of an ongoing programme supported by the government. The last event under the programme was a training course on rural development and agricultural co-operative management held at the Agricultural Co-operative College in April and May this year, which included participants from Indonesia, Iran, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Butan, Nepal, Mongolia, Senegal, Gabon and Honduras.

(Source: *NACF e-mail*)

## Moldova

### ICA Europe Visit to Moldova

Gabriella Sozanski, Secretary of the European Council, visited the Republic of Moldova in June after the consumer movement requested ICA assistance in lobbying the government and parliament of Moldova in support of a newly proposed law on consumer co-operatives. Ms. Sozanski met the Vice Prime Minister, Valerij Bulgaru, the deputy speaker of the Parliament, Dumitro Djakov and the chairman of the Parliamentary Commission in charge of co-operative legislation, Ion Curkanu. Visits were also arranged to the Co-operative Commercial University, Co-op hospital, as well as to various enterprises belonging to the movement. Co-op societies in Moldova are still restricted to the rural areas where they provide 64% of the population with consumer goods.

## Philippines

### MacPherson Meets Philippine Co-operators

Dr. Ian MacPherson, an internationally recognised authority on co-ops who led the ICA's latest review of co-operative principles, was the keynote speaker

## World Overview

at the 20th general assembly of the Philippines' National Confederation of Co-operatives (NATCCO) held in May. The assembly in Tagaytay City, south of Manila, had the theme "Philippine Co-ops into the 21st Century." NATCCO is the country's biggest national federation of co-ops in terms of geographical reach, membership, financial base and array of services. It now has more than 1,700 affiliate co-ops with about a million people comprising the membership base.

(Source: NATCCO e-mail)

### Russia

#### Centrosoyus is First to Achieve Gender Balance

In 1995, the ICA General Assembly adopted a resolution, "Gender Equality in Co-operatives" which called for the improvement of gender balance in co-operatives. The ICA Board in 1996 called on the ICA President to write to and to ask member organisations to formally plan to increase the representation of women at all levels.

The ICA Secretariat is happy to announce that Centrosoyus of Russia is the first ICA member organisation to register a gender-balanced delegation of representatives to the ICA General Assembly. Eight women and eight men will vote in the election of the ICA President, Vice-Presidents, Board Members and Audit and Control Committee. In this way, Centrosoyus has concretely contributed to increasing women's participation in ICA decision-making.

#### On the Eve of the 3rd Millennium

The 5th General Assembly of the Russian Federation of Consumer Co-ops was held in Kirov 31 July - 1 August. The participants discussed the social and economic problems facing consumer co-operation and adopted the following appeal to Russian co-operators. Russian consumer co-operatives face decreasing retail turnover, procurement of agricultural products and raw materials, and production. Many co-operatives have lost assets and are in debt; two thirds finished last year with losses. A radical modernisation of corporate governance and management control is necessary. A new Federal Law, on «consumer co-operation in the Russian Federation," passed in July 1997, states that consumer co-operation is recognised by and protected

by the Russian State. The Law outlines reforms, including the promotion of the members' role in decision-making, modernisation of governance and control structures, and strengthening leaders' responsibilities and discipline. To conform with the law, Consumer societies will form new governing and executive bodies to increase membership, ensure strict control over the management of co-operative organisations and enterprises and improve the quality of leadership.

(Source: Centrosoyus, Moscow, 6 August 1997)

### Slovakia

#### Producer Co-op "Best Supplier" for IKEA

The Slovak Producer Co-operative Society "KNK" in Lubietova has received the 1996 award as "Best Supplier for IKEA," accompanied by a prize of 100,000 Swedish Crowns. The 240-employee co-operative has been supplying furniture accessories to IKEA for eight years, with sales rising from 3 million to 12 million Swedish crowns during that period.

(Source: Slovak Co-operative News, issue no. 1, 1997)

### Switzerland

#### Coop Switzerland and Organic Products

Coop Switzerland has recently inaugurated a web site providing information on its product line - NaturaPlan - of organic and environmentally-friendly products. The product line has been a success with consumers in Switzerland and is being expanded. NaturaPlan products are expected to cover 15-20% market share by 1998, representing a turnover of CHF 400 million (approx. USD 250 million). For information on Coop NaturaPlan, see the Coop Switzerland web site: <http://www.coop.ch>

### United Kingdom

#### Top Speakers for UKCC Forum

Graham Melmoth, President of ICA and Chief Executive of CWS (UK) is to be a keynote speaker at the UK Co-operative Council's Annual Forum at the CIS Headquarters in Manchester on 21-22 November. Places can be reserved in writing from Peter Walker, Chief Executive, UKCC, c/o The Co-operative Bank plc, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP.

## ICA Europe Flood Appeal

ICA Europe is launching an appeal for financial assistance on behalf of consumer co-operatives in Central and Eastern Europe following the severe floods which have claimed many lives and caused widespread material damage.

To give an example of the disastrous consequences of the flooding, a faxed letter from the Union of Czech and Moravian Consumer Co-operatives based in Prague reports:

In this natural calamity, a lot of facilities belonging to the Union or respective co-operative organisations were either completely or partially damaged. A number of our newly-built supermarkets were flooded with water, and all stock and interior equipment including recently installed cold-storage technology were devastated. Some of the smaller retail shops were just swept away.

In Prague, at the Consumer Co-operative Union office, we have been collecting information on the scope of the damage in particular regions and we are trying to help in the worst cases, but our financial resources are rather limited."

Another appeal reached ICA from the National Co-operative Council of Poland requesting assistance in any possible form:

Your help will be a token of the international solidarity of co-operators....Please remember that the Polish co-operative movement is only just in the process of reconstruction after years of planned economy and the later period of government hostility and now it has been stricken by natural disaster. We need your help - this is the moment to substantiate the international solidarity of co-operators."

ICA Europe is establishing a fund to enable ICA members and readers of the *ICA News and Review* to respond with financial aid for co-ops in the devastated area of Europe.

By co-ordinating efforts with the Movement, it should be possible to raise a significant sum and ICA Europe will do everything possible to ensure that the money goes to those co-operatives in greatest need, both in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in the region.

Therefore, a special dollar account has been set up in Geneva. Please transfer donations in US dollars to: UBS Geneva Account Number 205 202 60Q; mark your transfer FLOOD APPEAL. Many thanks for your solidarity.

## ICA CALENDAR

**For all meetings related to the ICA General Assembly in Geneva in September 1997, please consult the schedule attached in the special issue for the General Assembly**

■ 3-5 October 1997  
ICA Research Conference  
*Bertinoro, Italy*

■ November 1997  
Regional Conference for the Americas  
*Mexico City, Mexico*

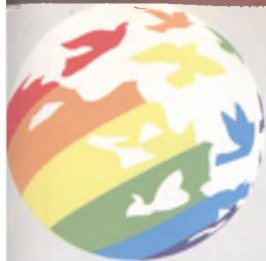
■ August 1998  
Regional Assembly for Africa  
*Lusaka, Zambia*

■ 15-16 October 1998  
Regional Assembly for Europe  
*Paris, France*

■ October 1998  
Regional Assembly for Asia & the Pacific  
*Seoul, Korea*

■ November 1998  
Regional Assembly for the Americas  
*Montevideo, Uruguay*





# ica News

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Special Issue for the General Assembly 1997, English only

Editor: Mary Treacy



*Graham Melmoth  
President*

## Welcome to Geneva



*Bruce Thordarson  
Director-General*

For the second time in its 102-year history, the ICA will hold its main membership meeting, the General Assembly, in Geneva, which has been the base for our Head Office since 1982.

In addition to the two-day General Assembly on September 15 and 16, eleven of the ICA's 14 Specialised Bodies will hold their own executive, plenary, and special meetings, making this the largest co-operative gathering ever held in Switzerland's "international city". In fact, the rapidly-rising number of General Assembly participants, now approaching 600, has required a last-minute shift to a larger meeting room in the Geneva International Conference Centre.

The ICA Board and Staff look forward to welcoming our many co-operative colleagues to Geneva. We hope that all will find something of interest and value through the sharing of information and experiences during these busy days.



*At the end of a fruitful day of meetings, take a little time out to visit some of the local sites (Mt. Blanc, United Nations Office and Reformation Wall, amongst many others).*



15, route des Morillons - 1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
Tel.: (41-22) 929 88 88 - Fax: (41-22) 798 41 22 - Telex: 41 56 20 ICA CH  
E mail: [ica@coop.org](mailto:ica@coop.org) - Website: <http://www.coop.org>

**The ICA Global HRD and Communications Committees with the support of the ILO COOPNET Programme will hold a joint one-day seminar on:**

**Overcoming Geographical  
Barriers Through Electronic  
Networking & Distance Learning**

We will have experts from a wide range of institutions speaking on this subject, and we will also give a demonstration of the uses and potential of electronic networking.

The seminar will take place from 9.00 to 17.00 on 17 September in Room A, Geneva International Conference Centre (the venue of the General Assembly). It is open to General Assembly participants, and is particularly intended for people involved in co-operative HRD and communications.

If you wish to attend this seminar, please fax/e-mail to the following address: Jan-Eirik Imbsen, Deputy Director of Development, +4122 798 41 22, [development@coop.org](mailto:development@coop.org)

### **Business Opportunity Lunch**

The chance for meeting other co-operators to discuss mutually beneficial ideas will be provided over a sandwich lunch on Tuesday 16 September at the General Assembly Conference Centre.

Speakers: Juan Diego Pacheco, Director of the ICA Regional Office for the Americas, has worked with business activities in the region.

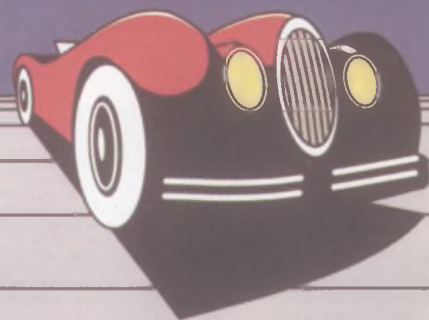
Byron Henderson, Director of Communications at the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, University of Saskatchewan in Canada, is working with the ICA Communications Department and is currently organising a new ICA project on trade and communications.

If this informal discussion lunch is of interest to you, sign up at the ICA Registration desk as soon as possible but before 10:30 on 16 September. Maximum participation is 45 persons.

For further information, you may contact Mats Ahnlund at ICA Headquarters (fax +4122 798 41 22 or e-mail [members@coop.org](mailto:members@coop.org)).

ARTS - IMAGES - SCIENCES - TECHNIQUES

## **MUSÉE INTERNATIONAL DE L'AUTOMOBILE GENÈVE**



TOUS LES JOURS DE 10 H A 19 H  
Genève-Palexpo halle 7  
Accès par bus: ligne n° 5, 10 ou 18  
Voitures: parking P 26

*The International Automobile Museum is the Venue of the General Assembly Reception on 15 September*

**ICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**Geneva International Conference Centre - September 15/16, 1997**  
**Draft Agenda**

**Monday, 15 September**

- 08:00-10:00** Registration
- 10:00** Official Opening
- G. Melmoth, ICA President
  - M. Schelker, Co-op Switzerland
  - M. Hansenne, ILO Director General
- Statutory Business  
Reports to the Membership
- President
  - Audit and Control Committee
  - External Auditors
  - Director-General
- Discussion and Decisions
- 11:30** Proposed Amendments to the Rules
- Presentation
  - Discussion
  - Voting
- 13:00** Adjourn
- 14:30** Introduction of Candidates for Board Election
- President
  - Vice-Presidents
  - Board Members
- Introduction of Candidates for Election to the Audit and Control Committee
- 15:30** Reports from Regions & Specialised Bodies
- 17:00** Adjourn
- 19:00** Reception - Musée de l'Auto de Genève

**Tuesday, 16 September**

- 09:00** Special Seminar: "The Global Dimension of Co-operatives"
- Introduction - Dr. Yehudah Paz
  - Opportunities for Civil Society to work with the United Nations system
  - Opportunities for Co-operatives to work with other civil society allies
  - Presentations:
    - John Langmore, Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, New York
    - Eddy Laurijssen, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Brussels
    - David King, International Federation of Agricultural Producers, Paris
    - Cyril Ritchie, Federation of International Organisations established in Geneva
  - Reaction by ICA Member Organisations:
    - Asia - Korea, Japan
    - Africa - Senegal
    - Americas - Brazil
    - Europe - Sweden
  - Reaction by Specialised Bodies:
    - Agriculture, Housing, Women
  - Discussion and Conclusion
- 12:00** Adjourn
- 13:30** Voting for Board and Audit & Control Committee
- 14:30** Reports from Regions and SBs (continued)  
Resolutions  
Future Meetings  
Announcement of Election Results
- 17:00** Official Closing

*Please note that all meeting documentation is included  
in the Review of International Co-operation Vol. 90 No 2  
(Annual Report) and Vol. 90 No 3 1997*





# ica News

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Special Issue No 4/1997

Editor: Mary Treacy

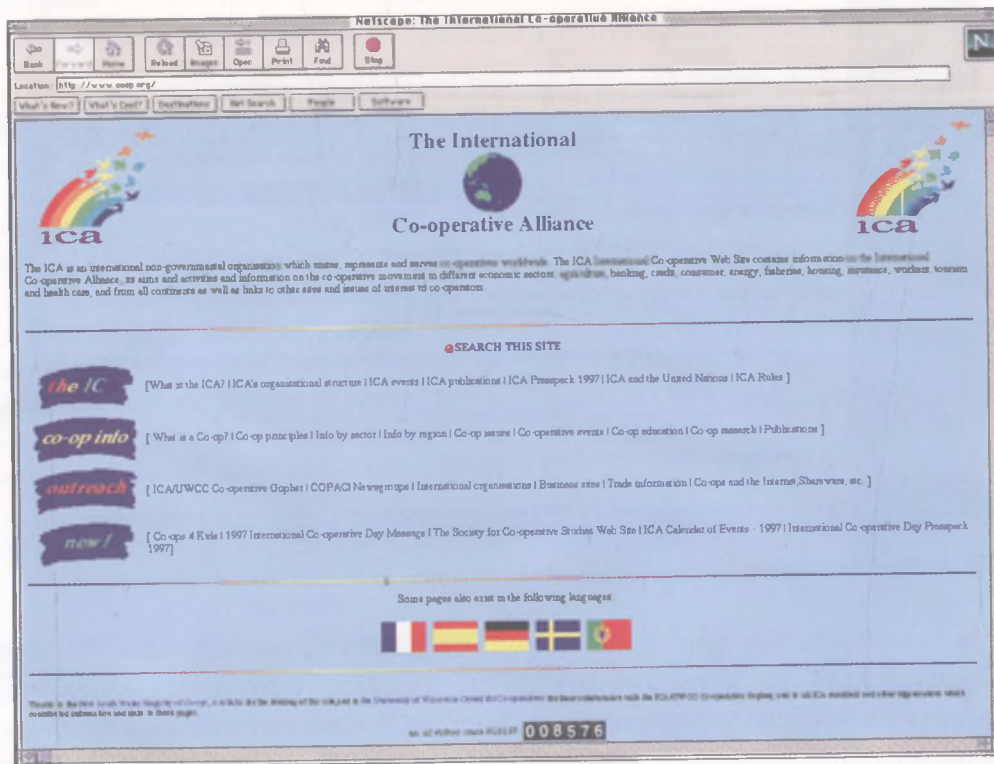
## Co-operatives and the Internet

There are more and more resources on and for co-operatives available on the Internet everyday. Here is a summary of some of the ICA's online resources, followed by some highlights of co-operative resources available on the Internet. It is by no

means an exhaustive list. Explore the ICA web site for more links and resources, and feel free to contact ICA to suggest additional internet and web sites for co-operators.

### New ICA Web Site Announcement

<http://www.coop.org>



The International Co-operative Alliance is proud to present the new ICA web site. The increasing amount of information presented on the web site led the Communications Department to improve

the overall structure to facilitate navigation and enable users to easily download relevant information, informing them at all times of their location within the site.



15, route des Morillons - 1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
Tel.: (41-22) 929 88 88 - Fax: (41-22) 798 41 22 - Telex: 41 56 20 ICA CH  
E mail: [ica@coop.org](mailto:ica@coop.org) - Website: <http://www.coop.org>

The largest section of the site contains the information in English, and has been separated into four main chapters. Each chapter has an index page which you can reach by clicking on the images at the top of each page. The four chapters and their contents are as follows:

**The ICA:** information concerning the International Co-operative Alliance

**Co-op Info:** information related to the co-operative movement and other co-operative organisations.

**Outreach:** information related to the Internet, to the Co-operative Gopher, to Newsgroups, to relevant business sites and international organisations.

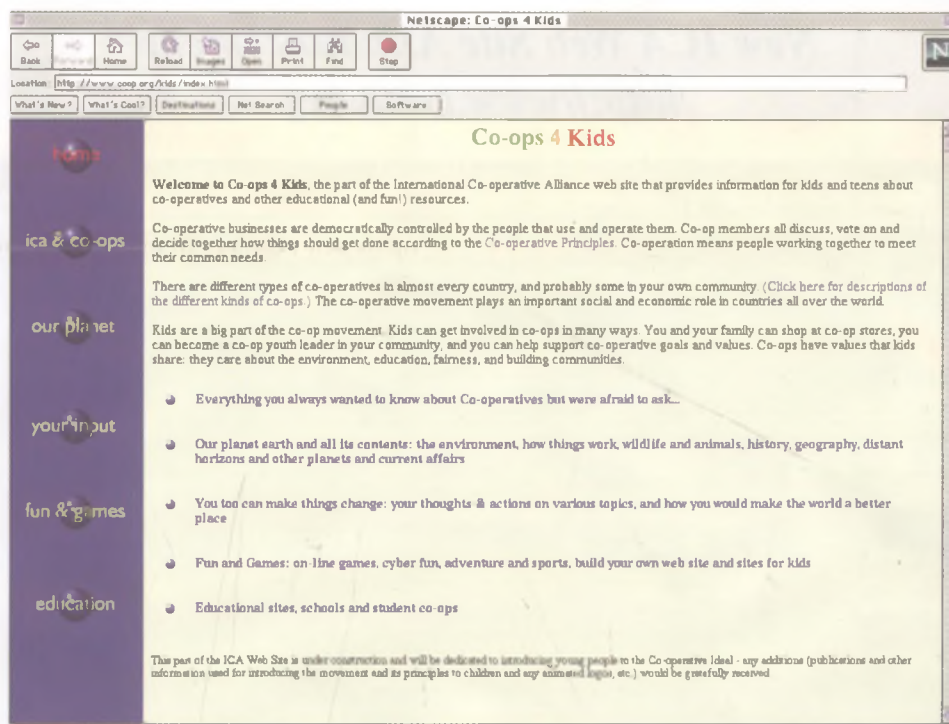
**New!:** regularly updated new information. Any new additions to the web site will be included in this section, and eventually placed in their relevant

chapter. This section contains a link to a new site called Co-ops for Kids (see below).

The ICA also contains information in other languages, including French, German, Spanish, Swedish and Portuguese. At present, this information is limited - any additions to this part of the site or translations of the original English information would be gratefully received in any language. Each language section contains an index page accessible through a flag on the home page, or at the top of each language page.

You can return to the ICA home page at any time by clicking on the ICA logo at the bottom of each page. You will also be able to search the ICA web site by using a search engine. The Communications Department would appreciate any feedback concerning the recent changes.

## Co-ops 4 Kids <http://www.coop.org/kids/>



ICA is going to be launching a new part of our web site entitled "Co-ops 4 Kids" in September 1997, which will introduce children and young people to the co-operative movement.

To make Co-ops 4 Kids both fun and informative, the site will emphasise interactive elements and will encourage input from young people (articles, pictures, photos, etc.), communication and networking with other kids and co-op members around the world.

The site will provide basic information on the co-operative movement, educational resources, and will also include links to online games and fun sites. By teaching kids about co-ops, we hope to encourage them to become co-op members, consumers and leaders in their own communities.

Comments, feedback and volunteers to help build this site and from teachers or schools interested in participating in the project are appreciated.

## The Cooperative Gopher

[gopher://wiscinfo.wisc.edu:70/11/info-source/coop](http://wiscinfo.wisc.edu:70/11/info-source/coop)

An ever-growing inventory of co-operative information, the Gopher is the product of a joint effort between ICA, Geneva and The University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives (UWCC) in Madison, Wisconsin. Essentially a large database of text from various co-operative resources including newsletters, articles on specific topics such as board trainings and co-op history, and publications, the Gopher is a comprehensive, and internationally accessible source of information about co-operatives.

## COPAC Web Site

<http://www.copacgva.org>

The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) now has its own web site. COPAC is a successful and on-going partnership between representatives of the cooperative movement together with farmers' and workers' organizations, and the United Nations and its agencies. Members work together on equal terms to promote and coordinate sustainable cooperative development through policy dialogues, technical cooperation and information, and concrete collaborative activities. The web site contains sections on COPAC's mission and structure, services and activities, member organisations and publications.

## Society For Co-operative Studies

<http://www.coop.org/scs/coopstudiesintro.html>

Information on the Society For Co-operative Studies based in the UK is now available on the Web through a site linked to the co-op education section of the ICA web site. The Society is an independent voluntary organisation committed to public education on all aspects of the movement. It aims to commission, identify and publish research on the co-operative movement, and actively promote the exchange of

information and experiences of co-ops through research and publication. Co-op members, employees, managers, specialists and academics from overseas as well as the UK are welcome. The Society convenes an annual conference (this year's will be held on 20-21 September on the theme, "Working Towards a Stakeholder Society"), publishes the quarterly *Journal of Co-operative Studies*, and maintains the International Register of Co-operative Research. In May, the ICA established a searchable database for the Register. At present, entries coming via the internet and those received through completed questionnaires are being processed by Dr. Peter Davis, from whom further information can be obtained at Fax (+44 116) 252 3949, E-mail: [pd8@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:pd8@leicester.ac.uk)

## Working Group on Trade and Communications Web Site

<http://dief106001.usask.ca/wg/wg.html>

ICA Communications Committee Working Group on Trade and Communications Network Technology now has its own web site. This includes information on the group's projects, resources, background papers, members, and links to other related sites.

The Working Group also maintains a list called ICN, which all interested co-operators are invited to subscribe to. Just do the following:

1. send an email message to: [ICN-request@usask.ca](mailto:ICN-request@usask.ca)
2. Include no subject in the subject line of the message
3. In the body of the message include the following:  
SUBSCRIBE ICN
4. Do not enter any other text and turn off automatic signatures, if you use them.

Byron Henderson, Director of Communications of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, University of Saskatchewan would be pleased to answer any questions you might have about the Working Group or about electronic commerce for co-operatives. Contact him by email at [hendersb@duke.usask.ca](mailto:hendersb@duke.usask.ca)

## Co-op Listservers

### The "Cooperative bus"

Sponsored and maintained by the University of Wisconsin Center for Co-operatives, the listserve is an electronic bulletin board intended to facilitate discussion about strengths and weaknesses of co-operatives in solving people's economic and social needs. The Co-op bus is probably the largest co-op listserver, and many subscribers are based in the U.S., but co-operators from around the world also subscribe. To subscribe, send email to [listserv@relay.doit.wisc.edu](mailto:listserv@relay.doit.wisc.edu), with the message: `subscribe co-operative-bus [your name]`

### Co-operativen - 1

A source of news from and about co-operatives, with subscribers providing news releases and full articles or edited abstracts from their newsletters. Co-operativen-1 is committed to promoting co-operative philosophy and principles.

The list is maintained by Co-operative Energy Ltd. of Victoria, Australia.

To subscribe, send email to [majordomo@peg.apc.org](mailto:majordomo@peg.apc.org) with the message: `subscribe cooperativen-1.`

### Co-opNet

Co-opNet is a new initiative set up by the Southampton Co-op Network in the UK to promote co-ops in their area and to encourage communication, networking, and positive discussion about co-ops and co-operation. Subscribers are mostly UK-based, but are welcome from all parts of the world. Discussion often focuses on the European movement and on worker co-ops. The list is maintained by Total Coverage, a co-op graphic design consultancy in Southampton. To subscribe, send email to [Listserver@total.tco.uk](mailto:Listserver@total.tco.uk), with message: `subscribe co-opnet.`

## ICA Member Web Pages Service

ICA is pleased to announce a new service for its members. Beginning in September 1997, individual pages for each ICA member organisation will be added to the ICA web site. This will make information on all member organisations accessible electronically, whether or not members have set up their own web sites. This new service is an effort to give priority to members, and to facilitate information dissemination between ICA member organizations, and to their own members, and vice-versa. Links will be provided for those organisations

that already have their own sites. Each member page will contain the co-op's logo, mission statement, basic contact information and, when available, e-mail addresses. Please send us any specific information you wish to be included - either by mail, on computer disk, or by e-mail.

Just two years ago, there were no ICA members on the World Wide Web. Now over 10 percent of the total membership has its own websites, in addition to the thousands of other co-ops on the web.

## ICA Members Already on the Web

Confederação Brasileira das Cooperativas de Energia  
Telefonia e Desenvolvimento Rural (CONBRAC)  
<http://www.conbrac.com.br>

Organização das Cooperativas Brasileiras (OCB)  
<http://ocb.org.br>

Unimed do Brasil Confederação Nacional das  
Cooperativas Medicas (UNIMED)  
<http://www.unimed.com.br>

Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA)  
<http://www.cca.usask.ca/CCA/CCA.Home.html>

Central Agricultural Co-operative Union, Egypt (CACU)  
<http://www.icc.egnet.net/member/Egypt.cacu>

Confédération Nationale du Crédit Mutuel (France)  
<http://www.creditmutuel.fr/>

Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives, Japan  
(JA-ZENCHU) (CUAC)  
<http://www.rim.or.jp/ci/ja/ejahome.html>

Faellesforeningen for Danmarks Brugsforeninger (FDB)  
<http://www.si.dk/sam/dod/249119.htm>

Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU)  
<http://www.co-op.or.jp/>

Korean Federation of Community Credit Co-operatives  
(KFCCC)  
<http://www.kfcc.co.kr/kfccc-m1.htm>

National Agricultural Co-operative Federation, Korea (NACF)  
<http://www.nacf.co.kr>

Instituto António Sérgio do Sector Cooperativo, Portugal  
(INSCOOP)  
<http://www.inscoop.pt/>

Folksam Insurance Group  
<http://www.folksam.se>

HSB: Riksförbundet (Union of Housing Co-operatives)  
<http://www.hsb.se>

Koopertiva Förbundet (KF)/Swedish Co-operative Union  
<http://www.kf.se>

Lantbrukarnas Riksförbundet (LRF)/Federation of  
Swedish Farmers  
<http://www.lrf.se>

Riksbbyggen, Sweden (Co-operative Housing Union)  
<http://www.riksbyggen.se>

Coop Suisse  
<http://www.coop.ch/f/>

Co-operative Bank plc, UK  
<http://www.co-operativebank.co.uk>

Co-operative Insurance Society, UK  
<http://www.cis.co.uk/>

Co-operative Union Ltd., UK  
<http://publish1.co-op.co.uk/UKCM/Union/>

Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd., UK  
<http://www.co-op.co.uk>

Plunkett Foundation, UK  
<http://www.co-op.co.uk/UKCM/plunkett/index.htm>

National Cooperative Business Association, USA  
<http://www.cooperative.org>

Nationwide Insurance, USA  
<http://www.nationwide.com>

World Council of Credit Unions, USA  
<http://www.woccu.org>

Confederación Uruguay de Entidades Cooperativas  
(CUDECOOP)  
<http://www.chasque.apc.org/cudecoop/>





## Roberto Rodrigues from Brasil Elected as ICA President

The ICA General Assembly unanimously elected Roberto Rodrigues of Brazil as ICA President at the conclusion of its business session on 16 September. Mr. Rodrigues, 55, is the first non-European, as well as the first representative from a sector other than consumer co-operation, to hold the presidency during the ICA's 102-year history.

The President of the Organisation of Co-operatives of Brazil, Dejandir Dalpasquale, officially nominated Mr. Rodrigues, describing him as a top leader in Brazilian agricultural, co-operative, political, academic and media circles for more than two decades.

In his acceptance speech, the new ICA President spoke of his gratitude to all who had supported him, of his fear in dealing with the great challenges facing ICA and co-operatives world-wide, and of his confident hope that co-operatives are the right solution for today's challenges. He said that he would continue the current direction of ICA by emphasising four priorities: strengthening the co-operative identity, strengthening and integrating the different economic sectors, fostering participation in co-operatives by women and young people, and supporting co-operative development in Africa.

Mr. Rodrigues succeeds Graham Melmoth, chief executive of the Co-operative Wholesale Society of the U.K., who did not seek



The ICA welcomes Roberto Rodrigues (Brazil) and says good-bye to Graham Melmoth (UK).

re-election. Mr. Melmoth was honoured at the General Assembly for his distinguished service as ICA Board Member, first Chairman of

ICA Europe and 12th ICA President.

(see p. 12 for profile of new president)

## ILO Welcomes ICA Collaboration

The Director-General of the International Labour Organisation,



Michel Hansenne is optimistic.

Michel Hansenne, spoke at the Opening Ceremony of the ICA General Assembly about the commitment to economic progress and social justice that was common to both the ILO and ICA. He described the ILO's large technical assistance programme of support to co-ops, which he said is based on the three priorities of democracy, employment, and workers' protection.

He expressed optimism that the already considerable degree of collaboration between ILO and ICA would grow in the future.



# General Assembly

## ICA Elections

### Two New Vice-Presidents

The General Assembly ratified on 16 September the four nominations for ICA Vice-President as submitted by the regions.

Yang Deshou of China becomes the new Vice-President for Asia and the Pacific. Miguel Cardozo of Uruguay becomes Acting Vice-President for the Americas, filling the position vacated by Roberto Rodrigues, until such time as the Americas' Regional Assembly meets to officially elect its vice-presidential nominee.

Lars Hillbom of Sweden and Bernard Wolimbwa of Uganda were re-elected respectively as Vice-Presidents for Europe and for Africa.

### Expanded ICA Board

As a result of the General Assembly's decision to expand the size of the ICA Board from 16 to 20 (including the President and four Vice-Presidents), elections were held during the General Assembly for the other 15 positions.



*Members of the ICA Board smile for the photographer.*

The successful candidates were: Rahaiah Baهران, Malaysia; Claude Béland, Canada; Ousseynu Dieng, Senegal; Valentin Ermakov, Russia; Jens Heiser, Germany; Hiroshi Kohno, Japan; Stefania Marcone, Italy; David Miller, U.S.A.; Cyril Moravcik, Slovakia; Yehudah Paz, Israel; Etienne Pflimlin, France; Ivan Prikryl, Czech Republic; B.S. Vishwanathan, India; Lloyd Wilkinson, U.K.; and Churll-Hee Won, Korea.

## New Audit & Control Committee

Elections were also held for the ICA's Audit and Control Committee. Elected were: Shigenori Takemoto, Japan; Wilhelm Kaltenborn, Germany; Pal Bartus, Hungary; Gun-Britt Martensson, Sweden; and Ivar Hansen, Norway. Mr. Takemoto and Ms. Martensson fill the vacancies created by the retirement of members Markus Schelker of Switzerland and Jacques Moreau of France.

## Seminar on Global Role of Co-ops

A special seminar on the second day of the General Assembly focussed on the global role of co-operatives. Introducing the topic, the chair of the session, ICA Board Member Yehudah Paz, noted that co-operatives have an unprecedented opportunity to participate in and influence major global issues, but that to do so requires a greater commitment and a closer collaboration with like-minded allies.

Following an introductory speech by John Langmore of the United Nations Secretariat in New York, leaders from ICFTU, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, IFAP, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, and FIIG, the Federation of International Institutions Established in Geneva, made presentations which stressed the potential for mutually beneficial closer collaboration between co-operatives and institutions representing trade unions, farmers, and the civil society.

Following interventions by ICA Member Organisations and Specialised Bodies, Yehudah Paz summarised the discussion by noting that the ideas expressed would be used by the Board in its planning of future activities and priorities for ICA.

## Millenium Congress in Quebec City

The General Assembly decided that, in conjunction with the ICA's 1999 General Assembly, a World Co-operative Congress should also be held in order to provide opportunities for extended participation, discussion, and publicity. It was agreed that the theme of the Congress will be: Adding Value to Membership - the Co-operative Challenge for the Next Millennium. On behalf of the ICA's two Canadian member organisations, ICA Board Member Claude Béland invited participants to Quebec City during the last two weeks of August 1999.

# General Assembly

## ICA Rules and Procedures Amended

The General Assembly approved proposals from the Board to amend the ICA Rules and Procedures in a number of areas. The major areas of change include:

- \* Changing the objectives of ICA to include efforts to promote sustainable human development and to promote equality between men and women in co-operatives.
- \* Replacing the old ICA Principles with the Statement on Co-operative Identity that was adopted by the 1995 Manchester Congress and General Assembly.
- \* Introducing a category of associate membership.
- \* Increasing the size of the maximum General Assembly representation per country from 20 to 25, and increasing the size of the Board from 16 to 20.
- \* Encouraging a closer working relationship between ICA and the Specialised Bodies.

The complete text of the revised ICA Rules and Procedures may be found on the ICA's Web Site at: <http://www.coop.org/en/rules.html> and will be published in written form in January 1998.

## Resolutions Support Countries in Transition

The General Assembly approved three Resolutions submitted by ICA member organisations in Russia, Bulgaria, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (C.I.S.), calling upon co-operatives, governments, and international institutions to support efforts of reform, rebuilding, and education in these countries. The Resolutions are also available on the ICA's Web Site (<http://www.coop.org/en/resolution.html>).

## Stable Financial Situation

The General Assembly approved the reports from the Audit and Control Committee, and from the ICA's external auditors, concerning the financial years 1995 and 1996. It was agreed that the surplus of the two years, amounting to 226,317 Swiss francs, be divided as follows: 150,000 donated to the Corpus Fund of the ICA Development Trust, becoming its initial capital; a maximum of 50,000 allocated to

restructuring of the ICA offices in Geneva; and the remaining minimum amount of 26,317 transferred to the ICA's General Reserve.

The ICA Board, having reviewed the Subscription Formula as part of its examination of the ICA Rules, did not propose any change in the Formula, with the exception of the housing sector, where further consultations are needed with the members involved.

## 1998 Regional Assemblies

The General Assembly took note of the planned meetings of ICA's regional governing bodies in 1998: African Regional Assembly, Lusaka, Zambia, late August; European Regional Assembly, Paris, France, October 15-16; Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly, Seoul, Korea, late October; Americas Regional Assembly, Montevideo, Uruguay, mid November.

As decided previously by the ICA Board, the Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly in Korea will also feature a global seminar on the theme of successful Asian co-operative experiences. ICA members from all regions will be invited to attend this meeting.

## Over 300 Million Hear Co-op Message

Participants to the General Assembly had the opportunity to view the first ICA Video News Release which featured agricultural co-ops in Kenya and discussed the role co-operatives play in contributing to world food security. The four-and-a-half minute VNR, produced by World Television, was distributed in its entirety or in partial form by several of the major news distributors to approximately 200 TV stations worldwide and official estimates show that the newsreel was seen by 300 - 400 million viewers worldwide. Plans are underway to produce a VNR on health co-ops in Japan and to make another featuring the new ICA President on mission in South America.

The ICA Board met on 14 September in Geneva in order to finalise preparations for the General Assembly. As its first item of new business the Board approved the recommendations of the Elections Committee, which had met in June in order to deal with the election of the new ICA President and other election issues.

The Board decided to accept proposals by the Global Women's Committee to remove the reference to co-options to the Board from the new Rules and amend the proposed composition of the new Elections Committee. The Board agreed upon a Resolution concerning co-option at this General Assembly only, which was subsequently approved by the General Assembly.

The Board also agreed that TICA (International Co-operative and Associative Tourism Organisation) should not be removed as an ICA Specialised Organisation, in view of its claim that it still maintains a separate identity and membership. This proposal, also accepted by the General Assembly, brings the total number of ICA Specialised Bodies to 15.

The Board accepted 11 new organisations into membership, ten from the Americas and one from Sweden, and agreed to reinstate into membership the Mauritius Co-operative Union, which has succeeded in paying its outstanding dues.

The Board accepted the end-August finance report, which shows an above-budget projected year-end surplus in the area of 100,000 Swiss francs as a result of higher-than-expected General Assembly registrations and investment income.

The Board received and discussed detailed reports on the implementation of the membership services strategy, and on gender, which will remain on the Board's agenda for future meetings.

### Retiring Members Honoured

In addition to the retiring President, Graham Melmoth, the General Assembly paid tribute to the other five Board Members who had not sought re-election: Raija Itkonen of Finland (the longest-serving Board Member, first elected in 1984), Ota Karen of the Czech Republic, Holger Hasle Nielsen of Denmark, Hakaru Toyoda of Japan, and Ivano Barberini of Italy.

### More Women on ICA Board

The elections of Stefania Marcone and Rahaiah Baهران effectively doubled the number of women on the ICA Board, whose only female representative had been Raija Itkonen of Finland, who did not seek re-election.

The General Assembly also approved a resolution from the ICA Board as follows: "The ICA Board proposes that a provisional measure of co-option be accepted at this General Assembly to ensure that at least one woman per region is included on the Board. The Board further recommends that at least one woman be nominated from each region at the next and subsequent General Assembly elections." Accordingly, the ICA Board will co-opt a woman representative from Africa and from the Americas at its next meeting.

### Women's Advice Heeded

The Global Women's Committee at its meeting in Geneva, considered the proposal of amendments to the Rules from a gender perspective. Unanimously agreeing that the text proposed for adoption at the General Assembly regarding women's participation did not reflect the views of women in the movement and more importantly did not take gender issues into consideration, the committee informed the ICA Board of its concerns. The ICA Board, with the help of the Secretary of the Women's Committee, was able to reformulate the text regarding ensuring women's representation on the ICA Board and Election Committee. This new text was presented to the members of the ICA General Assembly, who unanimously adopted the revision.

### New Board Prepares the Future

At a brief meeting following the conclusion of the General Assembly on 16 September, the newly-elected members of the ICA Board decided to hold a review and planning session in Mexico City on 18 November, just prior to the Regional Conference of ICA Americas.

In keeping with the decision of the General Assembly, the Vice-Presidents from Africa and the Americas were asked to present female candidates for co-option to this next Board Meeting.

The regular meetings of the Board in 1998 are scheduled for Japan in April and France in October.

## European Council

The meeting of the European Council on 13 September in Geneva unanimously adopted recommendations by the Working Group reviewing relations between ICA Europe and the co-operative sectoral associations in Brussels to create an institutional framework to facilitate collaboration between ICA Europe and the European sub-committees of the ICA Specialised bodies.

This would allow the latter to participate in the Regional Assembly for Europe with a right to vote, provided that half of their members are directly affiliated to ICA. As long as both parties agree, the European Committee can be represented by the competent sectoral association. An example of this is CICOPA's decision to accept CECOP as their European sub-committee.

A closer collaboration was encouraged with all sectoral associations, and in particular with COGECA.

Regarding future strategy, the Working Group recommended that ICA Europe concentrate on three specific areas: the defence and promotion of the co-operative idea; East-West relations; and the promotion of collaboration in the Mediterranean rim.

On the recommendation of the Working Group some additional activities were added to the workplan for 1998, including information collection and dissemination on key issues of common interest, particularly legislation, the process of demutualisation, training tools, the creation of co-operatives in non-traditional industries and added value to members.



*Sectorial Associations of Brussels attend meeting of European Council.*

The 1998 Regional Assembly for Europe from 15-16 October in Paris will focus on "Threats to co-operatives" as well as the European elections. Two seminars will be organised with the ICA Development Trust, one in collaboration with IRU and WOCCU on identifying the development needs of Central and Eastern European countries, and another on North-South collaboration including the EuroMed programme.

During the coming year a development plan on assistance to co-operatives in Central and Eastern Europe will be designed, and a gender programme will be drafted for Europe as a follow-up to the General Assembly resolutions.

ICA Europe will continue to deal with projects upon the request of member organisations. The project on the collection of co-operative statistics in Europe, co-financed by EC-DGXXIII, will continue in 1998.

After the data of member organisations has been received and evaluated, a workshop will be held for the national statistical coordinators of the programme.

Membership issues will take an increasing role in the activities of ICA Europe, with special focus on analysing cases of members leaving the ICA and of some negative developments which have occasionally lead to bankruptcies.

The Council decided to transform the European Secretariat into an official ICA Regional Office effective from 1 January 1998.

Two co-options were approved until next year's elections, replacing G.Vecchi by Luigi Marino, President of Conf-cooperative, Italy; and J.L. Arrieta by J. Salaberría, President of the Confederation of Euskadi Co-operatives, Spain.

A seminar on the impact of the European Union's enlargement on co-operatives will be held in Prague on 3-4 November. This event will begin the process of assisting candidate countries' co-operative movements to adapt to the requirements of joining the European Union while helping long standing ICA and EU members to make the necessary adjustments involved in the reform of the European Union.

# Scenes from the O

## Geneva, Sw



Votes being counted at the general election (1-2), the publication stand and co-op exhibition.



Katarina Apelqvist (Sweden), Chair of the Global Women's Committee, hugs Irena Drazewska, Vice-Chair (Russia). Both leave after many years of dedicated service (4).



Stefania Marcone from the Lega, Italy, was one of two women elected to the ICA Board in Geneva (5).



Delegates and staff joined the ICA President and Director-General for a relaxing evening at the Auto Museum in Geneva (8-9).

# General Assembly

October 1997

6



Roberto Rodrigues of Brazil making his inaugural speech (6) and outgoing President Graham Melmoth of the United Kingdom (7).



10



11

The newly elected ICA President, Roberto Rodrigues, commenced his new role by meeting with ICA Head Office staff (10), holding discussions with Director-General, Bruce Thordarson (11) and calling a meeting to welcome new members to the organisation (12-13).

13



12

14



A study tour to visit agricultural co-ops in Switzerland was well attended (14).

## Specialised Bodies

### Global Human Resource Development Committee

#### Joint HRD/ ICACC Seminar

The seminar on "Overcoming Geographical Barriers through Electronic Networking and Distance Learning" was a joint activity of the HRD and Communications Committees with the support of the ILO COOPNET Programme.

The morning session dealt with networking and the role the Internet can play in facilitating distance learning - the subject was introduced by Yehudah Paz, Chairman of Global HRD Committee, and Gabriele Ullrich from the ILO. Tony Luscombe, General Manager for Communications at Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS UK), Byron Henderson, Director of Communications at the Centre for Co-operative Studies of the University of Saskatchewan and Jim Spohrer from Apple Macintosh in California were the keynote speakers.

Distance learning by traditional methods was the topic of the afternoon session with presentations by Dr. Peter Davis from Leicester University and Prof. Suleman Chambo, Principal of the Co-operative College in Moshi, Tanzania. The two papers showed two sides of 20th century reality, but with one common denominator: both concluded that there is a need for distance learning, and that co-operative HRD will continue in the future to depend on distance learning.

#### Future HRD Meetings

An international HRD seminar on value-based professional management will be hosted by the Indian Movement in Puna, India, 2-13 February 1998.

The theme of the seminar will be linked to the issues of implementation of the co-operative identity, competitive advantage and performance, as well as the multi-cultural aspect. Participants from the various

countries will be asked to contribute short papers on persons who were important conceptual founders and who established values in the early days of the movement. One day will be dedicated to a discussion on networking.

The joint seminar with the ICACC on electronic networking and distance education which took place in Geneva will be followed by discussions with the Research and Women's Committees in line with the HRD Committee policy to work with other ICA specialised bodies.

The Chairman, Yehudah Paz, reported on the Board's decision to approve the Constitution of the Global HRD Committee and informed participants that the regional HRD committees in Asia and Africa have new Constitutions with research added to their mandates. Finally, Prof. Dr. Asar (Egypt) and Dr. Andrade (Colombia) were elected to the Executive.

#### INTERCOOP

At its meeting in Geneva, INTERCOOP decided to move its secretariat from Copenhagen to Geneva and to replace the present Secretary, Ole Dueholm, by Mats Ahnlund of the ICA, following the decision in 1996 to form a separate joint buying company.

The new secretariat will focus on training and providing services to the working groups on co-operative retailing and will also assist the ICA Development Trust to set up a project assisting consumer co-ops in the Caucasus region.

#### CICOPA

The CICOPA meeting approved new rules changing the composition of the Executive Committee and including provision for associate membership and the creation of regional sub-committees and development organisations. CECOP is now the official sub-committee for Europe and CICOPA Développement, France the first CICOPA development organisation.

Mr. Marián Rybár of Slovakia was elected President of CICOPA and Arsenio Invernizzi confirmed as Secretary. Future meetings will be held in Paris in October 1998 and in Quebec in 1999.



## Specialised Bodies

### Co-operative Fisheries (ICFO)

The highlight of the Plenary meeting of the ICFO was the adoption of a resolution calling for member organizations' efforts for the labelling of product origin concerning imported as well as domestically produced products. It is considered of paramount importance to supply consumers with fresh, healthy and quality produce at fair prices.

In many countries, fishermen claim that unfairly cheap imported fish and fish products adversely affect domestic producer prices without benefiting the small scale producers of exporting countries.

Another highlight in 1998 was a decision to hold an international fish cooking contest. The event will be hosted by the National

Federation of Fish Producers in Hungary.

In view of the increasing importance of environmental conservation and food security, the chairman, Shoji Uemura, called for members' to comply with the provisions of the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Furthermore, he emphasized the need to promote international trade among co-operatives in such a way that it does not run counter to the interest of producers. Such trade should assist the co-operative sector to establish a better position in food distribution and market share vis-à-vis commercial companies, he stressed.

The ICFO decided to deprive members not paying their dues of

their voting rights and demote them to associate members. From 1997, auditing would take place only every two years. The next "ODA Seminar" in 1998 will be hosted by the new member organisation in Brazil.

#### OBITUARY

The representatives present at ICFO meetings prayed for one minute in silence for the soul of the late Mr. H. Eddiwan, auditor of ICFO and president of Indonesian Fishermen's Co-operative Societies. Mr. Eddiwan was vice-chairman of the ICA Committee on Fisheries for Asia and the Pacific.

### Communications Committee (ICACC)

The ICACC Executive meeting in Geneva on 14 September agreed to hold a Seminar on lobbying in Paris to coincide with the regional assembly next October. Speakers will be invited to focus on lobbying within the UN and EU systems and with national governments, as well as mobilizing members.

The special sub-committee on Trade and Communications, led by Byron Henderson of the University of Saskatchewan, met on 16 and 18 September to discuss trade and technology for co-ops.

The sub-committee agreed to offer technological support to enable all ICA members to have a presence on the World Wide Web within one year. Space will be provided on the ICA Web Site. Apple are donating hardware, software and some technical support to set up interactive pages so that co-operatives can input and update their own pages, with a provision to enable those without internet access to input their information via fax. The group members also committed themselves and their organisations to a number of other concrete projects which have a clear benefit to co-ops, including

assistance to the ICA in its aim to set up a new Web Site dedicated to co-operative trade with an interactive bulletin which members can use to post trade information by e-mail and fax. Apple and Xerox will host the next meeting of the group in February 1998.

Finally, the ICACC held a Seminar with the ICA HRD Committee, with funding from the ILO CoopNet Project, on 17 September. This is detailed in the HRD report.

## Specialised Bodies

### ICA Global Women's Committee



*The ICA Global Women's Committee meets in Geneva.*

A new Chairperson and Executive were elected at the Plenary meeting of the Committee. The new Chair, Britten Lagerkvist Tranströmer and the Executive Committee defined priorities for the future. The Committee will look at practical ways of ensuring follow-up to the 1995 Congress resolution on

Gender Equality. Consultations are expected to begin with the specialized bodies to discuss how to improve the representation of women in the sectorial organizations. The Committee will also provide input to the Board regarding the progress of women's representation in the co-operative movement.

After numerous years of excellent work, Katarina Apelqvist turned down the request of members to stand for re-election. Members of the Committee expressed their gratitude for her hard work and persistence in ensuring the women co-operators' voices and concerns were heard. The Committee had grown under her leadership and the women's network was strengthened. The Plenary also thanked outgoing Executive members for their contribution to the work of the Committee. A special thanks was given to Ms. Irena Drazewska (Poland).

### Consumer Co-operatives

The meeting of the International Consumer Co-operative Organisation focused on several important programmes: the project on developing and strengthening consumer co-operatives in Latin America will continue to be co-financed in 1998 by ANCC, Italy and KF, Sweden. UK organisations, Co-op Union and CWS, are examining the possibility of subsequent co-financing of the project. CWS materials on education and training programmes will be the basis for a proposal to set up an international training and education programme for members and elected officials of consumer co-operatives.

A Conference on "biotechnologies and sustainable consumption", will be co-funded by the European Commission in Brussels on 23 October 1997.

During elections Giuseppe Fabretti, ANCC-Italy, and Hisashi Tanaka, JCCU-Japan, were confirmed as Chairman and Vice Chairman. Executive members are Silvester Adamca, Slovakia; Sigurd Bak, Germany; Petr Brozek, Czech Republic; Anne Buch-Jorgensen, Denmark; Lars Hillbom, Sweden; Patrice Jolivet, France; Zoltan Szoke, Hungary; and Lloyd Wilkinson, UK.

### Research

The Research Committee met in Bertinoro, Italy, from 2 - 5 October 1997 to discuss the role of co-operatives in the present economic climate. Over seventy researchers participated, over forty papers were presented and eleven workshops discussed issues ranging from Innovation and Community and the Co-operative Image to New Social Co-ops to Gender and Privatisation, Public Policy and Legal Issues. Future annual conferences will take place in Cork, Ireland, in 1998 and Quebec, Canada, in 1999.

### Banking

The ICA specialised organisation for co-operative banks focused on the issue of capital formation. This has been on the agenda for some time as international standards specify capital requirements which many co-operative banks have had problems meeting. ICBA also arranged a seminar on the topic, which was attended by some 80 people from co-operative banking worldwide.

## Development Meetings

### Development Trust Advisory Board

The first meeting of the Advisory Board met on 18 September when the members, individuals and representatives of organizations dealing with co-operative development were given an introduction to the ICA Development Trust before discussing their role and function to provide guidance on policy, strategy and the direction of the Development Programme to the Trust Board.

The Advisory Board will meet again in December in Marburg to decide on working methods and discuss the first draft of a new ICA Development Strategy.

The Advisory Board will discuss key issues facing the ICA Development Trust which will be incorporated in the new strategy. These include the role of co-operatives in development strategies, the environment, policy framework and practice, co-operative legislation and other regulatory frameworks, and new relationship with governments.

Other issues concern adjustment process and transition, identity and democracy, leadership and value-based professional management, capital, women and youth, new structures, new areas of activity and weak apexes/member organisations. These issues will be reflected in the new development policy/strategy.

### Regional Directors' Meeting



*Ada S. Kibora, Robby Tulus, Gabriella Sozanski, Vincent Lubasi and Juan Diego Pacheco are ICA staff responsible for the different regions. They are shown here with Roberto Rodrigues, ICA President.*

Dates, venues and programmes of regional meetings for 1998 were agreed with themes reflecting that of the 1999 General Assembly "Adding Value to Membership - the Co-operative Challenge for the Next Millenium".

A number of other development events are planned in conjunction with the Regional Assemblies: global members meeting and meetings of regional specialised committees (Asia/Pacific), Ministerial Conference follow up, Regional Council and regional committee meetings (Africa), conference on trade blocs, youth conference and sectorial meetings (the Americas), Development Trust Advisory Board and Regional Directors' meeting (Europe).

## Other Meetings

### Baltic Sea Co-op Environmental Project

A part of the ICA long-term environmental strategy is to find models for transferring experience from environmentally successful co-ops to other ICA members. The models must also be economically successful as we want to show that it is good business to "go green". ICA is therefore monitoring and evaluating a project exchanging experiences of 16 ICA members in the Baltic Sea area. The project is led by a Steering Committee which met in Geneva in September. The main topic discussed was the joint development of an environmentally friendly detergent to be sold by all consumer co-ops in the region.

### Business Opportunities

When ICA asked its members what it could do better, the members answered that "providing business opportunities" was a very high priority. A lunch seminar, attended by some 40 people, was arranged in Geneva.

The successful business work among co-operatives was presented by the Regional Director for the Americas, Juan Diego Pacheco, while Byron Henderson of the University of Saskatchewan, outlined the work of the new ICACC Sub-Committee on Trade and Communications.

## Profile of New ICA President

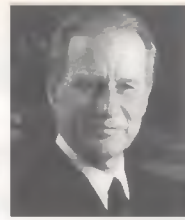


Left to right, back row: Son Paulo, son-in-law Darcy, Roberto and son Rodrigo. Front row: daughter-in-law Lia, daughter Candida, wife Eloisa and daughter Maria.

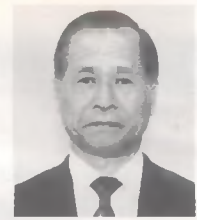
An agricultural producer, Roberto Rodrigues became president of his local sugarcane planters' co-operative in 1973, and served two terms as President of the Organisation of Co-operatives of Brazil from 1985-91. In 1990 he founded and presided over EXIMCOOP, which is now one of Brazil's five largest soybean exporters. He subsequently served as Minister of Agriculture of São Paulo State, and as President of the Brazilian Rural Society.

Mr. Rodrigues has been a member of the ICA Board since 1992, Chairman of the ICA Americas' region since 1993, and Chairman of the ICA Agriculture Committee from 1992-95.

## Good-Bye Co-operative Friends!



Graham Melmoth



Hakaru Toyoda



Ivano Barberini



Raija Itkonen



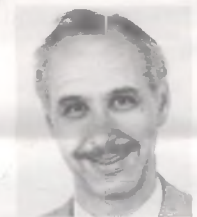
Ota Karen



Jacques Moreau



Holger Hasle Nielsen



Markus Schelker

Departing Board and Audit & Control members.

## ICA CALENDAR

■ 3-4 November 1997  
ICA Europe Seminar  
on EU Enlargement  
Prague, Czech Republic

■ 18 November 1997  
ICA Board Meeting  
Mexico City, Mexico

■ 19-21 November 1997  
Regional  
Conference  
for the Americas  
Mexico City, Mexico

■ 5-7 December 1997  
Development  
Trust Advisory  
Board  
Marburg, Germany

■ February 1998  
ICACC Trade  
& Communic.  
Cupertino, CA, USA

■ February 1998  
ICA Housing Seminar  
Manila, Philippines

■ 20 March 1998  
ICA European Council  
Helsinki, Finland

■ April 1998  
ICA Housing Board  
& Seminar  
Cairo, Egypt

■ 21-22 April 1998  
ICA Board Meeting  
Tokyo, Japan

■ 13-17 May 1998  
ICA Research Committee  
Cork, Ireland

■ August 1998  
Regional Assembly  
for Africa  
Lusaka, Zambia

■ 15-16 October 1998  
Regional Assembly  
for Europe  
Paris, France

■ 17 October 1998  
ICA Board Meeting  
Paris, France

■ October 1998  
Seminar on Co-ops  
& Lobbying  
Paris, France

■ October 1998  
Regional Assembly  
for Asia  
& the Pacific  
Seoul, Korea

■ October 1998  
ICA Housing Board  
& Seminar  
Algarve, Portugal

■ November 1998  
Regional Assembly for the  
Americas  
Montevideo, Uruguay

■ August 1999  
ICA General Assembly  
& Congress  
Quebec City, Canada