

PRESS RELEASE

6 July 2018

In its International Day, Cooperatives tell the world how to grow with democracy, equity and social justice

Tomorrow, **7 July 2018**, cooperators around the world will be celebrating the [International Day of Cooperatives](#) under the international theme of **Sustainable societies through cooperation**. With almost 200 years of history, the cooperative movement has shown how, thanks to its **values, principles and democratic governance structures**, cooperatives have sustainability and resilience at their core.

“On the International Day of Cooperatives, we are going to tell the world that it is possible to grow with democracy, equity and social justice. That our societies cannot continue wasting resources and excluding people. That we must improve the present and preserve the future for the next generations. And that we are proud to be part of this movement. A movement with values and principles. A movement committed to social justice and environmental sustainability,” the President of the International Cooperative Alliance, Ariel Guarco, declared.

Watch the full video message from our President for the 96th International Cooperative Day and the 24th United Nations International Day of Cooperatives [HERE](#)

Sustainable societies are ones that reflect the environmental, social and economic limits to growth. Cooperatives have concern for community (“Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities”) as the **seventh cooperative principle**; as a result, they consume, produce and use the resources that the planet offers but in solidarity with the environment and with the communities in which they are embedded. *“That is why we are a key partner for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG),”* insisted the President of the International Cooperative Alliance. From 2016, cooperatives have been expressing their commitment to the SDG’s through the campaign www.Coopsfor2030.coop and through it, the cooperative contribution to making the world a better place.

How cooperatives build sustainable and resilient societies?

By their very nature, cooperatives play a triple role:

- As **economic actors** they create opportunities for jobs, livelihoods and income generation
- As **people-centered enterprises** with social goals they contribute to social equity and justice
- As **democratic institutions**, they are controlled by their members, playing a leading role in society and local communities.

[Click here](#) to read [12 examples from different sectors and regions](#) of the world that highlight **how cooperatives can become the vehicle to ensure sustainable consumption and production of goods and services, or SDG12.**

How is the movement celebrating #coopsday?

Across the planet, cooperatives are celebrating what makes them special with events, festivals and all sorts of activities. The International Cooperative Alliance together with [DotCoop](#) has created an [interactive map](#) showing at the click of a button where #coopsday events are taking place as well as the organisations that are hosting them. The International Cooperative Alliance is encouraging its members to use the **hashtag #CoopsDay** and the [Cooperators' guide](#) to spread the word.

Yesterday, 5 July, a special Event at UN Headquarters was organized in New York. The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) and the UN Permanent Mission of Argentina invited UN Ambassadors and government representatives to explore how cooperative enterprises build sustainable societies through cooperation in innovative and inclusive ways. Participants engaged in an interactive discussion with fellow ambassadors, representatives of COPAC member organizations and cooperators from the field.

Ariel Guarco, President of the International Cooperative Alliance, closed the event highlighting the transformative capacity of cooperatives to build a better and more sustainable world for future generations.

Leaders of the cooperative movement including Gabriela Buffa, Representative of the Youth Committee from COOPERAR - the Apex organization in Argentina, Georgia Papoutsi, Policy Coordinator of the International Cooperative Alliance and Chiara Faenza, responsible of sustainability of Coop Italia, shared experiences on the real progress of SDGs, highlighting how cooperatives can become the vehicle to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. Ambassador of Mongolia to the UN, Mr. Sukhbold Sukhee, discussed how countries can support cooperatives to become key contributors to sustainable development.

COPAC also presented 'Transforming our world: A cooperative 2030', a series of case studies that highlight how cooperatives' can work to achieve the SDGs, available [here](#)

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

About the International Cooperative Alliance

The International Cooperative Alliance is a non-profit international association established in 1895 to advance the co-operative social enterprise model. The International Cooperative Alliance is the voice for cooperatives worldwide, representing more than 311 cooperative federations and organisations across 108 countries (figures of January 2017).

One in every six people on the planet are co-operators. Through its membership, the International Cooperative Alliance represents 1,2 billion people from any of the 2.94 million cooperatives worldwide. The largest 300 cooperatives in the world have combined annual revenues of 2.16 trillion USD (2015) and 280 million people around the world (10% of the employed population) secure their livelihoods in cooperatives, either through direct employment or by organizing through a cooperative.

The International Cooperative Alliance works with global and regional governments and organisations to create the legislative environments that allow cooperatives to form and grow. Towards media and public, the International Cooperative Alliance promotes the importance of people-centred co-operatives' values-based business model.

Operating from a global office in Brussels, Belgium, the International Cooperative Alliance is organised with four Regional Offices (Europe, Africa, Americas, and Asia-Pacific), and eight Sectoral Organisations (Banking, Agriculture, Fisheries, Insurance, Health, Housing, Consumer Cooperatives, and service and industry cooperatives).