**ICA-Americas Newsletter**

**Inside**

**ICA-AMERICAS ASSEMBLY ADOPTED IMPORTANT RESOLUTIONS:**
The motion for the modification of the 7th Co-operative Principle and the declaration of Rochdale as “International Capital City of Co-operatives” (page 3)

**XVII ICA-AMERICAS REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN BUENOS AIRES**
The event gathered more than 900 cooperators and leaders from the co-operative movement in the region and worldwide. (page 4)

**CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT CELEBRATES CITY TWINNING**
The National Capital of Co-operatives in Argentina and Brazil sealed their twinning agreement in the aim of strengthening their affective bonds. (page 9)

**INTEGRATION IS THE KEY TO THE SURVIVAL OF CO-OPERATIVES**
*Interview with Roberto Rodrigues, former ICA and ICA-Americas President (page 6)*

“Co-operative enterprises build a better world”

**“We are the solution to many of the problems in the world”**
Paul Hazen said the Obama administration wants to transform two failed banks into co-operatives (page 7)

**Key Conference on environmental sustainability by Graciela Magrin**
(p. 8)

**European co-ops take action on climate change**
(p. 8)

**Co-operative movement celebrates historic City Twinning**
(p. 9)

“I’m happy to tell you that Rochdale is the International Capital City of Co-operatives”
(p. 7)

**Dame Pauline Green:**
“We are the solution to many of the problems in the world”
(page 7)

**Paul Hazen said the Obama administration wants to transform two failed banks into co-operatives**
(page 7)

**Slogan for the International Year of Co-operatives officially approved**

ICA-Americas Newsletter is an e-publication of the International Co-operative Alliance for the Americas

communications@aciamicas.coop
Phone: + (506) 2296 0981
Fax: + (506) 2231 5842
PO BOX: 6648 -1000
San José, Costa Rica
The XVII ICA-Americas Regional Conference “Co-operative Commitment to the Preservation of the Planet”, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 22 to 26 November, 2010, was a success. One more time, it showed the potential of the people who nurture the co-operative movement in the region.

ICA-Americas President, Regional Board, Regional Director and staff, member organizations in Argentina—Confederación Cooperativa de la República Argentina (COOPERAR), Agricultores Federados Argentinos Sociedad Cooperativa Limitada (AFA S.C.L.), Instituto Movilizador de Fondos Cooperativos (IMFC), La Segunda Cooperativa Limitada de Seguros Generales, Sancor Cooperativa de Seguros Ltda and Banco Credicoop Cooperativo Limitado—feel immense satisfaction with the outcomes of the latest edition of the most important cooperators’ meeting in the region. At the same time, we thank every single participant since the conference was a success because of the efforts they made to take part in this event and their invaluable contributions.

During the conference, it was clear there are lots of cooperators, men and women, who are committed to the preservation of the planet. It was a great opportunity to reflect and collectively analyze the importance of the co-operative movement concerning this crucial issue for the future of mankind. We discussed all these topics at length, but now we have to put words into practice. There is no doubt co-operatives are organizations which are aware of the need to adopt concrete measures to contribute to the preservation of our planet. Our duty is to transform this socio-environmental commitment into feasible and sustainable practices.

This event meant another step in the path started by ICA with the adoption of a resolution called: “Climate Change: Our Co-operative Commitment”, which was approved by the General Assembly in Singapore in 2007. Cooperators committed themselves to reducing greenhouse gases, communicating and educating their members on environmentally-friendly practices and lobbying their governments.

On the other hand, the conference enabled us to go forward in the work regarding sectoral and thematic networks. The meetings, forums and seminars held during the conference contributed to strengthening the existing areas of sectoral and thematic integration, and at the same time, paved the way for the creation of new sectoral coordination spaces. Lastly, we had the satisfaction of seeing this XVII Regional Conference had a predominance of horizontal relationships.

To conclude, we echo the words of ICA’s President Dame Pauline Green, who honored us with her presence throughout the event: “This regional conference has been the tangible proof that, also in the Americas, the co-operative movement is more alive, more united and stronger than ever”.

We are aware of the fact that we have a lot to give to our planet and its people and we firmly believe we are stronger together. We invite you to continue walking together along this path of integration and mutual commitment.

Best regards,

Cooperatively,
7th Co-operative Principle could be modified

IX ICA-AMERICAS ASSEMBLY APPROVED IMPORTANT RESOLUTIONS

The IX ICA-Americas Regional Assembly was held within the framework of the XVII Regional Conference. Among the resolutions approved it is important to highlight two proposals to submit to the ICA Board: the motion for the modification of the seventh Co-operative Principle and the declaration of Rochdale as “International Capital City of Co-operatives”.

As a sign of the commitment of ICA-Americas with environmental problems, the IX Regional Assembly approved a motion for the modification of the seventh Co-operative Principle. If this modification is accepted by ICA Board it will be presented to the ICA General Assembly to be held in Mexico in 2011. The modification approved by ICA-Americas Assembly is the following:

7TH CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLE: CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

“Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities including the protection of the environment through policies approved by their members, promoting the responsible management of natural resources to ensure ecological balance and human well-being”.

There has been a long-standing analysis, reflection and commitment of the co-operative sector to the environment, which is present in this proposal for a reformulation of the seventh Co-operative Principle related to sustainable development.

There is a link between co-operative values and environmental sustainability. Co-operative values call co-operatives to commit themselves to behaving responsibly and to be proactive in terms of environmental sustainability. Such values are solidarity, democracy, equality, honesty, responsibility and concern for other human beings. Co-operative values and principles must be applied to raise environmental awareness. ICA firmly believes we are all responsible for our generation and the future generations and, therefore, affirmative actions must be taken.

ICA-Americas Assembly considers it is necessary to modify the current version of the seventh Co-operative Principle, so as to formulate it in a more concrete way to defend the environment and to show the clear commitment of the co-operative sector to it.

ELECTION OF AUTHORITIES

During the IX Regional Assembly an election of authorities took place. Mr. Ramón Imperial was re-elected as ICA-Americas Regional Board President. A new ICA-Americas Regional Board was elected and it is integrated by a representative from each of the countries in which there is at least one ICA-Americas’ member.

ROCHDALE INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL CITY OF CO-OPERATIVES

The IX Regional Assembly also approved a proposal to submit to the ICA Board a motion to declare Rochdale as the International Capital City of Co-operatives on the grounds that it was the city where the co-operative movement was born.

Along with this proposal, ICA-Americas will promote the development of “Twinning Co-operative Cities” among co-operative cities worldwide.
ICA-Americas promotes various initiatives

XVII ICA-AMERICAS REGIONAL CONFERENCE: HIGH LEVEL OF ATTENDANCE AND COMMITMENT

The International Co-operative Alliance for the Americas celebrated its XVII Regional Conference from 22 to 26 November, in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina. It gathered more than 900 cooperators and leaders from the co-operative movement in the region and worldwide.

The central theme of the Conference —which was declared of national interest by the Argentinian Government—, was: “Co-operative commitment to the preservation of the planet” and it included the following topics: global warming, energy and new technologies, water and sanitation, cities, rural areas and environment. The Regional Conference offered participants more than twenty activities (symposiums, forums, meetings and key conferences) which led to four days of fruitful work.

The forum entitled “The media and the co-operative movement” was considered very important since there is no doubt the co-operative sector lacks visibility. The participants of the forum concluded it is necessary to “make us visible and get ready for it”.

“We want to propose the creation of a Strategic Platform of Co-operative Communication to be launched by 2012, International Year of Co-operatives, so as to promote, disseminate and make the co-operative movement visible globally. This Strategic Platform should include various tools, target groups and aims focused on its main objective which is working on the creation of co-operative-owned means of communication in order to provide relevant information of the co-operative sector to the mass media” the participants explained.

Another remarkable activity of the Regional Conference was the VI Parliamentarians Meeting. Parliamentarians from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru were present at the Meeting and committed themselves to adopting ILO Recommendation 193 for the promotion of co-operatives and stated they will lobby for its implementation in each of their countries. Parliamentarians will also work on the evaluation of public policies regarding the promotion of co-operatives at national, regional and local level. During the Meeting it was decided to create a Parliamentarians Network to support co-operatives.

Moreover, Parliamentarians congratulated the co-operative movement in the region on assuming the commitment to working on the protection of the environment through the Co-operative Green Pact. They urged all co-operative organizations to promote environmental education and training as well as the development of concrete projects.

It should also be pointed out that during the Utilities Co-operatives Forum, the creation of the Network of Utilities co-operatives of the Americas was unanimously approved.
On the other hand, the Agriculture Sector Seminar concluded it is relevant to “commit co-operatives to deepen their bonds and interrelation at a national and international level, making the interchange of co-operative goods, services, knowledge and experiences possible”.

Regarding the Workers Co-operative Seminar we highlight the re-launching of CICOPA-Americas was approved.

Last but not least, we emphasize the relevance of the election of authorities that took place during the Assemblies of the Regional Equity Gender Committee, Youth Committee and the Financial Co-operatives and Co-operative Banks Committee of the Americas.

**Among the distinguished attendees of the Conference were:**
- Dame Pauline Green, ICA’s President;
- Charles Gould, ICA’s Director General;
- Ramón Imperial Zúñiga, ICA-Americas’ President;
- Dr. Roberto Rodrigues, former Minister of Agriculture in Brazil, former ICA and ICA-Americas President;
- Manuel Mariño, ICA-Americas Regional Director;
- Martin Lowery, Executive Vice President of external affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA);
- Paul Hazen, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA);
- Alessandra Wilson from the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada;
- Bob Burlton, ACT! Principal, Cooperatives Europe/ICA-Europe;
- Dave Sitaram, member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Co-operative Association
- Hubert Méndez, from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Mesoamerica regional office.
- Hagen Hénry, Chief of the ILO’s Cooperative Branch
- Nerina and Silvia Barberini –wife and daughter of Ivano Barberini –also participated in the conference taking this opportunity to present Ivano Barberini’s book.
Interview with Roberto Rodrigues

INTEGRATION IS THE KEY TO THE SURVIVAL OF CO-OPERATIVES

Roberto Rodrigues, former ICA and ICA-Americas President and former Agriculture Minister in Brazil, said -during his stay in Buenos Aires, Argentina, for the celebration of the XVII Regional Conference-, that in the present global scenario, co-operatives must focus on integration and intercooperation. Rodrigues reaffirmed co-operatives are the alternative to avoid social exclusion and the concentration of wealth.

The former ICA President analyzed the challenges ahead for co-operatives in a globalized world. “Growth is one of the rules of globalization. Any kind of company needs to grow. Otherwise, they are likely to disappear. Co-operatives are no exception. Their main problem is they have, in legal and institutional terms, limits to that growth. The answer to this problem is integration through cooperation and intercooperation”.

Rodrigues said co-operatives should not only integrate with other co-operatives but also with private companies. “Some time ago, private companies were seen as ‘enemies’ of the system, but as co-operatives need to grow companies can join us in some way so as to broaden co-operatives horizons”.

He explained co-operatives were always considered a ‘third way’ for social inclusion between capitalism and socialism. However, after the Fall of the Berlin Wall, socialism disappeared and capitalism transformed into liberalism. “With this transformation, I now see co-operatives as a bridge, but where there is no river. Co-operatives are a bridge between a market which causes unhappiness and the possibility of collective well-being”.

According to Rodrigues, co-operatives and the movement as a whole have the responsibility of preserving peace and democracy through integration and making use of the cooperative philosophy which avoids wealth concentration.

Regarding co-operative administration, Rodrigues highlighted that although there are some co-operatives with excellent management practices there are others which need changes in the way they are managed. “Modern co-operatives have to pay attention to their new role. They have to be competitive and efficient enterprises so as to serve their members, not capital, and in this way, mitigate their members’ difficulties. Co-operatives are not against liberalism, they are against its negative effects. Co-operatives have to make use of the same mechanisms liberalism and capitalism use but with the sole aim of serving their members”.

Rodrigues stated another crucial challenge for co-operatives is communication. “I always tell cooperator we are very good at telling ourselves how efficient we are, how important we are. But we have not been able to communicate this to those who are not cooperators and who do not know who we are. Take Brazil, for example. Here we have health co-operatives, they are fantastic, but they do not sell the message that they are co-operatives. They just sell themselves as the best health service but they are not promoting the cooperative advantage. Consumers should choose us because we care for their well-being and not for our own profit”.

CO-OPERATIVE AGENDA

According to the ex ICA President there are three areas where there is a lot of work ahead for co-ops. Firstly, attracting women to the movement. “Women are crucial for co-operatives since they have a great influence over the population. They are vital for co-ops”.

Secondly, the youth. “I always insist. Every co-operative needs to have a Youth Committee. Youth is the guarantee for the future. We cannot put our future at risk”.

Lastly, he raised the topic of having stronger relationships with governments. “A democratic government will always be interested in associating with co-operatives. We must be at democratic governments’ side to support them in social matters”, he concluded.
“WE ARE THE SOLUTION TO MANY OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE WORLD”

Dame Pauline Green, ICA president, called parliamentarians in the Americas to work on the implementation of sound laws by the governments. She talked about this and other issues during the sixth Parliamentarians Meeting, one of the most remarkable activities of the XVII ICA-Americas Regional Conference.

“Co-operatives work a lot against climate damage and they do defend the environment but we have to catch people’s attention with strategies to raise awareness so more and more people start spreading the word about co-ops”, she said.

“More than 1000 million people around the world belong to co-operatives. This sector creates 100 million jobs, 20 per cent more than multinationals” Pauline Green highlighted. At the same time, she told parliamentarians “there is not any other business model as flexible as ours and with these figures”.

Dame Pauline Green also remarked the UN declaration of 2012 International Year of Co-operatives “gives us a historic opportunity of making a real change in the visibility of the movement so that it can be part of the new global business model. It promotes investment and social well-being along with horizontal management. We are the solution to many of the problems in the world”.

Regarding some pressing issues which need to be solved, Green mentioned gender inequity and how to raise awareness about co-operatives among the youth. She suggested the focus should be placed on the development of co-operatives young people can feel identified with.

PAUL HAZEN SAID THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO TRANSFORM TWO FAILED BANKS INTO CO-OPERATIVES

Paul Hazen, member of the ICA Board and President and CEO of the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA) travelled to Buenos Aires, Argentina, to take part in the XVII ICA-Americas Regional Conference. There, he informed that two mortgage banks Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac -which went bankrupt in 2008 and were placed into conservatorship by the government- would be transformed into co-operative banks. Hazen added the government sent a bill to the Congress in Washington in November, to discuss the co-operative model’s potential role as part of any long-term structural reform option for these enterprises.

“It is very gratifying that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has recognized what we have known for years: that co-operatives – through their member ownership – responsively meet market needs” Hazen said.

In the report sent to the Congress, the GAO states, “that lenders would have financial incentives to engage in sound mortgage underwriting because, if they do not, then poorly underwritten mortgage loans sold to the co-operatives could result in significant losses [that] could adversely affect the capital investments that lenders have in such co-operatives.”

The GAO report further stated, “Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac help provide a secondary mortgage market for conventional conforming loans and thereby enhance liquidity in housing finance.” However, due to the establishment as for-profit shareholder corporations, with an implied government guarantee, it led both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to take excessive risks, resulting in costs that the GAO estimates will reach $400 billion to the U.S. taxpayer.

Paul Hazen said NCBA “looks forward to working with the new Congress and the Administration to implement member-owned co-operative solutions for the myriad of challenges facing our economy”.

“It will be a controversial issue in the Congress since the Republicans do not accept this option. There is still a lot of work ahead of us” he admitted.

OBAMA’S SUPPORT

During his stay in Argentina, Hazen told the press the president Barack Obama supports all the initiatives regarding co-ops and that the Obama administration provides funds to enable co-operatives to get started especially in rural areas.

“Today 20 million dollars are allocated per year to co-operatives and, although it is not much, it is three times higher than the funds provided during the Bush administration”, said the co-operative leader.
ICA-Americas continues its work in defense of the planet

KEY CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
BY GRACIELA MAGRIN

For its recent Regional Conference, ICA-Americas called distinguished personalities from the world of science and the co-operative movement to analyze environmental challenges. In this opportunity, we want to share with our readers the key conference called: “Environmental Sustainability: contributions through solidarity and co-operative ethics” by Graciela Magrin from Argentina.

Graciela Magrin is an agriculture engineer. She has worked as Main Researcher of the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA in Spanish) in the Climate and Water Institute since 2007. During the recent XVII Regional Conference she provided important information about the main problems the planet is facing.

Magrin said global population is growing alarmingly. “Global population doubled between 1960 and 1999. In October 1999 there were over 6,000 million people on the world. The population grows 77 millions per year, 95% in developing countries”.

Regarding the use of water, she said every year we use 54% of the amount of fresh water available. “If the consumption of water per person remains invariable, in 2025 we would be using 70%, owing to population growth”. If the rate of water consumption per person reaches the rate of consumption in developed countries, in 2025 we would be using up 90 percent of the amount of water available.

According to Magrin, the main challenges for the 21st century will be keeping the capability of feeding a growing population, preserving the availability and quality of natural resources (soil and water) and tackling climate change. Also, she said the American region has various environmental problems which make these countries more vulnerable to climate change, for example soil degradation caused by deforestation, erosion and overgrazing.

She explained some countries are losing between 4% and 8% of their GDP as a result of productivity reductions derived from environmental degradation. Moreover, she added that population growth, disorganized urban growth, poverty, rural migration and the lack of investment in infrastructure and services, increase the vulnerability to climate changes and natural disasters.

Magrin believes our future depends on how mankind moves forward. “The key to reducing vulnerability of the less privileged sectors of society are co-operative and joint actions. Every nation needs to address these issues and plan measures in the short, medium and long term. Climate change requires the attention of every sector of society”.

EUROPEAN CO-OPS TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Euro Coop an organization representing consumer co-operatives in 17 European countries, has released a new report on the initiatives its members are taking to fight climate change.

The report outlines measures being taken by consumer co-operatives in such areas as the sale of eco-friendly products, promoting sustainable fishing policies and forestry management, sourcing organic and locally-sourced food products, waste reduction, sustainable transportation and energy efficiency.

The report is part of a project undertaken in 2009 called ”Consumer Co-operatives and Climate Change: Taking the Challenge Forward”, in which European consumer co-ops voluntarily engaged to take action on this issue.
CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT CELEBRATES HISTORIC CITY TWINNING

The National Capital of Co-operatives in Argentina - Sunchales - and the National Capital of Co-operatives in Brazil - Nova Petrópolis - sealed their twinning agreement in the aim of strengthening their affective bonds and promoting joint-ventures.

The city twinning agreement was celebrated in Sunchales, Argentina, on 26 November and four days later in Nova Petrópolis, Brazil. Both celebrations were emotive and significant and were honoured with the presence of the president of the International Co-operative Alliance, Dame Pauline Green; the regional director of ICA-Americas, Manuel Mariño and Ivano Barberini’s family: his wife Nerina and his daughter Silvia.

Ivano Barberini, who passed away in 2009, was warmly remembered in these celebrations for having encouraged the twinning between both cities. ICA-President, Dame Pauline Green, said. “I’m sure Ivano Barberini would be really happy if he were here”.

Back in 2006, being Ivano Barberini ICA’s president, he received a delegation from Sunchales to invite him to participate in the inauguration of the “first” monument to co-operatives in the world. Once he had accepted the invitation, Ivano Barberini explained that, in fact, the monument in Sunchales was the “second” one since the first one was situated in Nova Petrópolis, in the south of Brazil. Cooperators from Sunchales were so interested in this information that they decided to go to Nova Petrópolis and know its history, co-operative tradition, and of course, its monument called “Co-operative Strength”. That was the beginning of a strong relationship between both cities.

Nova Petrópolis’ mayor, Luis Irineu Schenkel, said that on one occasion Ivano Barberini pointed out there were three cities in the world which embodied cooperation: Sunchales, Nova Petrópolis and Mondragón.

Sunchales was declared Co-operative Capital City in Argentina in 2005 and Nova Petrópolis in Brazil in 2010 and the historic city twinning sealed last November will be very important to interchange experiences, education, history, culture and above all, to promote cooperation.

Oscar Trinchieri, Sunchales’ mayor stated: “Today is just one more step in a strong relationship between these two cities. We have to continue what we have started. We are together for cooperation”.

Regarding the importance of this completely new experience Dame Pauline Green said: “I am very pleased with this twinning. I was able to see how new co-operatives are developed and how this philosophy is being absorbed by young people, who are our future”.

Manuel Mariño, regional director of ICA-Americas, said he was proud of this twinning. “There is nothing in the world compared to what we have seen today. I am proud of belonging to the co-operative movement”.

ICA-Americas Newsletter // Issue Nº 8 // December 2010
Slogan for the International Year of Co-operatives officially approved

“CO-OPERATIVE ENTERPRISES BUILD A BETTER WORLD”

The United Nations and the International Co-operative Alliance have just announced that the slogan for the 2012 International Year of Co-operatives will be “Co-operative enterprises build a better world”. ICA encourages all co-operative organizations around the world to include the slogan and the logo – which will be approved soon – on all their communications and marketing materials: product packaging, point-of-purchase displays, newsletters, magazines, annual reports, web sites. In this way, the general public will get a common and consistent message from a variety of co-operative enterprises.

Since 1959 the UN has designated International Years in order to draw attention to major issues and to encourage international action to address concerns which have global importance and ramifications. The declaration of 2012 as International Year of Co-operatives constitutes a unique opportunity to make the case for the co-operative movement globally as a major factor of economic and social development and its contribution to the eradication of poverty.

UN General Assembly proclaimed the year 2012 the International Year of Co-operatives (IYC) through the resolution A/RES/ 64/136 adopted on December 18th, 2009. The resolution recognizes the co-operative model as an important factor in economic and social development and encourages governments, international organizations, the co-operative movement itself and other stakeholders to support the development and growth of co-operatives worldwide.

The document “encourages all Member States, as well as the United Nations and all other relevant stakeholders, to take advantage of the International Year of Co-operatives as a way of promoting co-operatives and raising awareness of their contribution to social and economic development..." With this aim, ICA will develop special activities at global, regional and sectoral level, together with the United Nations and its agencies.

The ICA invites co-operatives to plan their activities for the UN International Year considering all the stakeholders of the movement: co-operatives, their members and leaders, government and local authorities, community organizations, media, educational institutions and the general public.

Conferences, seminars, workshops, publications, media events, preparation of films, video series, radio programmes can all be a part of IYC celebrations at national, regional and international levels to spread the co-operative message.
The International Year of Co-operatives represents a historic opportunity for co-operatives. Our challenge is to make the most of it and work in a coordinated way to transform this celebration into an event which generates programs and policies to foster the contribution of co-operatives to the eradication of poverty and social and economic inclusion.

Manuel Mariño
ICA-Americas Regional Director

The IYC can provide opportunities to initiate changes in existing policies through short and long term lobbying campaigns, to undertake research, collect statistics, and introduce co-operatives in educational curricula, among other initiatives.

Throughout 2010, the ICA has participated in different consultations with the UN Secretariat about the IYC planning, including the definition of the function of each stakeholder in order to advance in its own planning of activities, the search of funds and members mobilization. Furthermore, a Work Group, integrated by distinguished co-operative leaders, has been established.

In turn, ICA-Americas has established a special Work Group at the level of the Regional Board and, at the same time, will stimulate the constitution of Committees in each country of the American continent, integrated by ICA members but open to other local co-operative organizations. These Committees shall be in contact with their governments to commit them to the creation of National Committees with governmental and co-operative participation, as well as other stakeholders involved in the social and economic development of each country.

Which opportunities will the International Year of Co-operatives bring?

- Raise the visibility and understanding of co-operatives with decision-makers as well as with the general public.
- Put co-operatives firmly on the international, regional and national agenda and to influence policies that impact co-operatives positively.
- Obtain progress in the promotion and advancement of co-operatives, including the establishment of new partnerships with stakeholders and cooperation programs, the improvement of the regulatory legal frame and the adoption of new policies directed to its promotion and development.
- Raise the visibility and recognition of the ICA as the global voice of the co-operative movement.

The United Nations Year provides co-operatives with a platform to tell our story. We won’t wait until then to share our message but, undoubtedly, 2012 will bring opportunities not normally available.

Charles Gould, ICA’s Director-General

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF CO-OPERATIVES
http://www.aciamericas.coop
http://www.ica.coop/activities/iyc
http://social.un.org/coopsyear
http://www.2012.coop
1 The **ICA Board** has approved an initial work programme for **International Year of Co-operatives**. The programme will have a large communication element. The **2011-2012 work programme** includes active participation and collaboration with the **UN and its agencies**, the production of communications materials - brochures, templates, video footage - for use by members and partners including. A series of media events are also foreseen to build interest and contacts during 2012 and beyond. ICA foresees partnerships with a wide variety of organisations and institutions during 2011 and 2012 to further the aims of the Year. It will associate itself and endorse international, regional and national events. The **work programme** should enable ICA to get co-operatives included on the international agenda not only in 2012 but also beyond. **ICA members** will be asked to support the programme through special contributions.

2 The UN Programme on Co-operatives is compiling a list of the proposed activities for the International Year of Co-operatives (IYC) 2012. Please visit [http://social.un.org/coopsyear/documents/planned-activities.pdf](http://social.un.org/coopsyear/documents/planned-activities.pdf) from time to time to view the updated list.

3 **ICA EXPO 2010** – the second ICA’s global trade fair – took place from 8th to 10th December, 2010 at KTPO, White Field in **Bangalore, India**. Over **130 co-operative exhibitors from 23 countries** participated in this event. Co-operatives from Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Georgia, Korea, India, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, East Timor, the UK and the U.S.A., joined the host country to showcase exclusive co-operative products and services to increase their import and export opportunities.

4 **ICA EXPO 2012** will be held in **Manchester, UK** on **31st October to 2nd November, 2012**.

5 **Dame Pauline Green**, President of the International Co-operative Alliance joined the **President of the Republic of Cyprus, Dimitris Christofias** to mark **100 years of the Cyprus Co-operative movement** and 50 years of the Independence of the Republic of Cyprus at an event entitled: ‘Co-operatives empower women’. Dame Pauline Green received the **highest honour of the Cyprus Co-operative Movement** for her services in supporting and developing co-operatives across the globe and for her support for the interests of Cyprus for many years.

6 ICA continues to increase its membership. Currently, ICA has **247 member organizations from 92 countries**, representing more than 800 million individuals worldwide.

All of your suggestions and proposals regarding the newsletter’s contents are very important for us, since our primary goal is to provide a publication enriched by your opinions.

Please send your comments to: communications@aciAmericas.coop