



Weekly Digest

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Editorial

Welcome to the twenty seventh issue of the Weekly Digest. This week we return to our regular weekly format covering a wide range of activities throughout the ICA's global network.

Firstly, we have a report on the new arrangements for the ICA in Africa. Moving continents, we cover the ICA's efforts to increase their profile with the European Commission. We also report on tax changes, both good and bad from different parts of the world before returning to Europe to announce that the digest is now available in Russian. The recent ICMIF meetings in Japan are covered as well as a new youth project in Canada. Finally we note two important anniversaries.

As usual we would welcome your comments. Remember, it's your ICA so let's hear from you!

New Structure and ICA Director for Africa

Following the resignation of Bernard Kadasia, ICA Regional Director for East, Central and Southern Africa, in August 2004 a review of the ICA's African structure was undertaken.

The review was timely as there is a clear trend towards greater integration in Africa. This can be seen in the new African Union (AU), the NEPAD – New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

At the same time, civil society is better recognized and more involved in development processes throughout the continent. The representative status recently accorded by ECA to the ICA will give us a more pan-African mission. The invitation to the ICA President to attend the African Heads of State Summit in Ouagadougou in September 2004 was another example of this new trend. In addition, international organizations are tendering to support larger projects across bigger areas of Africa.



The result of the review was a threefold proposal: one Regional Office for Africa based in Nairobi, continuation of the office in Burkina Faso as a Project Office and the appointment of one Regional Director for the whole of Africa. The ICA Board at its recent meeting in Warsaw approved these changes, as did the recent ICA African Regional Boards.

The result is we have a new structure and a new ICA Regional Director for Africa - Ada Souleymane Kibora, *pictured above*. Kibora has been ICA Regional Director for West Africa since 1990. He will start as ICA Regional Director for Africa on 17 October 2004. Future issues of the *Weekly Digest* will report on the recent Regional Assembly held in Africa and keep you updated on ICA programmes and activities in Africa.

Brussels Reception for New MEP's

Co-operatives in Europe recently hosted a very successful reception for newly elected Members of the European Parliament (MEP's). Co-operatives in Europe is the common platform established by ICA Europe and the Co-ordinating Committee of European Co-operative Associations (CCACE).

The reception, held in the European Parliament in Brussels, was hosted by long standing "co-operative" MEP, Terry Wynn. It was attended by over 70 people. The two main speakers were Dame Pauline Green from ICA Europe and Etienne Pflimlin, from CCACE. Pauline Green indicated that "the main objective of the reception was to increase the profile of co-operatives, with the new MEPs and the European Commission generally. This is the start of a number of similar profile raising exercises for Co-operatives in Europe" she said. Photo shows from left, Etienne Pflimlin, Pauline Green and Terry Wynn speaking at the opening of the reception.



Some Gains, Some Losses on Taxation Front around the World

News from our members on the taxation front. USA member, the National Co-operative Business Association (NCBA) reported that they have scored a major victory for co-operatives with the US Congress sending its repeal of the 'Triple Tax' to the White House, where the President is expected to sign the "long-awaited measure". "The co-operative community has fought long and hard for this," said NCBA President and CEO Paul Hazen, pictured opposite. "It is a very significant, if long-overdue, victory.



The dividend allocation rule penalises co-ops that raise capital by issuing non-voting stock and pay dividends on that stock. It taxes some of their earnings three times. The rule reduces the returns co-ops can provide to their owner-members by increasing their tax liability, discouraging them from seeking capital. "In the end," said Hazen, "the losers from the triple tax are the rural and urban communities that co-ops serve."

Across the Pacific a recent Federal Court decision may have implications for the many non-profit co-operatives throughout Australia. The decision is believed by some to call into question the long standing, 120 year old, principle of mutuality. This principle means groups are not taxed on any surplus generated by its own members. However, the ruling may ironically mean that as some co-ops have a rule that does not allow them to distribute profits to individual members they may now be prevented from enjoying the benefits of mutuality! Examples such as this show that one can never assume long standing rights and entitlements for co-operatives at law will continue. It highlights the importance of making all lawmakers aware of the co-operative difference. For more information see

www.australia.coop

Weekly Digest Now in Russian – More Languages Soon!

The ICA's Weekly Digest is now available in Russian, as well as English, Spanish and Portuguese. The Russian language edition is being translated by Nikolay Tikhonovich, Belgorod University Consumer Co-operatives with support from the ICA's Russian member, Centrosoyus.

ICA is committed to bringing the latest news of its activities to its members in as many languages as possible. Apart from the four languages already being produced, French and Italian language versions of the digest will be available within the next couple of weeks. If members who are currently receiving the Weekly Digest would like to receive it in one of the languages mentioned above, possibly in addition to what they are currently receiving please advise Marie-Claude Baan directory@coop.org

Еженедельный йджест

Том 1, Номер 25
13 Сентябрь 2004

От редактора
Мы вас приветствуем на страницах 25 номера Еженедельного дайджеста. В том номере ведущий темой является открытие того факта, что работа МСА по поддержке кооперативов принесла результаты. Предоставляем материал о том, как кооперативы могут внести свой вклад в развитие глобальной сети на национальном уровне бедности и создание рабочих мест. Мы также помещаем материал о недавней международной конференции и о призыве к сообществу кооперативов и их лидеров к участию в следующем саммите. Наконец, мы сообщаем о предстоящем заседании рабочей группы, а также о его будущем. Как всегда, мы бы хотели почитать и вас комментарию по содержанию этого номера.

Главы африканских государств поддерживают кооперативы
В 8 сентября 2004 в г. Уагагага, Бурунди Фанс провела чрезвычайная встреча глав государств и правительств Африканского союза. Основным темой встречи стало создание рабочих мест и снижение уровня бедности в Африке.

Повышение этих двух экономических вопросов на такой важной встрече отражает великую работу Африки в создании новых предприятий и сосредоточении на национальном уровне бедности через создание рабочих мест и предоставление возможностей. Выборы Уагагага в качестве места проведения встречи также являются значимым событием Фанс - глава на него выдвинул больше стран, чем в предыдущие саммиты, и международные министерства и организации не могли полностью игнорировать. Поддержка от национальных министров, глав государств и правительств.

Удэн Сианья, Генеральный директор Международной организации труда, и Иван Барборин, Президент МСА (на фото выше) получили приглашение на эту встречу и будут представлять кооперативный сектор международных организаций: ФИД, Марконио Банья, МБФ, ФАО, ФСКК, ФКФК и МБ МСА с его национальной неправительственной организацией, получившей официальный статус на данной конференции.

В своем обращении и приветствии на саммите Иван Барборин отметил, что «основная проблема Африки заключается в том, что она должна бороться не только с голодом и с созданием рабочих мест, но и с созданием рабочих мест». Она должна создать культуру и достоинство, получившая это понятие. Он подчеркнул, что «кооперативы являются отличным способом развития по ним, (на саммите 25)

МСА объединяет, представляет и служит кооперативы во всем мире.

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ICA-ICMIF Joint Action discussed



Maria Elena Chavez Hertig, ICA Deputy Director-General attended the recent ICMIF board, its membership and development committees meetings. The meetings were held in Tokyo, Japan in conjunction with ICMIF Asia and Oceania Association seminar (see below) and offered an opportunity for Ms. Chavez Hertig to meet a number of ICA's Japanese members. She was able to discuss a number of areas in which joint action would be useful to both organisations. She noted that "a co-ordinated approach to the International Accounting Standards Board, raising the unique image of co-operatives and finding synergies to support each other's development initiatives were among the issues on which ICA and ICMIF can work more closely". *Photo below shows the ICMIF board and others in festive mood.*



Closer Ties with ICMIF Regional Association

Maria Elena Chavez Hertig representing the ICA President delivered a commemorative address to the ICMIF Asia and Oceania Association's 20th anniversary event. She noted "we are convinced that the future will be bright for co-operatives and mutuals. Capital businesses are trying hard to introduce the kind of principles and links to their customers that are common place in co-operatives and mutuals. The issues of trust, accountability, communication and service orientation are implicit to our organisations".

Both she and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA ROAP Regional Director made presentations. AOA is ICMIF's regional association and brings together not only co-operatives, but also mutual organisations. The seminar shared experiences from members on how insurance co-operatives and mutuals would be better able to address the challenges of rising competition, globalisation, and changing policy environments, etc.

Mr. Tan Kin Lian, Vice-President of AOA and CEO of NTUC Income of Singapore, noted that "regular contact helps us to strengthen our knowledge and gives us strength to retain our co-operative identity against the tide of demutualisation and privatisation". Members shared experience on customer care, strategies to address the increasing environmental uncertainties, aging populations, micro-insurance and governmental policy challenges. At the end of the seminar, members thanked out-going AOA President, Chihiro Maeda, former President of ZENKYOREN and welcomed the new ZENKYOREN President Toshiyuki Uehara to take over the presidency of AOA. AOA will hold an event during the ICA Regional Assembly for Asia and the Pacific to promote closer ties at the regional level.

Asian Confederation of Credit Unions Elects First Woman Director

The Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions ([ACCU](#)) one of the ICA's four international members has elected a woman to its board for the first time. Ms Evelyn Bautista is the first woman director of ACCU since its creation in 1971. ACCU has been active in advocating women's participation in the leadership of credit unions. ACCU policies and programmes emphasise gender equality with a view to increasing women's participation not only in the activities, but also the leadership of credit unions.

Youth Reinventing Co-operatives

The [British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies](#) (BCICS), in collaboration with the [International Labour Organisation](#), the International Co-operative Alliance, and the [Canadian Co-operative Association](#), is preparing a book showing how young people around the world are using co-operatives to meet their economic and social needs. It will present case studies of co-ops operated by young people and articles about co-ops that have interesting youth programmes. It will also feature essays by young people exploring the world of co-operatives and co-operative action. BCICS want pictures, especially from different parts of the world! They anticipate publishing the book by May 2005. The book will be co-edited by Julia Smith, a BCICS researcher now on an internship through the Canadian Co-operative Association with the International Co-operative Alliance



in Nairobi, and Ian MacPherson, BCICS Director. [More](#)



160th Anniversary of Rochdale Pioneers

The 21st of December 2004 is the 160th anniversary of the opening of the Toad Lane store by the Rochdale Pioneers. This event marked the foundation of the modern co-operative movement.

To celebrate the achievements of the Rochdale Pioneers the UK Co-operative College, the Co-operative Group, United Co-operatives and the Rochdale Museum and Heritage Centre are running a series of activities in Rochdale in coming months. These include workshops for schools, an exhibition of co-operative banners and a series of lectures at the [Co-operative College](#) on the importance of the Rochdale Pioneers to the development of the international movement, see <http://archive.co-op.ac.uk/pioneers.htm>

Italian Consumer Co-ops Celebrate 150 Years

Over 500 people gathered at the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome on 5 October 2004 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the establishment of consumer co-operatives in Italy. Foreign delegates from Japan, Finland, Sweden, Portugal, Spain, the Czech Republic, and Ireland attended. The ICA was represented by Patricia Vaucher. Italian musicians opened with a performance of pieces by Beethoven, Brahms and Bartok. The meeting was moderated by well know Italian journalist Federica Sciarelli. Speakers included:

- Giuliano Poletti, President of the National League of Co-operatives
- Vera Negri Zamagni, Professor at the Department of Economics, University of Bologna
- Ivo Diamanti, Professor of Political Sciences, University of Urbino
- Vasco Errani, President of the Emilia Romagna region
- Giuliano Amato, Senator, Professor of Comparative Constitutional Right, European University Institute of Florence
- Aldo Soldi, President of the National Association of Consumer Co-operatives-COOP

On this occasion, a book was launched on consumer co-operatives in Italy. It was co-authored by Vera Zamagni, Patrizia Battilani and Antonio Casali. Contact: info@cooperazione.net

Copies of the Weekly Digest are archived on the ICA's website www.ica.coop

