



ICA Digest

Issue 45

19 December 2005

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New Year 2006

"I have great hope for the future and that 2005 will mark the continuing transformation of co-operation throughout the world"

This was the ending of my message of 2005. Was it justified? I think so.

The main event for ICA this year was our General Assembly in Cartagena, Colombia, in September. The theme - Co-operative Values, a Competitive Asset in a Globalised Economy - was designed to emphasise the business orientation of our work. Given that this was the best attended General Assembly of all time – nearly 2000 people came – it was certainly a success in that way. But I think people also saw that our voice is increasingly being heard – whether through our top 300 project; the endorsement of the UN's Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs; the grave warnings of Sherron Watkins, the Enron whistleblower, on operating business without values; or the examples of good practice from right across the movement - this was an important conference. Our challenge is to keep up this momentum.

Seeing first hand the destruction in Sri Lanka and Indonesia caused by the tsunami was something I will never forget. But the co-operative movement is being used to rebuild and spread hope. Through our tsunami fund we are developing projects in these countries designed to rebuild co-operative enterprises. Thanks to the generosity of our movement, both through us and directly to these countries, ICA members have been very active and supportive.

Continued on page 2



Iain Macdonald, ICA
Director-General

Welcome to our last issue for 2005 - see inside for all the latest news and information

From the editor's desk



Garry Cronan
Editor

Welcome to the December 2005 edition of the ICA's **Digest**.

Our lead story covers the recent special consultative meeting in Geneva. This well attended meeting focused on exploring ways of operating regionalisation within the ICA.

In addition, we report on a range of other activities, including the recent WTO meeting in Hong Kong and

peace related meetings in Israel and Palestine.

We also cover a series of events which have been occurring over the last few months, which we have not otherwise reported.

As this will be our last **Digest** for 2005 I would like to take the opportunity to wish all our members and readers the very best for the coming holiday and festive season.

We will return in 2006 on our now regular monthly basis. Several other communications initiatives are planned for 2006, including a new news service on our upgraded website, a global business journal and the launch of our *Global 300* project.

All the best.

Garry Cronan

cronan@ica.coop

ICA's global workplan for 2006 will give priority to communications, promotion and information services; representation and international standing; and membership development

Please note our Head Office in Geneva will be closed from the 23 December 2005, reopening on 3 January 2006

New ICA Board meets in Geneva

The new ICA Board met in Geneva on 7 December 2006 for a half day following the special consultative meeting, see report on page 3.

This meeting was the first full Board meeting for new members elected at the Cartagena General Assembly.

Among the items dealt with was a report from the ICA Director of Finance, Guy Malacrida. The Board approved the 2006 budget

and workplan. The 2006 budget forecasts a small surplus. The main priority areas in the 2006 workplan, at a global level, are communications, member related services, development and international standing.

The Board also approved the application for membership of a number of new members (see page 17) and also approved the cessation of membership for five organisations who have not paid their 2004

and 2005 dues.

As mentioned on page 3 the Board also approved the establishment of an interim working party to further develop options and ideas discussed at the special consultative meeting.

The Board will next meet in Brussels on 6-7 March. The focus of this meeting will be a report of the interim working group and other governance related matters.

Director-General's New Year message..... continued

Our Campaign against Poverty embraces our work on tsunami reconstruction as well as an increasing project portfolio in Africa. Working together with the International Labour Office, our Co-operating out of Poverty campaign is becoming an effective symbol of the special message of hope that co-operation can provide the world - offering a serious alternative to the misery caused by neoliberal economics. ICA is now working very closely with the Global Call for Action against Poverty – the parent body of Making Poverty History.

We are already planning our next General Assembly in Singapore in 2007 but 2006 will see regional assemblies in England, Peru, Sri Lanka and Tanzania where the transformation I mentioned earlier will continue.

Best wishes for a peaceful and co-operative 2006

*Iain Macdonald
ICA Director-General*

Agreement on need for strong global and strong regional ICA

Special Consultative meeting



A special consultative meeting was held in Geneva on 6-7 December 2006 to consider the issue of regionalisation in the ICA.

The ICA General Assembly in Cartagena, Colombia in September 2006 approved two governance resolutions. The report and recommendations of the *Governance Working Group (GWG)* was approved. Secondly, the *European Resolution* on regionalisation and other matters was also approved. Both of these documents provide the context and rationale for the special consultative meeting in Geneva.

The objective of the

Geneva meeting was to identify the key strategic issues in the operation of a regionalised ICA and position these within the context of governance renewal within the ICA.

Over 70 people attended including ICA Board members, representatives of ICA regional governing bodies, ICA sectoral representatives and senior ICA staff.

To help facilitate discussions three workshops on specific aspects of regionalisation were held. A large degree of consensus was reached, particularly on the need to ensure regionalisation strengthens both the global and regional ICA. See related items below and on page 14.

From left, Hans Dahlberg, Chair of Workshop 1 on the role and functions of the ICA, Ivano Barberini, ICA President, Paul Hazen, Chair of Workshop 3 on membership criteria and Yehudah Paz, Chair of Workshop 2 on legal structures for the ICA, presenting their group's reports to the consultative meeting



Etienne Pflimlin, Co-Chair, Co-operatives Europe and Jean-Claude Detilleux, ICA Board member during the consultation

Interim working group formed to further examine issues

One outcome of the consultative meeting described above was the decision by the ICA Board to establish a special interim Working Group on structural and regionalisation issues.

This interim group has been asked to report on these issues to the next ICA Board meeting in Brussels on March 6-7 2006.

The working group is to comprise the Director-General and the four ICA Regional Directors, plus two representatives from each ICA region taking account of sectoral, gender and Governance Working Group considerations.

The Regions have nominated the following two representatives.

Europe

- Etienne Pflimlin;

- Gun-Britt Mårtensson
Asia-Pacific
- Yehudah Paz
- Seah Kian Peng
Americas
- Paul Hazen
- Lourdes Ortellado
Africa
- Joseph Mukasa
- Aba Smith

For more information contact Iain Macdonald
macdonald@ica.coop

See our website www.ica.coop for a range of material relating to governance changes in the ICA

International standing

The ICA is able to leverage, on behalf of its members, the strength, diversity and spread of the global movement

The ICA is seeking closer collaboration with the World Bank – we want to ensure the co-operative message is clearly heard

The ICA is one of the world's largest NGOs. NGOs are playing an increasingly important role in the debates surrounding globalisation

Importance of ICA's global agenda

One of the key roles of the ICA is to represent the interests of co-operatives and its members in international organisations and forums.

The range of the ICA's work in this area is impressive. It extends from its very close and long standing relationship with the International Labour Organisation, to other UN agencies, some of which are mentioned in separate items in this issue.

A number of these agencies are formally involved in COPAC which the ICA coordinates. The ICA also has strong relationships with the international organisations representing agricultural producers and trade unions.

The ICA is now increasingly working with organisations such as the International Accounting Standards Board.

Over the last year the ICA has also been invited to

join the organising group for the GCAP campaign, greatly increasing its presence in global anti-poverty initiatives.

It is also reaching out to other global and regional organisations. It is now a partner organisation in the *Global Economic and Social Forum* and it is also in discussions with the [Glocal Forum](#).

During 2006 the ICA will be further integrating these various global initiatives within a more strategic approach and framework.

ICA continues talks with World Bank

The World Bank Group

Rural employment promotion, development in Africa and implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers are the three initial entry points for enhanced co-operative involvement with the World Bank.

In a meeting organised by the ILO, ICA, COPAC and ILO representatives met with WB officials in Geneva to review the current WB position on co-operatives and identify areas of new collaboration. The ILO and World Bank are already working together on the issue of em-

ployment promotion, particularly as a follow-up to the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation.

However, there continues to be a need to stress to Bank officials that a new policy and legislative environment exists in many countries which ensures co-operative autonomy; that co-operatives are business enterprises and that co-operatives are economically significant in both industrialised and developing country economies. ICA and COPAC

are actively seeking to ensure that the message is clearly received by WB officials.

A proposal for collaboration with the Bank - particularly on the *African Co-operative Facility*, as well as the *Global Co-operative Campaign against Poverty: Co-operating Out of Poverty* both of which are being developed by ICA and ILO - was positively received.

Further contact with officials is planned to discuss concrete activities.

ICA participates in Unctad discussion on WTO services negotiations

The ICA was invited to participate in a special meeting 15-16 November, on "Pro-development Agenda for Services Negotiations - International Civil Society Concerns" that was held in Rajasthan, India. The

meeting was organised by the United Nations Conference on Trade And Development.

Although many NGO's have strong positions on agriculture within the context of WTO negotiations, this is

less so for the service sector. This was the focus of this conference.

We will carry a fuller report of these issues in our next issue of the **Digest**.

COPAC membership expands

The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Co-operatives, COPAC, is expanding.

[COPAC](#) was established in 1971. It is an on-going partnership between representatives of the cooperative movement, farmers' organisations, cooperative development agencies, and the United Nations and its agencies. At its last meeting in Ber-

lin, Germany, in January 2005 it decided to expand its current membership. Its present members include, ICA, International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) the International Labour Office, (ILO) the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), and the United Nations (UN).

Since the Berlin meeting

at the start of the year three new members have joined. They are the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA), International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF) and the Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC). The last three are all involved in international cooperative development activities. For more information contact: copac@coop.org

COPAC



Maria Elena Chávez Hertig, COPAC Coordinator

COPAC convened 5th meeting of co-operative development agencies: tsunami reconstruction

The next meeting of COPAC will be in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 24-25 January 2006.

On this occasion COPAC will also be convening the 5th meeting of cooperative development agencies.

The main focus of this meeting will be on the cooperative response to the tsunami and the subsequent reconstruction. In particular to examine how successful co-operative agencies were in coordinating their responses. What lessons can be learned from this experience to avoid duplication

of effort and increase effectiveness.

Invitees to the meeting include current COPAC, members (see item above) plus other cooperative development agencies including the Co-operative College (UK), DID (Canada), DGRV (Germany), GTZ (Germany), Legacoop (Italy), NISPED (Israel), NTUC Income (Singapore), Royal Norwegian Society (NORCOOP), Rabobank Foundation (Netherlands), OCDC (USA), and the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU).

Also invited are local partner organisations and ICA members. Sri Lanka: National Cooperative Council (NCC), SANASA, CoopFed, NICD -- Indonesia: DEKOPINWIL, Institute for Indonesian Co-operative Development Studies.

In addition to the COPAC Board meeting and the 5th meeting of co-op development agencies, there will also be a seminar on microfinance.

For more information contact: Maria Elena Chávez Hertig copac@coop.org

The meeting will focus on the effectiveness of the cooperative response to the tsunami

Secretary-General's report highlights co-operatives' role

The 2005 United Nations Secretary-General's report on co-operatives spells out in detail the role co-operatives can play in social and economic development.

The report acknowledges

that during the past decade greater attention, both within and outside the United Nations system, has been paid to the role of co-operatives in social and economic development.

The report highlights the successful role of co-

operatives in poverty reduction through a number of case studies and examples. It includes the results of a survey of member countries and ICA members. See www.copacgva.org/a60138e.pdf for a copy of the report.

United Nations

The ICA has been very successful in raising the profile of co-operatives within the UN System

Special feature

Co-operatives in Palestine and Israel: partners in peace

ICA is helping to broker a unique deal between Israel and Palestine. ICA Di-

rector-General, Iain Macdonald and ROAP Director Rajiv Mehta attended a meeting of Israeli and Palestinian co-operators in Tel Aviv 15-16 December 2005 where agreement was reached on three specific projects.

Iain Macdonald said "This is a perfect example of how

co-operative enterprise can act as a vehicle for peace and reconciliation and at the same time provide jobs and business opportunity. I am sure this is the start of something very big."

The co-operative movements of Palestine and Israel provide a variety of potential areas of co-operation, particularly in the areas of agricultural production and marketing.

Co-operation among the co-operatives can serve the interests of the peoples of both nations and help create a solid basis in

human and economic relations, which will strengthen the peace process.

The first stage is to develop joint projects, outlined below, between the agricultural co-operatives of Gaza and their counterparts in the Eshkol region of Israel.

Yehudah Paz, Chair of the Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development in Israeli and former ICA Board member, welcomed these developments. "This is a major achievement - the result of a lot work by many Palestinian and Israeli co-operators. I am very hopeful for the future" he said.



Photo shows the Israeli and Palestinian delegations together with ICA Director-General, Iain Macdonald and ICA-Asia Pacific Director, Rajiv Mehta. Also pictured are representatives of the co-operative movement from Sri Lanka who were present to discuss the joint Israeli-Sri Lanka tsunami reconstruction effort.

rektor-General, Iain Macdonald and ROAP Director Rajiv Mehta attended a meeting of Israeli and Palestinian co-operators in Tel Aviv 15-16 December 2005 where agreement was reached on three specific projects.

The three Israeli/Palestinian peace projects

Project one envisages joint production and marketing of agricultural products under the trade name *Co-operatives Products for Peace*.

The produce will include strawberries, sweet peppers, cherry tomatoes and olive oil. The project will link Palestinian producers with Israeli co-operators with experience in the fields of post-harvest processing and marketing in Europe and North America. The project will include the development of a co-operative business model which may be applicable in other similar circumstances.

The Palestinian and Israeli co-operators believe that this initiative will be

strengthened by the assistance which can be provided by the ICA and its members. They are seeking support in opening markets and distribution channels for these products.

Project two will focus on developing a training programme for senior managers and directors of Palestinian co-operatives. The programme will utilise the capabilities of NISPED as well as additional Israeli co-operative partners.

The third project envisages NISPED assisting the Palestine Peasants Union, (PPU) in implementing commercial fish production in Gaza.

For more information contact nisped@nisped.il



A farmer from Gaza shows his strawberries that could be exported to Europe

"This is a perfect example of how co-operatives can act as a vehicle for peace."

Iain Macdonald



One of the few fishermen's co-operatives in Gaza and Palestine

ICA attends WTO meetings in Hong Kong

WTO

ICA participated in the recent meetings of the World Trade Organisation held in Hong Kong 13-18 December 2005. ICA ensure that the role and nature of co-operatives are acknowledged in future WTO discussions. One issue which may affect



ICA Board member Dae-Kun Chung, NACF, Korea talking with former ICA President and now Brazilian Agricultural Minister, Roberto Rodrigues at the IFAP briefing



Photo from IFAP session at the WTO meetings. Roberto Rodrigues, second on left, David Rogers, second from right and Jack Wilkinson far right. Jack Wilkinson, chair of IFAP is also the current of COPAC Chair.

Deputy Director-General, Maria Elena Chávez Hertig and Kim Jin-Kook, ICA's Agricultural Advisor, both attended.

The ICA is increasing its involvement with the WTO. It will be seeking the views of members and others on how best to

is that of state enterprise. This issue may well be a future problem for co-ops – as it is not just state trading enterprises – but any trading entity that has

a monopoly. This could include co-operatives in some countries and sectors.

The next issue of the **Digest** will carry a full report of the WTO meetings

Photos shows ICA Board member, Isami Miyata, JA-Zenchu, Japan asking a question at the IFAP meeting in Hong Kong



Peace

Co-operative peace initiatives

The ICA is seeking to establish a project showing how co-operative enterprise makes a unique contribution to peace and reconciliation using examples from Israel/Palestine, Kashmir, Sri Lanka and Ireland.

In each case the countries concerned have experienced or are experiencing recent conflict but are also well known for active co-operative movements and it is those movements which have been

taking initiatives.

Together with the ILO, the ICA seeks to highlight these initiatives showing how co-operation can make a unique contribution to world peace through the creation of decent jobs and the establishment of self help businesses.

Co-operative values such as democracy, solidarity, equality and self responsibility undermine the causes of conflict and injustice through methods unavailable to governments and

traditional enterprises.

This project could make a huge global impact through the ILO's special links with governments, labour and employers, and, with a membership base of over 800 million, the ICA's longstanding commitment to world peace and trade justice,



ILO Director-General, Juan Somavia, talking with Nobel Prize winner Rita Levi-Montalcini. Ms Levi-Montalcini was the President of the Jury which awarded Mr Somavia the 2005 Archivio Disarmo Peace Award at a special ceremony celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Coop Liguria in Italy earlier this year

Development



Visit our
*Cooperating Out
of Poverty website*

www.ica.coop/

By linking with other well resourced global campaigns and coalitions the ICA is able to increase the effectiveness of its anti-poverty programmes

Real progress on ICA's poverty and development initiatives

The ICA over recent months has been moving to brand many of its development and poverty reduction programmes under the joint ILO/ICA *Cooperating Out of Poverty* banner. During 2006 we will be continuing to develop the campaign with specific communications and project initiatives already being planned. Below we report on some recent activities under the *Cooperating Out of Poverty* banner. We would welcome comments from members, development partners and others on the direction and content of this campaign. For more information contact ICA Director of Development, Jan-Eirik Imbsen, imbsen@ica.coop.



Jan-Eirik Imbsen

Objectives of poverty campaign

The ICA and ILO initiated the *Co-operating Out of Poverty* campaign as a call for action to the world co-operative movement to join hands in fighting poverty. It aims to strengthen the capacity of co-operatives to make a significant contribution to poverty reduction by enabling poor people to co-operate out of poverty.

Co-operatives and other organisations which promote the development of sustainable co-operative business enterprises and create awareness on the significant contribution of co-operatives to poverty reduction can join the Campaign by:

- Promoting and implementing co-operative development activities
- Promoting and initiating movement to movement linkages (trade links, information sharing, etc)
- Producing, collecting and disseminating knowledge on successful initiatives and good practice
- Using the Campaign logo to draw attention and educate those with whom they correspond (website links, letters, email, publications)
- Supporting peace and conflict resolution through cooperative enterprise

Already many members are using the logo and distributing the campaign posters, all available from the campaign website. Also, many are giving the campaign profile in their communications activities and a number have translated the material into other languages.

Linking the poverty campaign with other global initiatives

Recent poverty and development initiatives and activities include:

- The ICA and ILO jointly issued a statement on the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 17 October 2005. This statement highlighted the key role of co-operative enterprises in helping achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) see www.outofpoverty.coop/
- Ongoing work linking the *Cooperating Out of Poverty* campaign to the global anti-poverty **GCAP** campaign. The ICA is now a member of GCAP's International Facilitation Group. It participated in a meeting of this group in Bangkok in July. GCAP is particularly interested in the link that the co-operative campaign can bring at the national level to the national campaign coalitions in the North and South.
- The ICA has followed up contacts with the United Nations Millennium Campaign www.millenniumcampaign.org. This campaign supports citizens' efforts to hold their government to account for the realisation of the MDGs.
- ICA is participating with the ILO and International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in the Syndicoop project.

ICA participating in *Global Economic and Social Forum*

The *Global Economic and Social Forum* is an initiative of the City of Lyon, France.

The forum is designed to focus on innovations in the economic and social realm which will lead to a fairer globalisation. It is expected that over 2000 regional, national and international representatives will be participating.

The ICA has been asked to be one of the partner organisations for the forum. [More....](#)



Jacques Terrenoire, Director of the *Global Economic and Social Forum* presenting a report to the ICA General Assembly in Colombia

International standing

The ICA needs to be visible in the new and evolving global forums which are discussing how globalisation should develop

Asia-Pacific Co-operative – Government Dialogue

Malaysia was the venue for a recent *Co-operative – Government Dialogue* organised by ICA Asia Pacific in collaboration with national co-operative apex of Malaysia, ANGKASA from 14-17 November 2005.

The dialogue was attended by more than 70 international delegates from the governments

and movements of 15 countries. This is the normal preparatory meeting prior to the bi-annual Asia-Pacific Co-operative Ministers' Conference series.

The following areas of concern were identified by participants:

- Government policy and legislation affecting co-operatives
- Effective participatory

- governance
- Institutional capacity building
- Protection for vulnerable sectors of society
- Resource mobilisation

Copies of the presentations made at the meeting can be obtained from the ICA's Asia Pacific site or by clicking [here....](#)

Regions

ICA Americas meet with Inter-American Development Bank officials

Approximately 15 representatives of ICA Americas members raised the profile of co-operatives with the *Inter-American Development Bank* during a half-day meeting at the bank's Washington, D.C., headquarters on 1 December 2005.



In the meeting, held as part of an Americas Regional Council Meeting, the ICA delegates demonstrated that co-operatives are a significant part of the economy in many countries in the region and a good economic de-

velopment tool. Bank officials asked for a continued dialogue with the group and agreed to work with the ICA in the future.

An initiative of Latin American countries, the Inter-American Development Bank is the old-

est and largest regional development bank. It is a main source of financing for economic, social and institutional development projects, as well as trade and regional integration programmes, in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Members of the ICA Americas delegation in Washington

Research

ICA Research Conference held in Cork, Ireland



Yohanan Stryjan, ICACR Vice-Chair, Europe one of the organisers of the Cork conference



Olive McCarthy, from the Centre for Co-operative Studies, UCC the local host organiser

The *Contribution of Co-operatives to Community Culture* was the theme for the most recent ICA co-operative research conference.

The conference was held at the Centre for Co-operative Studies, University College, Cork Ireland on 11-14 August 2006. Over eighty co-operative researchers from twenty countries attended.

Right, research conference attendees at one of the workshop sessions

Olive McCarthy from CCS was the local conference organiser. She was very pleased with both the attendance and the quality of many of the papers presented. "There is some very interesting co-operative research currently being done", she said.

A selection of the papers will be published in the *ICA Review of International Co-operation* early in 2006. The *Journal of Rural Co-operation* will also be publishing some papers from the conference. Discussions are also held with editors of other co-op journals.



What is the ICA Research Committee?

The ICA Committee on Co-operative Research (ICACR) is one of the ICA's four global thematic committees.

The committee acts as a loose network by bringing together a

large number of researchers interested in

co-operatives from around the world. It is a bridge between the academic and the co-operative worlds.

A meeting of the ICACR was recently held in Cork at the conclusion of the research conference. Dr Iain MacPherson, Canada was elected as Chair replacing Akira Kurimoto, Japan. The secretary of the committee also changed from Garry

Cronan to Kim Jin-Kook.

A new constitution for the committee was also adopted. It includes provision for a new global executive comprised of up to 3 representatives each from Europe, Asia-Pacific, North and South America. For more information contact Iain MacPherson cluny@uvvm.uvic.ca



Iain MacPherson, left with former chair Akira Kurimoto

Australian co-operative researcher dies

Paul Fitzgerald, on right seated, talking to Robby Tulus at the ICA's 2004 Asia Pacific Regional Assembly. Paul Fitzgerald was one of the keynote speakers at the assembly.

Paul Fitzgerald, the CEO of the former ICA member, the Australian Centre for Co-operative Research and Development (ACCORD), died in September 2005.

Although Paul had been battling cancer for a number of years, his death was still unexpected. He will be

remembered for his very practical approach to co-operative research.

Editor's Note:
Paul Fitzgerald replaced me as CEO of ACCORD after I left to join the ICA. It was with great sadness that I learnt of Paul's death. I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to his two young daughters and the rest of his family and friends.



Recent co-operative publications

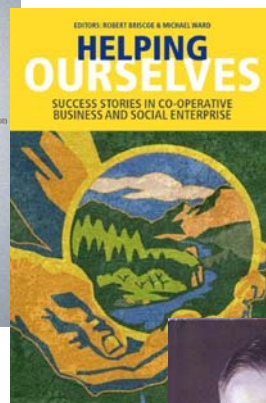
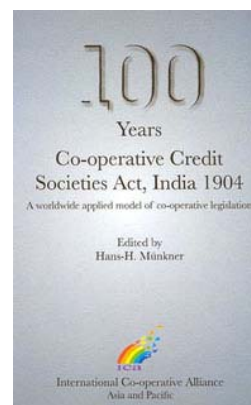
Three publications have been published in recent months.

The first is *Helping Ourselves*, by the Centre for Co-operative Studies, at the University College Cork, Ireland. This book explores the co-operative way of doing business across a wide spectrum of activities. Also, how ordinary people around the world are finding innovative ways of meeting their needs, with results that are proving more effective than the systems designed by big business and government.

The second title, *100 Years Co-operative Credit Societies Act, India 1904*, looks at the role of a key piece of Indian co-operative legislation and its subsequent application as a model for co-operative legislation throughout the world.

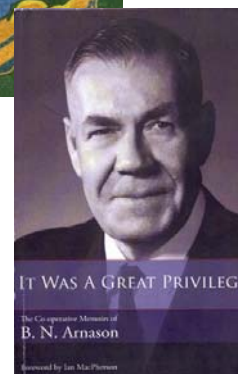
The book is edited by Hans-M Münkner and includes papers by a range of co-operative legislative experts and researchers.

The third title, *It was a Great Privilege: The Co-operative Memoirs of A. N. Arnson*, is published by BCIC. In this book "Barney" Arnson, a long



Research

serving Canadian government official reflects on a life time of service to the co-operative cause. For anyone interested in the relationship between government and the co-operative movement this is an important book.



Co-operative research conferences in 2006

- **International Conference on Co-operatives in the Pursuit of Peace, 19-23 June 2006, British Columbia, Canada**
The British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies and the ICA will co-host this conference. Presentations will examine the role of co-ops, past and present, in promoting social cohesion at the international, national, and local level. [More](#)
- **ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Research Conference, 15-16 August 2006, Colombo, Sri Lanka.** The two themes for conference are:
 - Natural disaster preparedness and rehabilitation in community through co-operative initiatives;
 - The role of co-operative leadership in preservation of co-operative identity

Contact: Madhav Madane mvmadane@pn3.vsnl.net.in or Akira Kurimoto, akira.kurimoto@jccu.coop [More....](#)

- **ICA Co-operative Research Conference, 19-22 October, 2006, Paris, France**
This is the regular biennial ICA European Co-operative research conference. Please contact: Caroline Naett cnaett@entreprises.coop or Yohanan Stryjan Yohanan.Stryjan@sh.se



ICA Asia Pacific appeal for Kashmir earthquake victims

The ICA's Asia Pacific office has established an appeal for the victims of the earthquake in Kashmir on 8 October 2005.

The devastating earthquake killed more than 13,000 on the Indian side and 70,000 on the

Pakistan side of Kashmir. Help is needed to assist the survivors of this disaster. It is estimated 50 Indian co-operatives and 1500 in Pakistan have been affected. Contributions can be sent directly to the National Co-operative Council of Pakistan Click [here](#) for full details.



Appeals

Sectors



Kathy Bardswick, the new Chair of ICMIF



Shaun Tarbuck, the new Chief Executive, ICMIF

Sectoral innovation

Is ICMIF's approach to solving members' capital needs applicable to other ICA sectors?

Successful ICMIF Biennial Conference held in Singapore

The International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF) held their Biennial Conference in Singapore 16-18 November 2005. ICMIF is one of the ICA's nine sectoral organisations.

The conference was attended by over two hundred and thirty delegates from more than fifty countries. It was hosted by NTUC Income from Singapore. ICA was offi-

cially represented by Deputy Director-General, Maria Elena Chávez Hertig.

This conference was the first one for Shaun Tarbuck, as ICMIF's new CEO. He has recently replaced long serving CEO, Hans Dahlberg, one of the recent joint winners of the ICA's Rochdale Pioneers Award. Jean-Louis Bancel stepped down as chair of ICMIF at the conference and has been replaced by Kathy Bardswick, from The Co-operators in

Canada.

The conference covered a wide range of issues from governance to growth, social and environmental issues, to poverty alleviation through to catastrophe assistance.

The conference also included a range of forums for CEOs and others, and innovative use of technology including interactive voting for delegates. See also ICMIF's website www.icmif.org/

"Knowledge is power" says ICMIF chief

An important initiative was unveiled at the ICMIF conference.

Following feedback from members, ICMIF Chief Executive, Shaun Tarbuck, is designing a communications initiative designed to help share vital knowledge across the ICMIF membership.

Based at the ICMIF headquarters in the UK, the new communications team will be working to change the face of public perception about mutuality and broadening means of communication. This initiative will ensure the better integration of the communications and intelligence functions within ICMIF.

For more information contact John Gully, SVP Communications, john@icmif.org or Tiffany George, Global Communications Manager, tiffany@icmif.org

Subordinated loan programme for insurers

Capital has been highlighted by ICMIF members as being one of the key challenges for them.

At ICMIF's previous Biennial Conference in Paris in 2003, over 90% of the delegates anticipated that they would need capital over the next ten years.

ICMIF's solution to this member need has been to partner with leading investment experts to offer a unique subordinated debt programme to their members.

There are a number of

factors driving this need for capital among ICMIF members. Both national and international regulation are putting pressure on existing capital in mutual and co-operative insurers. The gradual introduction of the new *International Accounting Standards*, along with *Solvency II* are helping to drive this process.

As ICMIF notes, some co-operatives will close to new business, others will merge and some may demutualise. While larger co-operatives and mutuals are better placed to respond to these challenges, small and medium-sized co-

operatives and mutuals will face more difficulty. ICMIF solution is particularly focused on these organisations.

ICMIF has obtained a EUR 300 to 600 million tranche to be able to offer a subordinated debt product for its members. The subordinated loans will be pooled and be funded in the capital markets via a Collateralised Debt Obligation (CDO) transaction. The CDO will be underwritten by Merrill Lynch. For more information contact shaun@icmif.org

Sectors

Co-operative tourism news

TICA (International Association of Tourism Co-operatives) is one of the ICA's nine global sectoral organisations.

It is a network of about 80 co-operatives operating in Europe, Asia and the Americas. The membership base is diverse, given the difference in size of the co-operatives and the type of tourism activity they are involved in. The common denominator is their co-operative structure or that they are owned by co-

operatives.

TICA has been active over recent months. It organised a meeting at the recent ICA General Assembly in September in Colombia. That meeting decided on a work-plan and range of activities for the coming year.

TICA has a strong partnership with BITS (Bureau International du Tourisme Social). Maurizio Davolio, Chair of TICA is also a board member of BITS.

BITS, together with TICA

and IAST (International Association of Social Tourism) jointly organises meetings and conventions.

In other co-operative tourism news, Sanjay Verma, Editor National Co-operative Union of India [NCUI](#) recently presented a paper at the Global Summit on Tourism, organised by [IIPT](#).

The European Union have also organised a conference on social tourism for 17 January 2006 in Brussels, contact mdavo@tin.it



Maurizio Davolio,
Chair of TICA

Greater coordination of ICA sectoral organisations underway

Representatives attending the ICA's recent special consultative meeting in Geneva took the opportunity to meet and discuss a range of sector related issues.

Five of the ICA's nine sectoral organisations were present. The main focus of discussions was on developing greater integration of ICA sectoral activities

and on improving communication flows between the sectors.

The meeting also agreed to organise regular meetings between the sectoral organisations, possibly every 3 months, in order to exchange information and opinions. Based on a successful 2-year experience within CICOPA, it is proposed to do this

through written online conferences with YAHOO Messenger.

Over the coming year the ICA will also be assisting in the wider dissemination of sectoral innovations in areas such as communications, intelligence sharing, capital raising, legislative and public policy responses. Contact kim@ica.coop



Kim Jin-Kook, from ICA's head office in Geneva helps coordinate greater intersectoral coordination

ICA Housing and UNECE sign agreement

A new partnership agreement has been signed between ICA Housing and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe/Committee for Human Settlements.

A special signing ceremony was held in Geneva on 8 December 2005.

The objective of the agreement is to strengthen the co-operation between the UNECE and the ICA to assist governments (in particular Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South Eastern Europe) in

designing and implementing, national housing policies and programmes. It will also promote the UN's Habitat Agenda, the UN Millennium Development Goals and UNECE Strategy for sustainable quality of life in human settlements in the 21st century.

ICA Housing will be working closely with UNECE's Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN). For more information contact Mounir Ibrahim Mibrahim@chfinternational.org



The signatories to the agreement after the signing, from left Iain Macdonald, ICA Director-General, Michael Doyle, President, ICA Housing, Christina von Schweinichen, Deputy Director of the Environment and Human Settlement Division, UNECE and Kaj Bärlund, Director, Environment and Human Settlement, Division, UNECE

Governance matters



Gun-Britt Mårtensson, Chair of the GWG is also on the special interim working group looking at regionalisation issues

ICA Governance Working Group meets following special consultative meeting in Geneva

ICA's Governance Working Group (GWG) held its most recent meeting on Monday 12 December 2005.

This meeting follows the special consultative meeting, see report page 3. The GWG reviewed the outcomes of the Geneva consultative meeting and have decided to draft a paper outlining what it

believes is the need for a strategic approach to regionalisation and governance generally within the ICA.

It is also preparing a detailed implementation plan and timetable for the procedural governance recommendations approved by the recent General Assembly.

The General Assembly mandated the Governance

Group to continue its work on strategic and structural governance issues and to monitor the implementation of its detailed procedural recommendations.

For more information or to provide input into the GWG deliberations contact the GWG coordinator Garry Cronan cronan@ica.coop.



Art Jaeger, NCBA Communications

Interesting survey on governance practices in USA co-ops

A 30-page report on a comprehensive survey of co-operative governance practices is now available from the USA's National Cooperative Business Association.

More than 500 co-ops and co-operative organizations participated in the survey, which covered topics including board size and composition, nomination and election practices, board committees,

and fiduciary responsibilities. The survey allows co-ops to compare and contrast their governance practices with those of others, either in their own sector or community-wide.

The report is being made available to communications departments of co-ops and co-op organisations for the purpose of stories in co-op publications.

The survey highlighted some

interesting facts - 35 per cent of co-ops said they allow mail-in ballots and four per cent permit electronic voting. On gender, there's no question that 51 per cent of the U.S. population is female; however women make up far less than half of most co-op boards.

To obtain a copy contact Art Jaeger at NCBA, 202-383-5462 or ajae@ncba.coop.

Communications

Visit the ICA's new website - www.ica.coop



ICA new website can be found at www.ica.coop

Over the last few months the ICA global website has been completely redesigned.

The site has new navigation bars to help people better access the full range of information available. It also includes much new material, presented in a more straight forward and systematic way.

The launch of the new site represents the first

stage of the upgrading of ICA online services.

Early in 2006 work will commence on stage 2 of the upgrade. This will involve the development of dynamic online news service using RSS technology, further design improvements and enhancements to the site, plus development of a members only section and the expansion of links and material housed on the site.

Co-operators receive awards from Hungarian Government and movement

Awards



Gabriella Sozanski, ICA Director of Knowledge Management, receives the award from Pál Bartus

Two co-operators with long backgrounds in the Hungarian and international co-operative movement were honoured with awards at a ceremony in Budapest on 11 October 2005. The ceremony was attended by senior Hungarian Government ministers

and co-operative representatives.

Pál Bartus, former ICA Board member and President Coop Hungary received the second highest Hungarian Government Award, the Commander's Cross Order of Merit of the



Pál Bartus receiving his award

Republic of Hungary (civil division). Gabriella Sozanski, ICA Director of Knowledge Management, received an award for her contributions to the co-operative movement both in Hungary and more particularly, internationally over many years.

Korean co-operator receives French Légion d'Honneur

Mr. Chung Dae-kun, the Chair of the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation of Korea (NACF) received the Légion d'Honneur, one of the most prestigious orders given by the French Republic.

Mr. Francois Descoueyte, the Ambassador of France to Korea, conferred the decoration on Mr. Chung at the grand auditorium of the NACF during the cere-

mony to mark the 44th anniversary of the foundation of the NACF.

Mr. Chung received the order for his significant contribution in developing a close civil relationship between the two countries, including strong partnership between the NACF and Credit Agricole group of France. The two organisations have worked closely to successfully establish and operate a joint



venture company, NACF-CA Investment Trust Management Co., Ltd.

Youth

New youth representative for global ICA Board

The new Youth Network representative on the ICA's global Board is from Colombia.

Juan Carlos Mejía Cuartas replaces Jo Bibby Scullion from the UK. Jo was the

first ever youth representative on the ICA Board.

In a sign of the increasing interest in the youth network Juan Carlos won the right to be the youth representative in a ballot at the

recent General Assembly in Colombia.

He has already attended his first full Board meeting and actively contributed to debate. Contact: jmejiaacu@eafit.edu.co



Celebrations

Mondragon celebrates 50th anniversary



Photo shows: Javier Salaberria, President of Confederation of Euskadi Co-operatives and also recently elected President of CICOPA; Jesus Catania, MCC President with ICA President Barberini and DG, Iain Macdonald and ILO Co-op Branch Deputy Director Huseyin Polat

The Mondragon Co-operative Corporation celebrated its 50th anniversary at a ceremony in San Sebastian, Spain on 10 November 2005, in the presence of the Basque Regional President, ICA President,

Ivano Barberini, ICA Director-General, Iain Macdonald and ILO representative, Huseyin Polat. The visiting group also visited Mondragon itself, which is an outstanding advertisement for co-operative achievement. This is evi-

denced by the fact that over 5,000 co-operators visit Mondragon each year to gain insight and inspiration from their achievements.

Innovation and the ability to adapt are at the centre of success in the face of global competition. Many of their brands are internationally known in the domestic appliance field.

MCC is particularly keen to work with ICA on its new and developing business orientation.

Mondragon University - education and research focus

One of the distinguishing features of the Mondragon approach, from its very earliest days, has been its commitment to education, training and research.

One recent manifestation of this was a very successful co-operative research

conference run by Mondragon earlier this year. It had a strong business focus with a range of very interesting papers presented on the global challenges co-operatives face. See

www.eteo.mondragon.edu/ocs/



Social Economy

Mont Blanc Social Economy Forum



Some participants at the 2nd Mont Blanc Social Economy meeting

The second Mont Blanc Meetings were held, 4-6 November, near Annecy, France.

The meeting brought together leaders of co-operatives, mutuals, associations, foundations from all continents, representatives of the ILO, WTO, ICA and academics, leaders from access software and encyclopaedias (the Wikimedia Foundation), and outside experts (McKinsey, the Ecole de Guerre Economique).

The participants agreed on the need to position the social economy

more clearly on the stage of globalisation; they agreed to work together so that an economy which serves people can be taken into account by international organisations such as the WTO, the World Bank, and regional organisations such as Mercosur or the European Union.

For more information contact *Thierry Jeantet* Tel: 33 1 45 74 08 56 or *Jean-Philippe Poulnot* Tel: 33 1 41 85 08 53.

Members visit ICA headquarters in Geneva

Members/People

ICA members often visit the organisation's head office in Geneva, Switzerland.

Over the last few months, the ICA has hosted visits from a range of member organisations including a delegation from Brazilian consumer co-operatives; a NACF

Korean delegation and a delegation from Swedish funeral co-ops. Such visits provide an opportunity for members to be briefed in detail on all of ICA's activities. All members are free to visit the Geneva head office.



Members of the Korean NACF delegation receiving a briefing from ICA Director-General, Iain Macdonald

Former DG visits head office

Two former senior ICA staff, André Sanger and Rita Rhodes recently visited the ICA's head office in Geneva.

Current Director-General, Iain Macdonald welcomed André Sanger who was ICA Director-General, in the period 1981-1983.

Both men exchanged views on the ICA and the future of the international co-operative movement.



Rita Rhodes, well known UK co-operative researcher and academic worked with the ICA for 3 years in the early 1980s, overlapping with the period in which André

Sanger was DG. She was also the only staff member of the ICA who came to Geneva when the ICA moved its head office from London in 1982.

Photo shows from left, Martine Carruzzo, Jan-Erik Imbsen, Marie-Claude Baan, Iain Macdonald, André Sanger, Rita Rhodes, Kim Jin-Kook and Maria Elena Chávez Hertig

JCCU staff changes



Well known Japanese co-operator Akiko Yamauchi, see left, has been promoted within the Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union and has moved from their International Division.

Akiko has had a long involvement with the ICA and we wish her the very best in the future.

Her successor, Jiro Ito, see right, is also very well known in the ICA.



Attendance at GA encourages membership

One of the ICA's newest members, Australia's Capricorn Co-operative Society happened because of its CEO's attendance at the recent General Assembly in Colombia.

Trent Bartlett writing in the [New Zealand Co-operative Association](#) newsletter expressed it this way.

"The global co-operative movement is an incredible

force and this is most visible at the GA. ..The assembly proved to me that I will not learn about the world of co-operatives by waiting for it to come to me, ..the only way is by learning and networking with each other:" [more....](#)



Trent Bartlett, CEO of Capricorn, one of the ICA's newest members

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chived on the
ICA's website
www.ica.coop

2006 Calendar of ICA Events and Activities

- 26 Jan** COPAC and co-op development agencies meeting, Sri Lanka. Contact chavez@ica.coop
- 28 Jan** COPAC Board meeting, Sri Lanka. Contact chavez@ica.coop
- Feb** Meeting of Executive Committee of International Co-operative Banking Association, (ICBA), Colombo, Sri Lanka. Contact: biurowaw@kzbs.pol.pl
- 6-7 March** ICA Board meeting, Brussels, Belgium. Contact: Iain Macdonald, macdonald@ica.coop
- March** Seminar, International Co-operative Fishing Organisation (ICFO), Colombo, Sri Lanka. Contact: icfo@zengyoren.jf-net.ne.jp
- March** African Research Facility Conference, Ethiopia. Contact: imbsen@ica.coop
- 31 March** International Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO) Board meeting, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Contact: direccion@fundacionespriu.coop
- 3-4 May** ICA Board meeting, Washington, USA. Contact: Iain Macdonald, macdonald@ica.coop
- 24-27 May** 4th Annual International Youth Conference, Manchester, UK. Contact, UK Co-op College, Mervyn Wilson, mervyn@co-op.ac.uk
- 21 June** International Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO) Board meeting, Stockholm, Sweden. Contact: direccion@fundacionespriu.coop
- 23-28 June** Peace and Co-operation Workshop, Vancouver, Canada. Contact Ian MacPherson, cluny@uvvm.uvic.ca
- 19-23 July** ICA Americas Regional Assembly, Lima, Peru. Contact: Manuel Mariño, direccion@aciamericas.coop
- August** ICA Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Contact: Shil-Kwan Lee, sklee@icaroap.coop
- August** Annual General meeting, International Co-operative Fisheries Organisation (ICFO), Colombo, Sri Lanka. Contact: icfo@zengyoren.jf-net.ne.jp
- 22-23 August** ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Research Conference, Colombia. Sri Lanka. Contact: Akira Kurimoto, akira.kurimoto@jccu.coop
- 23 Sept** ICA Europe Regional Assembly, Manchester, UK. Contact: Rainer Schluter, r.schluter@coopseurope.coop
- Oct** ICA Africa Regional Assembly, Arusha, Tanzania. Contact: Ada Suleymane Kibora, skibora@icaafrica.coop
- 19-22 Oct** ICA Research Conference, Dourdan, France contact: Caroline Naett cnaett@entreprises.coop or Yohanan Stryjan Yohanan.Stryjan@sh.se

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- 24-29 Sept** ICMIF World Congress, Brussels, Belgium. Contact: Shaun Tarbuck, shaun@ICMIF.org see also www.icmif.org
- Oct** ICA General Assembly, Singapore. See www.icasingapore.coop/

The next issue of the Digest will carry a detailed report on the ICA tsunami reconstruction activities