



Weekly Digest

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Editorial

Welcome to the fifth issue of the ICA's new weekly publication.

One of the prime objectives of the *Weekly Digest* is to let members know what the ICA is doing on their behalf. This however, is only one side of what should be two way communications. The Digest could also highlight news from its members for ICA members. It could be a very timely and cost effective way for you to let others know about significant co-operative developments. The ICA is your communication pathway to the whole movement. We would like to include short items from members about issues which relate to ICA activities or believe are of general interest. If you are interested please contact the editor Garry Cronan at cronan@ica.coop

Agreement to Host 2005 General Assembly Signed

The next ICA General Assembly will be held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia on the 22- 23 September 2005.

The photo opposite shows ICA Vice-President (Americas) Carlos Palacino and ICA Deputy Director-General Maria Elena Chávez Hertig signing the agreement in Colombia on 16 February. The agreement to host the first ever General Assembly in South America was signed by Mr Palacino on behalf of Colombian host organisation Saludcoop.



Cartagena, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has the most extensive fortifications in South America. Situated on the northern coast of Colombia, it was founded in 1533 by Don Pedro de Heredia, and named after Cartagena, Spain. It was a major centre of early Spanish settlement in the Americas, and continues to be an economic hub as well as a popular tourist destination. It is one of the most

picturesque baroque cities of Colombia with majestic architecture which still reminds us of the Eldorado myth and the galleons' treasure-ship full of gold.

The Hilton Hotel has been selected as the venue for the General Assembly. This five star hotel is the location for many similar international conferences.

ICA European Director, Gabriella Sozánski also visited Cartagena.

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Ms Sozanski (*photo opposite*) is the ICA Head Office official responsible for organising General Assemblies. She was very impressed by what she saw. “Our partners from Colombia are very effective conference organisers. Cartagena is a lovely and historic city. It has wonderful beaches and the people are very friendly. I am sure that everyone who attends our next General Assembly will have a wonderful time.”

Fabian Muñoz who is in charge of International Relations in the President’s office of Saludcoop, has been assigned to assist with the organisation of the General Assembly. Local co-operative travel agency, Coopava will be coordinating the logistics and technical arrangements. More detailed information will be distributed at the upcoming ICA Regional Assemblies for those members interested in making their bookings early.

ICA Supports International Women’s Day Message : Women and HIV/AIDS

This year the United Nations has chosen to focus on the theme of “Women and HIV/AIDS” for the celebration of International Women’s Day, 8 March. The ICA President Ivano Barberini and Vanda Giuliano, Chair, ICA Gender Equality Committee, have issued a joint message of support.

Part of this statement is reproduced here. “The ICA and its Gender Equality Committee in particular, welcomes this initiative as HIV/AIDS is a pandemic around the world that continues to spread causing misery and death. It also greatly helps in the follow-up of the ICA joint seminar organised by the Gender Equality Committee and the International Health Co-operative Organisation during the last ICA General Assembly in Oslo. The seminar focused on HIV/AIDS and underlined the important activities currently being undertaken by ICA’s regional offices in Africa and Asia to tackle the problem.”

“Co-operatives can play an important role in contributing to stopping this modern day plague through actions ranging from reducing poverty, promoting gender equality and providing education and information to their members and to the communities in which they operate. The strength of co-operatives is that they traditionally work in social and cultural spheres alongside their business interests. Let us today promote this strength to focus on the fight against HIV/AIDS.”

The full text of this joint statement can be found on our website www.ica.coop/gender/womens-day-2004.pdf

Report into North-South Co-operative Development

The ICA was recently invited to participate in a workshop on the role of co-operatives in North-South development. The workshop held in Brussels on 1 March was organised by the Belgian Cera Foundation, www.cerafoundation.be. Cera commissioned the Belgian Higher Institute for Labour Studies to undertake the study to find out what role Northern co-operatives play in supporting their colleagues in the South. The study titled Development Co-operation: ‘How Co-operatives Cope’, was undertaken by Patrick Develtere, Professor of Development Co-operation at the University of Leuven, Belgium (*see photo opposite*) and Ignace Pollet, senior researcher, University of Leuven. The results of the research, which were based on a survey of 45 Northern co-operative development agencies, were presented at the Brussels workshop.



Agencies participating in the survey included Agricord (international), BRS (Belgium), CCA (Canada), CICM (France), CHF International (USA), Confcoop Piemonte (Italy), Confcooperative (Italy), Co-operative Group (UK), Cooperativa sociale Spazi Mediani (Italy), COPAC (international), DGRV (Germany), DID (Canada), FAO (international), FDC (Denmark), Federcasse (Italy), Federcopesca (Italy), FOS (Belgium), ICA (international), IFCD (Ireland), ILO-Coop (international), IRU (international), Land O’Lakes (USA), Legacoop (Italy), Pellervo (Finland), NCBA (USA), NRECA (USA), NORCOOP (Norway), OCDC (USA), Rabobank Foundation (Netherlands), SCC (Sweden), SOCODEVI (Canada),

United Nations (international), USAID (USA), WOCCU (international), World Bank, and WSM (Belgium).

The survey shows that there is considerable co-operative development activity being undertaken. A variety of institutional and fund raising approaches are being followed which reflect the histories of the various organisations involved. In many cases co-operatives represent best practice in the field. The authors estimate that the agencies that participated in the survey collectively spend between 500 and 1000 million Euros in their development co-operation activities.

This is one of the first times that such a mapping exercise has been undertaken. It compliments the work of the joint agencies described below and helps build a much clearer picture of the range and extent of international co-operative development activities. ICA plans to undertake a global survey in the near future.

ICA/ILO Joint Agencies Meeting Planned for Late May in Washington D.C.

Representatives from a range of international and national co-operative development agencies will be meeting in Washington D.C. (USA) in late May 2004. The meeting, the third of the joint agencies group will be examining how to better coordinate the wide range of activities undertaken by the major co-operative development agencies. A COPAC Open Forum will also be held to coincide with the joint agencies meeting. More details on both meetings will be published in future issues of the Weekly Digest.

Review of Legislative Changes in Countries Joining EU



Co-operative legal expert Dr Hagen Henry has been commissioned by the ICA and ILO to review legislative changes in the ten countries due to join the European Union on 1 May 2004. The review will be carried out against the backdrop of the ILO Recommendation 193 on the promotion of co-operatives.

The main objective of the study is to gain a better understanding of how the ILO's Recommendation can be used to achieve improved co-operative legislation in individual countries. In effect, how to operationalise the guidelines and policy contained in the Recommendation and ensure that it results in supportive and workable legislation on the ground. Dr Henry will present his findings at a forthcoming conference in Budapest where he will be one of the keynote speakers, *see item below*. Hagen Henry recently visited Geneva to meet with the ICA and ILO on the detail of the proposed study. The above photo shows Dr Henry with ICA Director for Europe, Gabriella Sozanski and ICA Director-General, Iain Macdonald.

Putting ILO Recommendation 193 into Practice

The next in the series of seminars on ILO Recommendation 193 is to be held in Budapest, Hungary on 1-2 April 2004. The first was held in St Petersburg (Russia) in November 2003.

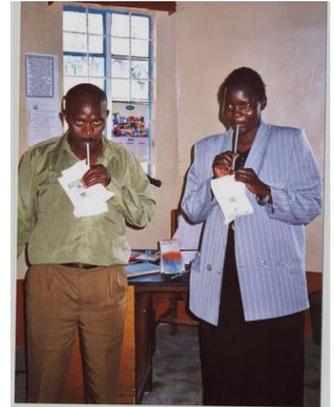
The seminar is being jointly organised by ICA Europe, the National Co-operative Council of Hungary in collaboration with the ILO Co-operative Branch. It is being sponsored by the Hungarian Government. The conference entitled, *ILO Recommendation 193 in practice – co-operative values and principles in national legislation*, includes speakers from the ICA, ILO, European Commission, Hungarian co-operative movement and Hungarian Government. The meeting is being held in the Hungarian parliament. As reported above Dr Henry will report on his analysis of legislative changes occurring in the ten EU accession countries. The conference will also receive reports from co-operative representatives from these countries. The photo above shows Pál Bartus, ICA Board member and President of the National Federation of Consumer Co-operatives and Trade Associations "Co-op Hungary" and member of the National Council of Hungary.



A Working Holiday!

It is well known how dedicated ICA staff are to their jobs. Making the most of a holiday in Kenya, ICA Europe's European Officer, Barbara Coghlan, took the opportunity to visit some local co-operatives. It was also a chance to see how European co-operatives are helping their local African counterparts.

Ms Coghlan said "it was an inspiring experience and once again demonstrates you can only appreciate the difference such programmes make by taking the trouble to visit the local co-operatives". She was assisted in her efforts by ICA Regional Director for East, Central and Southern Africa, Bernard Kadasia, who arranged visits to two dairy co-operatives and a local arts and craft co-operative. Githunguri Dairy Farmers Co-operative Society in Kiambu District, Central Province is currently building a pasteurising plant. The co-operative is supported by the Swedish Co-operative Centre (SCC) Community Empowerment and Enterprise Development through Co-operatives (CEEDCO) Project. The second dairy co-operative, Wamunyu Farmers' Co-op is seeking to expand their markets through new product development. A new yoghurt has recently been produced after training assistance from SCC. The photo above shows the product being tested by the co-operative manager (*right*) and staff!



Progress Made at 2nd SGA Meeting

The second meeting of the UK Strategic Grants Agreement (SGA) was held in Manchester on 4 March. The role of the SGA is to develop awareness within the UK co-operative movement campaign of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals. The campaign will network with other agencies and build the capacity of the UK movement to undertake serious long-term development work with co-operatives in the South. Mervyn Wilson from the UK Co-operative College is chair; the ICA is represented on the SGA by Jan-Eirik Imbsen. The recent meeting approved the final draft of an information pack on ILO Recommendation 193 and agreed on a series of further joint initiatives with the ICA.

People in the News

Roberto Rodrigues

Former ICA President Roberto Rodrigues is still making co-op news! This time in his capacity as Minister for Agriculture in Brazil. Mr. Rodrigues has been invited to make a keynote address to the European Confederation of Agriculture (CEA) conference in October, later this year. The topic of the conference is *Farmers Communicating with the Wider World*. Other co-operative speakers at the conference will include Eduardo Baamonde President of COGECA www.copa-cogeca.be and Kjeld Johannessen Chair of Danish Crown. For more information contact Christophe Hémard (CEA) congress@cea-agri.org



Current President Ivano Barbèrni with former President Roberto Rodrigues

Petar Stefanov



Mr. Petar Stefanov, Chairman of Central Co-operative Union, Bulgaria and member of the Consumer Coop International (CCI) Executive was recently presented with a national award for services to the economic development of his country. Mr. Stefanov received his award from the Vice President Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. Martin at a special ceremony on 18 February 2004. Photo shows Mr. Stefanov receiving his award.

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