



Weekly Digest

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Editorial

Welcome to issue seventeen of the Weekly Digest. This week we report on the last of the recent Washington D.C. (USA) meetings. We also cover the European and French worker co-operative meeting recently held in France, a special International Housing meeting in Bosnia and an agricultural insurance conference in Tunisia. The diversity of these events once again demonstrates the wide range of activities covered within the broader ICA network. As usual we would welcome your comments on the newsletter.

ICA President Addresses World Farmer's Congress

ICA President, Ivano Barberini, and ICA Director of Development, Jan-Eirik Imbsen both addressed the International Federation of Agricultural Producers – www.ifap.org 36th World Farmers Congress held in Washington D.C., USA from 29 May to 4 June 2004. The congress was attended by more than 400 farmer representatives from over 70 countries.



Ivano Barberini's presentation to the opening plenary session of the conference focused on the role co-operatives can play in helping farmers compete in the global market place. He stressed the need for greater collaboration between IFAP and the ICA. Areas of common interest include developing an agricultural public policy which is able to support increases in farming productivity while also achieving an ecological balance, fair animal treatment and integrated sustainable rural development. He reiterated the need for the two organisations to join forces to improve the development and economic performance of agricultural sector in developing countries. This was a way to fight poverty and create stable economic development. Finally, he reminded the audience of the "co-operative advantage" and how it offered farmers an opportunity to link with



consumers, through consumer co-operation in ways not available to other forms of agricultural business.

The ICA's Director of Development presentation, see photo above, was to the Development Co-operation Committee of IFAP. He outlined the ICA development programme and the proposed *Global Co-operative Campaign on Poverty*. He also stressed the benefits of the ICA and IFAP working together on these common objectives. IFAP already has a close working relationship with the ICA through its membership of COPAC www.copacgva.org/. The IFAP Congress marked the end of a hectic week of meetings in Washington for the ICA; see www.ica.coop/ica/digest/index.html for more information.

ICA Meets with US Based Co-operative Housing Foundation

The recent round of Washington meetings included one with Mike Doyle, President and CEO of the Co-operative Housing Foundation (CHF), see photo opposite. Senior ICA staff including Director-General Iain Macdonald discussed ways in which ICA and CHF could work together. The meeting also provided an opportunity for the ICA staff be updated on recent CHF's international activities including projects in Iraq.

Mike Doyle is a board member of the ICA's global housing organisation, ICA Housing. See www.chfhq.org/ for more information on CHF. Also, see related item below.



Conference on Social Stability and Economic Development



A recent joint conference by CHF International and ICA Housing explored practical approaches to housing sector development in transition countries. The conference was held in Sarajevo, Bosnia on 19-21 May, 2004 was supported by members of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN)" which was established by the UN Economic Commission for Europe's Committee on Human Settlements. Presentations were given by Mike Doyle, CHF International, Iain Macdonald, Director-General, ICA and Gert Gunderson, Chair of HUMAN.

Iain Macdonald commended "as a venue, Sarajevo could not have been more relevant, scarred by recent war but now fighting back to regain its former status as an international city, famed for its tolerance of all creeds and races. For me the conference was a very timely reminder of the important practical role for co-operative enterprise can play in facilitating conflict resolution – something we should make more of". Speakers from all over the world contributed to a very valuable conference with site visits showing how Sarajevo was putting principle into practice.

The conference was the first its first in a series of dedicated to "Practical Approaches to Housing Sector Development in Transition Countries". The photo above shows Iain Macdonald delivering his address to the conference.

Get to Know Your ICA – Meet the Staff and Officials

This week in our semi-regular series we meet Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific, see photo opposite.

Shil Kwan Lee has been Regional Director of ICA's Regional Office for Asia & Pacific (ICA ROAP) since January 2002. Prior to that from 1972 he worked for the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation (NACF) in Korea, dealing with training and banking and most recently was General Manager of International Co-operation Office of NACF where he was responsible for the ICA General Assembly 2001 in Seoul.



Mr. Lee has also been a consultant to the World Bank and served as the Secretary-General of one of the ICA's global sectoral organisations the International Co-operative Agricultural Organisation (ICAO).

The photo on left shows Mr Lee with other members of staff from the ICA ROAP office. See www.icaroap.coop/

ICMIF holds 2nd Agricultural Insurance Network meeting in Tunis



The International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation ([ICMIF](http://www.icmif.org)), one of the ICA's nine global sectoral organisations held its 2nd Agricultural Insurance Network meeting on 19-20 May in Tunis, Tunisia. The meeting was hosted by BEST-Re, reinsurance company of Tunisia. Over 50 participants attended the workshop. Mr Sabbir Patel sabbir@icmif.org the ICMIF Vice-President who organised the workshop said that "compared to the first meeting in London last year, which had 20 participants this showed the developing interest this topic."

Mr Sid Gibson (NFU Mutual, UK), chaired the seminar which included 13 case studies. Mr Olivier Mahul, Insurance Specialist with the World Bank presented a new insurance framework – a market based solution for crop revenue insurance. Dr Chan Ho Choi, see photo opposite the ICA Agricultural Advisor discussed the need for insurance in agriculture, particularly the need for an appropriate model for developing countries. He further discussed possible opportunity for co-operation among the related organisations with a view to attaining the UN Millennium Development Goals.



Participants generally agreed that increasing natural disasters such as global climate change, along with price fluctuations and financial disturbances often forced farmers out of agriculture. Therefore agricultural insurance should be an important policy agenda item. Government have a role to play in both establishing and subsidising national systems. Dr Erich Kasten, Agricultural Reinsurance Consultant (Switzerland) provided a global overview on agricultural insurance and reinsurance markets. He said that global agricultural insurance already represents a huge market, but only about 20% of the worldwide production (crop and livestock) is insured today. There is great potential in this as yet untapped sector. The meeting also agreed to look at producing a set of guidelines for agricultural insurance providers.

Following this meeting, ICMIF held a seminar on *Mutuality, Cultural Diversity and Development* on 21 May at the same venue where the Islamic mutual insurance model – TAKAFUL and its potential were highlighted. The 3rd Network meeting will be hosted by the Russian Insurance Group (Podderzhka) in Moscow next year. The above photo shows seminar participants.

Dates for ICA Regional Assemblies

The following dates and venues have been decided for the four Regional Assemblies this year.

Europe:	Warsaw, Poland	20-24 September
Americas:	Buenos Aires, Argentina	22-26 November
Africa:	Praia, Cape Verde	4 - 8 October.
Asia & Pacific:	Bangkok, Thailand	30 November- 4 December

ICA Message on International Co-operatives Day Now Available

The ICA message for the 82nd ICA International Co-operatives Day and the 10th UN International Day of Co-operatives is now available on our website, see <http://www.ica.coop>. The theme is “*Co-operatives for Fair Globalisation: Creating Opportunities for All*”.

33rd Workers Co-operatives Congress in Nantes

On May 13-16, the 2nd Congress of the European Confederation of Workers' Co-operatives, Social Co-operatives and Participative Enterprises CECOP (CICOPA-Europe) took place in the City of Nantes. The Congress celebrated the organisation's 25th anniversary. It was held in conjunction with the 33rd Congress of CGSCOP (the French confederation of worker co-operatives).

Over 1200 delegates took part, including 200 from other European countries – this made it one of the largest co-operative events during 2004. The Congress, focused on the theme of “*Socially responsible enterprises in an enlarged Europe*”. This theme had a particular relevance because it took place just days after the enlargement of the European Union towards the East. There was a substantial presence of CECOP members from the new EU countries at the Congress. This historical moment was made even more tangible by the presence of ICA-Europe's President Dame Pauline Green, who emphasised the urgency to deepen the ongoing “Co-operatives in Europe” dynamic between ICA-Europe and Co-ordinating Committee of European Co-operative Associations (CCACE).

The main topics discussed in the various workshops were the development of human resources and human capital; the relation between worker / social co-operatives and local development; innovative forms of entrepreneurial development (networks, groups, transmission of enterprises; new forms of co-operatives, financial systems); identity and co-operative added value; and finally the consolidation of the CECOP network in Europe, and the place of CECOP within the International Committee of Producer Co-operatives and Handicraft Co-operatives (CICOPA), see <http://www.ica.coop/ica/ica/sb/cicopa.html> .

The delegates from across Europe had an opportunity to learn from their French counterparts thanks to a large number of stands at the neighbouring “co-operative village” see also item below. A summary of the Congress results will soon be available on www.cecop.coop . At the General Assembly that followed, Felice Scalvini was re-elected as CECOP President (and therefore CICOPA Vice-President for Europe) for another 4 year term.

All Roads Lead to the DotCoop Booth

As noted above there were a large number of stands at the CSGOP/CECOP Congress. One was for Dot Coop, see photo opposite. The stand displayed brochures and promotional materials in the middle of the “co-operative village”. The stall was very popular with visitors and Congress attendees, reinforcing Dot Coop's image as a familiar partner in French co-operative life.



In other Dot Coop news co-operatives now have an option in Japan for registering or renewing .coop Internet addressees. Firstserver, Inc. based in Tokyo, has signed a contract to begin offering .coop names in addition to other popular Internet domains like .com, .net, .org and .jp. “We really are pleased to have Firstserver available for those in Japan who want a local registration option,” said Paul Hazen, CEO of DotCooperation LLC, which is the Sponsor of the .coop top-level domain which was originally approved by ICANN in November 2000. “Firstserver will give us the ability to provide direct service to the thousands of Japanese co-operatives that could benefit from a .coop domain.” Hazen said a key advantage of using Firstserver is its full range of services for those registering .coop names. The new co-operative-only top-level domain was launched January 2002. Since that time, co-operatives in 50 countries have registered more than 7,500 .coop names.

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