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ICA's New World Wide Web Service

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ICA's New World Wide Web Service

Join the ICA's Latest Venture on the Information Super highway

ICA's World Wide Web (WWW) Service has now been redesigned to give access more quickly and easily than ever before to on-line information on the International Co-operative Alliance and on the history and present activities of co-operatives worldwide.

To access the ICA Web service all you require is a computer, a modem, browser software - two of the most popular browsers are Mosaic and Netscape - and an Internet connection. The address of the ICA Web Site is:
<http://www.coop.org>

Once there, the ICA Web service provides users with:

- * General information on the ICA, its history, membership, rules, etc. and the ICA's specialised bodies, with contact addresses.
- * Information about the history of the co-operative movement including biographies of famous co-operative people throughout the ages.
- * The latest ICA annual report and on-line copies of the Review of International Co-operation, the ICA News and other Co-operative publications.
- * A catalogue of ICA publications with details of how to order.
- * Information on Co-operatives by Region and by Sector.
- * Information on News groups, On-line Conferences and FAQs (Frequently asked questions and their answers).
- * A link to the ICA/University of Wisconsin Center for Co-operatives Gopher Server and its search engine.
- * Hypertext links to other Web sites on Co-operatives and to Web Sites of International Organisations and Business Information of relevance to Co-operatives.

To find out more about a given topic, simply click on the underlined or highlighted text which represents links to menus, other Web sites or documents on the subject concerned.

With just a click of the mouse button you can browse through a series of materials of interest to you.

ICA on the Internet

Addresses: <http://www.coop.org>

and: gopher://wiscinfo.wisc.edu:70/11/.info-source/.coop

General E-mail: icageneva@gn.apc.org

Communications Department E-mail: treacy@coop.org

The first section of the ICA Homepage is on ICA and its Specialised Bodies. The second part "Further sources of Co-operative Information" contains links to the ICA/UWCC Co-operative Gopher and Co-op Web Sites worldwide and includes further information about the ICA, articles explaining what a co-operative is, historical information about the movement and famous co-operators throughout the ages, information on co-ops by region and by economic sector and information on issues of particular interest to co-ops.

The third part includes links to the University of Wisconsin Center for Co-operatives Home Pages and to the Co-operative Gopher, in addition to links to other international organisations and business sites.

The Web Site is being developed to include information in French, Spanish and German.

The site will develop and evolve over the coming months and we look forward to your comments and suggestions.

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Theme for International Co-operative Day

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Theme for International Co-operative Day

Co-operative Enterprise: Empowerment for People-centred
Sustainable Development

Empowerment for People-centred Sustainable Development has been chosen as the theme for this year's International Day of Co-operatives. The theme was chosen in consultation with the United Nations and with the new ICA President, Mr. Graham Melmoth.

The theme will enable the ICA to give prominence to the new Co-operative Principles while linking to a variety of issues of importance to the United Nations in 1996.

ICA will provide input to the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty 1996, which will focus on the need for people-centred, sustainable development to reduce unemployment and hunger, empower women and provide basic services. The theme will also follow up the major UN conferences - the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) -- all of which call on governments to create partnerships with co-operatives as a means of tackling today's most urgent problems.

The International Day of Co-operatives will be officially celebrated on 6 July 1996, by the United Nations and by co-operatives around the world.

The International Co-operative Alliance is an independent, non-governmental association which unites, represents and serves co-operatives worldwide. The ICA was founded in London in 1895. Its members are national and international co-operative organisations in all sectors of activity including agriculture, banking, energy, industry, insurance, fisheries, housing, tourism and consumer co-operatives. ICA has more than 230 member organisations from over 100 countries, representing more than 760 million individuals worldwide.

In 1946, the ICA was one of the first non-governmental organisations to be accorded United Nations Consultative Status. Today it is one of the sixty-nine organisations holding Category 1 Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Co-operatives worldwide have been celebrating International Co-operative Day since 1923, when the Day was initiated to strengthen the unity of the Alliance and as a means of publicising the Co-operative Movement worldwide. In 1992, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the first Saturday of July 1995 to be United Nations International Day of Co-operatives, marking the centenary of the establishment of

the International Co-operative Alliance. In 1994, it invited the international community to observe this Day annually, starting from 1995.

In this way the United Nations intends its own celebrations to support and extend those of the international co-op movement.

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ICA Adopts New Logo

TITLE: ICA Adopts new Logo

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ICA Adopts New Logo

The logo which has been used during the ICA Centennial Year will continue to be used by ICA.

The logo, which depicts doves of peace emerging from the rainbow colours, universally recognised as the ICA and Co-operative Colours and adopted by the Executive in 1925, represents the unity of ICA's diverse membership.

As the original design only incorporates six of the seven colours of the rainbow the acronyms ICA, ACI, MKA, GBI have been added in violet, the fourth colour of the rainbow.

The new logo is more appropriate than the logo used by the organisation for the past eight years because it incorporates the whole spectrum of the rainbow and can be used in all of ICA official languages, indeed in all languages, whereas the former logo could only be used in English and inverted to be used in Spanish and French. The ICA has five official languages: English, French, Spanish, German and Russian, therefore, it was necessary to adopt a logo which could be used in all of these languages.

News from the Americas

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News from the Americas . . .

Strategic Alliances Conference *****

The promotion of trade, joint ventures and investment between co-operatives was the theme bringing together more than 700 co-operators from mainly Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada and the U.S. for the annual Regional Conference of the Americas on 6-8 December 1995 in Miami, Florida.

In addition to briefing delegates on the current political, economic and social conditions in Latin America, international experts from the public and private sector, academia and the co-operative movement analyzed the potential of co-operatives forming strategic alliances for meeting the challenges of today's global economy.

Sectoral and specialized workshops were also held, giving participants the opportunity to share their experiences in forming partnerships and to discuss possible areas of collaboration. Moreover, co-operative sponsored luncheons, trade stands and an individualized business meetings session set the stage for a conference aimed pragmatically at fostering co-operative business.

The 1996 Regional Conference, whose theme will be "De-globalization: Global Challenges, Local Responses," is being planned for 20 - 22 November 1996 in San Joss, Costa Rica. It will be followed by the Second Regional Assembly of the Americas on 23 November.

Co-operatives, A Question of People *****

On 4-6 June 1996, co-operative experts in Human Resource Development (HRD) will converge on Lima, Peru, for a Continental Forum that will culminate in the final draft of a continental HRD strategy.

Since receiving its mandate to focus on the area of HRD from the 1st Regional Assembly of the Americas in August 1994, the Regional Office of the Americas, in collaboration with regional experts, has been developing a continental strategy for HRD to be included in the Strategic Plan for 1996-2000. The final strategy document will be presented for formal adoption at the 2nd Regional Assembly of the Americas in December 1996.

This preliminary phase of strategic formulation is being

sponsored by the Swedish Co-operative Center (SCC), the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA), the European-funded PROCOOPCA, and the COOPNET Programme of the International Labour Office (ILO).

The HRD strategy has the following components: the creation of a computerized information network through Internet; support for the formulation and implementation of HRD plans in co-operatives; the exchange and marketing of innovative products for HRD; support for incorporating the gender perspective in co-operatives; and work with co-operative youth.

Regional Gender Campaign

This year's International Women's Day, 8 March 1996, will mark the launching of the regional campaign "Women, How Many Are We, and What Do We Want?" with special ceremonies taking place in Panama, El Salvador and Costa Rica, and national workshops in the Dominican Republic and Guatemala.

This campaign, coordinated by the Regional Office of the Americas' Gender in Co-operatives programme, is aimed at increasing the visibility of women's participation at both the base and sectoral levels of the co-operative movement in the Americas. Moreover, the "How Many Are We, and What Do We Want" campaign initiates a process of reflection on the interests and aspirations of women within the co-operative movement in terms of economics, politics, culture, family and participation.

At the national level, information will be disseminated and statistics will be collected on the level of participation of women in the co-operative movement, and women co-operators will be surveyed in order to develop a national platform representing women's interests.

This process will culminate in the creation and adoption of a Continental Women's Platform at the Continental Women's Forum to be held 18 - 19 November 1996 in San Jose, Costa Rica, just prior to the Regional Conference and Regional Assembly of the Americas.

Business with the Latin American Co-ops

The Regional Office for the Americas continues its publication of the series "Doing Business with the Co-operatives of Latin America" with new books planned this year for the following countries: Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Honduras, Bolivia, Panama, Puerto Rico and Venezuela.

These books serve as practical guides to doing business with the co-operative sector in Latin America, providing a synthesis of the economic, political and legal situation in each country; a survey of export and investment incentives; an analysis of the co-operative sector by economic activity; and valuable leads on potential business opportunities with specific co-operatives.

Guidebooks are currently available for the following countries: Mexico, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil.

World Overview

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World Overview

Canada

Profile Campaign of CCYN

The Canadian Co-operative Youth Network (CCYN) launched a Profile Campaign at its National Planning Session in Winnipeg last November. The session brought together co-operative youth from all over Canada. In 1996, the CCYN will work with co-operative organizations to find ways of working together, accessing funding and building the network. The SCYN is supported by the CCA.

(CCYN News Release, December 1996)

Electronic Conference on Co-op Principles

The Canadian Co-operative Association, CCA, hosted a three-week on-line conference on the Internet, on the revised co-operative principles. The discussion forum brought together 70 subscribers from Canada, the US, UK, Australia, Switzerland and Sweden. A Summary of the discussions can be assessed through the ICA Web Pages (<http://www.coop.org>).

The CCA will be producing an interactive multimedia presentation on the Statement of Co-operative Identity and Principles, which will be available on a diskette. The presentation will contain a brief history of co-operatives and the background to the ICA Statement and Principles, including full colour photos.

-(Member Development & Communications Update, Fall 1995)

Desjardins Enters the US Capital Markets

The Desjardins caisse populaire movement in Quebec has successfully launched the first "Debenture Desjardins", with a total value of 200 million US dollars. Offered mainly to institutional investors in the United States, the debentures have an interest rate of 7.37 percent and carry no voting rights.

According to Desjardins President, Claude Beland, this new form of capitalisation demonstrates that the co-operative system can successfully enter the large institutional investment market, "while at the same time respecting its

mission, values, and distinctive character."

-(Desjardins Press Release, 9 August 1995)

China

ICMIF Members Open Beijing Office

NTUC INCOME, Singapore, and Unipol, Italy, have become the first co-operative insurers in the world to be granted representative office licences in China.

The two organisations will work with the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) in joint projects and market research. Unipol is among the top 10 insurers in Italy, with more than 2.8 million policies and annual premiums of ITL 1,886 billion. NTUC INCOME has also applied for a representative office licence in Vietnam and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour to set up a joint venture and operate an insurance co-operative.

-(Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Network, September 1995)

Finland

Consumer Co-ops increase Market Share

Finland's two consumer co-operative groups shared in the general recovery of the Finnish economy during 1994.

The S group's food and grocery sales increased by 4.4 per cent, bringing its market share to 22 per cent. SOK Corporation's operating profit was FIM 90 million, an improvement of 17 million compared to the previous year.

The net turnover for Tradeka Consolidated Company grew by 3 per cent and operating profit rose by FIM 120 million to FIM 370 million. During the year 150,000 new households joined the Loyal Customer Scheme.

-(SOK and Tradeka Press Releases, February 1996)

India

Rediscovering Co-operation

The Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Anand, India will organise a national Seminar on 'Rediscovering Co-operation' in November 1996. In view of the significant changes in the social, political and economic environment in recent years, IRMA has called for research proposals on themes such as 'Bases of Co-operation', 'Strategies for the Models of Tomorrow', and 'Co-operatives in the Emerging Context'. IRMA will provide funding support for field research and will also reimburse travel costs and provide local hospitality to authors of accepted papers for participation in the Seminar.

Further details from Prof. R. Rajagopalan, Institute of Rural Management, Post Box 60, Anand 388 001, Gujarat, India. Tel: (91) 2692-40391 Fax: (91) 2692-40188, E-mail: raja@irm.ernet.in

Japan

JA-ZENCHU Establishes an Internet Home Page

JA-ZENCHU has launched a Web Site, which can be accessed at <http://www.rim.or.jp/ci/ja/> or through the ICA Web Pages at <http://www.coop.org>

The site aims to provide domestic agricultural information, to stress the importance of JA-Zenchi's information service and to interact with other networks internationally.

The site will promote the JA group's activities through focus on its structure and business and through the regular publication of JA-ZENCHU NEWS.

The International Department of JA-ZENCHU can be contacted by E-mail at ldm05517@niftyserve.or.jp

- (JA ZENCHU News No.3, November 1995)

JA Group Involved with Welfare for the Aged

As a response to the fast aging rural society in Japan, the JA group has started a home-helper training programme which has trained over 18,000 home helpers in the past year and aims to increase the number trained to approximately 60,000 by the end of the year 2000.

The group also organized a 'Local Participants Volunteer Programme' involving home helper trainees, women and youth. The group runs or is building 14 homes which include a day care centre in Tochigi prefecture and a centre in Fuji city, Shizuoka prefecture, is scheduled to open later this year.

-(JA-ZENCHU News No.4, December 1995)

Poland

Polish Parliament Approves Credit Union Act

Last October, the Polish Parliament approved a Credit Union Act submitted by the National Association of Polish Credit Unions.

The Act received almost unanimous support from the Sejm - the lower Chamber of the Parliament - with 317 votes in favour of the regulation and only 8 against. The landslide victory in the Parliament follows more than two years of strenuous efforts dedicated to securing a legislation for the Polish credit union movement.

-(Krajowa Spoldzielcza Kasa Oszczednoscowo-Kredytowa, Gdynia, October 1995)

Portugal

XXI International Congress of CIRIEC

The XXI Ciriec International Congress will be held in Lisbon on 20 and 21 May, 1996. The general theme of the Congress will be 'Towards economic and social cohesion? The contribution of public enterprises, co-operatives and social economy enterprises'.

Topics for discussion will include: prevention of social exclusion; provision and financing modes of public and social services; development of outlying regions; transnational infrastructure networks; privatization experiences (including Eastern Europe); services in the general interest facing liberalization; the future of public services in the European Union (1996 Inter governmental Conference for revision of the

European treaties/European Charter of Public Services).
Further information from:

Bernard Thiry, Director, Ciriec International, Universite de Liege au Sart-Tilman, Bat. B33 - bte 6, B-4000 Liege, Belgium.
Tel.(32)41-66 27 46; Fax: (32)41-66 29 58.

-(Ciriec International News Release, October 1995)

Switzerland

Migros Turns to Capital Markets

The Federation of Migros Co-operatives has turned to the Swiss capital markets for a 10-year loan of 250 million Swiss francs, which will be used to consolidate short-term debts. This is the first time since 1983 that Migros, Switzerland's largest retailer, has gone to the capital markets.

-(Journal de Geneve, 13 September 1995)

United Kingdom

Robert Owen Statue Gets a New Plaque

The Co-operative Bank, Manchester recently hosted the Robert Owen Memorial Museum Committee from Newtown, Mid Wales, who were visiting Manchester to see the statue outside 1 Balloon Street. The original likeness, from which the statue outside head office of the Co-operative Bank is copied, is in Newtown, the birthplace of the famous co-operator. The visit also marked the completion of a new plaque which explains who unveiled the statue and when.

-(Banknotes, Issue 45, December 1995)

Entries Called for World Habitat Awards 1996

The Building and Social Housing Foundation invites entries for the World Habitat Awards 1996. The awards, initiated in 1985 by the Foundation, are part of its contribution to the UN International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987. Each year, two awards of £10,000 and individually designed and crafted silver trophies are given to the winners of a competition for human settlement projects, both in developed and developing countries, offering sustainable futures to residents and providing practical and imaginative solutions to current housing problems.

Those who wish to participate in the competition should send their preliminary entries by 31 July, 1996 to Diane Diacon, Research Officer of Building and Social Housing Foundation, Memorial Square, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 3TU (Tel.+44/1530/510/444 and fax +44/1530/510 332).

USA

Co-operatives Active in Rural Communities

New co-operatives across the USA are revitalizing rural communities, according to testimony provided November 1 at a USDA hearing by the National Co-operative Business Association (NCBA).

A small USDA programme that funds regional co-operative development centres is showing great results. Over the last 10 years, NCBA has committed itself to the creation and

successful operation of centres for rural co-operative development. Today, all across rural America, citizens are using co-operatives to start their own businesses. In the Western part of the US, co-operatives create new jobs processing recycled material into retail products; in the upper Midwest, co-operatives engage in value-added processing of agricultural products that is raising farm income on the commodities they produce; and in the South, community development credit unions are providing loans for small businesses owned by minorities in rural areas.

This economic development activity is conducted on a regional basis through a network of co-operative development centres. The benefit to rural communities is significant because co-operatives aggregate economic power in large enough units to make businesses competitive in a global economy.

- (NCBA News Release, November 1995)

NCBA and CBI Sign New Russian Project

The National Co-operative Business Association, through its subcontractor, Co-operative Business International, signed its third USDA Food for Progress Grant on February 9, to establish an Import Guarantee Fund in Khabarovsk Krai, located in far east Russia. The guarantee will be used to collateralize letters of credit on behalf of Khabarovsk food-processing enterprises for the purchase of bulk commodities, semi-processed and packaged foods, addressing the lack of available import credit at realistic interest rates in Khabarovsk Krai.

- (NCBA News Release, February 1996)

CLUSA Institute for Co-operative Development

The National Co-operative Business Association launched the CLUSA Institute for Co-operative Development, January, 1996. The institute will increase the capacity of co-operatives to provide concrete solutions to contemporary problems and act as a catalyst to replicate successful co-operative development models around the country and overseas.

John Gauci has been appointed director of the Institute. Besides Gauci, a new internal steering committee, charged with the responsibility of setting overall policy and direction for the Institute has also been appointed. The committee members include Jim Cawley, NCBA Vice-president for international programmes, Paul Hazen, Chief Operating Officer of NCBA and Judy Ziewacz, acting Director of the Co-operative Development Foundation.

- (NCBA Press Releases, January and February 1996)

Zambia

ZCF Weathers Economic Down-turn

The Zambia Co-operative Federation recorded decreased profits in 1994-95 (K 145 million compared to K 870 million the year previously), but continued its restructuring in order to cope with the effects of the Structural Adjustment Programme. Staff size was reduced from 415 to 282 as part of ZCF's cost-cutting measures. Zambia's GDP declined in real terms in 1994, and its agricultural output fell by 19.8 percent, with the result that both maize and maize meal had to be imported in the first quarter of 1995.

Co-op People

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Co-op People

Keith Brading, former Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies (UK) and first President of the UKCC died on 2 February aged 78 after suffering ill-health for several years.

David Dinning has taken over as the Senior Executive Director of World Council of Credit Unions and David Richardson as Executive Director of Technical Services. Both have had extensive experience with the credit union movement.

Lord Jacques, Chairman of the Central Executive of the Co-operative Union (UK) from 1964 to 1970 and President of Congress in 1961, has died aged 90. John Henry Jacques began his working life as a miner and entered the co-operative movement as a grocery apprentice with the Ashington Society, where he was working when he won a co-operative college scholarship.

Graham Melmoth, elected ICA President at ICA's Centennial Congress in Manchester last September, has been given another challenge. He is to become Chief Executive Officer of the Co-operative Wholesale Society in Manchester when the present CEO, David Skinner, retires later this year. Mr. Melmoth was Vice-President of ICA (Europe) before being elected ICA President in September 1995.

George Money, MBE, Chief Executive Officer and Secretary of Yorkshire Co-operatives, one of the largest and most successful independent retail co-operatives in UK, has been elected President of the 1996 UK Co-operative Congress which will meet in Harrogate from May 26 to 28, 1996.

Hakaru Toyoda, President of JA-ZENCHU, was elected ICA Vice-President at the ICA Congress held at Manchester September, 1995. He succeeded Mitsugu Horiuchi, who retired as the President of JA-ZENCHU in 1995.

Churll-Hee Won, Chairman and President of the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation, NACF, was elected Vice-President of ICA International Co-operative Agricultural Organization at its plenary meeting in Manchester last September.

1996 Co-op Hall of Fame

On April 17, 1996, four co-operative leaders, Burgee O. Amdahl, Glenn M. Anderson, Dr. Allie Felder, Jr., and Dr. Katharine Whiteside Taylor, were inducted in to the Co-operative Hall of Fame. They were selected by the two committees of national co-operative leaders to receive the co-operative sector's highest honour.

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ICA Calendar

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ICA Calendar

22 March 1996

ICA European Council Stockholm, Sweden

11-12 April 1996

ICBA Central Executive Casablanca, Morocco

15 April 1996

ICA Housing Co-operatives Board - Prague, Czech Republic

19 April 1996

Joint Meeting International Co-operative Agricultural
Organization/ IFAP Standing Committee on Agricultural
Co-operatives Versailles, France

24 April 1996

ICACC Executive Committee, Geneva, Switzerland

25-26 April 1996

Specialized Bodies Consultation Meeting on Operational Issues

27-29 April 1996

Health Steering Committee - Barcelona/Madrid, Spain

22-24 Mmy 1996

ICA Africa Co-operative Ministerial Conference - Mauritius

3 June 1996

ICA Housing Co-operatives Board & Plenary - Istanbul, Turkey

5 June 1996

Conference on Housing Co-operative Development, ICA and the
Habitat Agenda HABITAT II - Istanbul, Turkey

9-10 June 1996

ICA Board - Beijing, China

10-14 June 1996

Regional Assembly - Asia/Pacific - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

28 June 1996

European Committee of ICBA - Lisbon, Portugal

6 July 1996

International Co-operative Day/UN International Day of
Co-operatives Worldwide

15-17 August 1996

Regional Assembly Africa - Dakar, Senegal

11-14 October 1996

ICMIF Meetings - Wiesbaden, Germany

25 October 1996

ICBA Plenary Meeting - Budapest, Hungary

26-27 October 1996

ICA Board - Budapest, Hungary

27 October 1996

ICA Audit & Control Committee - Budapest, Hungary

29 October 1996

ICA European Council - Budapest, Hungary

29 October 1996

ICA Consumer Co-op Org - Budapest, Hungary

30 October 1996

Regional Assembly Europe - Budapest, Hungary

18-19 November 1996

ICA Global Women's Committee Conference - San Jose, Costa Rica

20-22 November 1996

ICA-ROAM Regional Conference - San Jose, Costa Rica

23 November 1996

ICA Regional Assembly Americas - San Jose, Costa Rica

28-30 October 1997

ICA General Assembly - Israel