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Editor: Mary Treacy

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Top Priorities for New ICA President

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February 1996

ICA NEWS

Special Centennial Congress Issue

Development Issues and Gender Equality are Top
Priorities for New ICA President

The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) is to establish a special trust fund for sustainable human resource development by January next year, says new ICA President, Graham Melmoth.

In an interview with Congress News after his election to the Presidency, Mr Melmoth stressed that the creation of the fund was a priority item and appealed to all co-operative leaders especially those from rich movements to contribute generously to the fund.

He said once the fund is created, ICA will use the interest to support among other things delegates from poor co-operative movements to attend its major meetings. The creation of the fund is part of the organisation's initiatives to raise resources.

The ICA does not have adequate resources to undertake major assignments but maintains a degree of influence with major lending institutions like the World Bank.

Regarding the new structure of the ICA, Mr Melmoth said there was a need to monitor closely how it will operate to avoid regions alienating the centre.

Greater effort will be required to sustain and increase links with all ICA specialised bodies to maintain unity in the organisation. He was, however, quick to point out that regional assemblies will be in a better position to deal with specific needy areas.

Mr Melmoth's priorities will be to tackle gender issues, ensure recognition of the ICA at the international level and promote the development of co-operatives in Africa where no single movement was sound and secure.

He said the ICA will endeavour to try and convince rich co-operative movements to transfer resources to the poor ones. He was optimistic that once South Africa is admitted into the ICA, it will have great influence in the development of co-operatives in Africa.

The ICA is arranging a forum specifically for South Africa to try and bring different types of co-operatives in that country together.

On gender issues, Mr Melmoth felt that the ICA may be prompted to make positive discrimination regarding the attendance at ICA meetings to encourage more equal representation of men and women.

Geoffrey Chipolyonga

Doctor's Dose of Change

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February 1996

Doctor's Dose of Change

Co-operatives now find themselves in a context much different from that of their founders. This was stressed by Dr Ian MacPherson in his address to ICA Congress. He was introducing the ICA Statement on Co-operative Identity. These changed circumstances demand that co-operatives redefine their identity. Indeed he was of the opinion that such a review is necessary every thirty or so years.

The present proposals are a result of a process that started eight years ago at the 1988 Congress in Stockholm, Sweden. Sven Ake Book finished the first part of the assignment and gave a report on Basic Co-operative Values at the 1992 Congress. A primary reference group of six was set up to translate these basic values into principles as a basis for actual implementation. In addition, a questionnaire was circulated to many co-operatives worldwide and their responses received. An Advisory Committee consisting of fifty eminent co-operators was constantly consulted. Many regional and national events were organized and their reports fed into the mainstream project.

It emerged that there was some "unhappiness over the existing capital formation principle as well as concern over the omission of a specific reference to gender, the lack of a definition of a co-operative, and the general absence of a reference to values and community obligations."

Dr MacPherson said that he considers the placing of the principles into the context of a statement on co-operative identity as the most important achievement of the review. Also this is the first time in the history of the ICA that it has been possible to reach an acceptable definition of a co-operative. The definition conforms relatively well to the one adopted in 1966 by the International Labour Office.

Key improvements in the draft new statement of identity and principles are:
*..inclusion of the term "self-responsibility" which embodies an important part of the co-operative value system not adequately covered by "self-help";

- * reference to "the tradition of our founders";
- * a deliberate effort to ensure that the principles are applicable to all kinds of co-operatives and not only to consumer co-operatives;
- * a flexibility that allows variations in the behaviour of every co-operative but demands a certain minimum standard of behaviour;
- * the principles are subtly intertwined with each other thus proposing a broader view and approach;
- * stress is given to the centrality of the member;
- * autonomy of co-operatives is clearly stated, as a principle. "The point is that in all cases of relations with other organisations - be they public or private - the first key concern for co-operatives must be the protection of their autonomy and particularly the capacity of members to control their own organisations";
- * the idea of an indivisible reserve to reflect the truth that at least part of the assets is usually the common property of the co-operative;
- * the obligations of co-operatives towards their communities are

specifically spelt out.

Dr MacPherson concluded by suggesting that co-operatives can only meet their full potential if they do the following: "Celebrating the advantages of membership; recognizing the unique strengths provided by the co-operative principles; empowering members, employees, managers and elected leaders; helping co-operatives combine their resources prudently; helping to improve the financial strength of our co-operatives; and thinking strategically". He thanked the ICA for giving him the privilege to work on such an important project, and all the co-operators who had made contributions.

Bernard Kadasia

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Resolved in Principle

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February 1996

Resolved in Principle

The ICA Congress resolved to adopt the Statement of Co-operative Identity. The version adopted includes the amendments accepted by the ICA Board on 18 September.

Three reports were received contributing to the Statement. The first report was from the International Joint Project on Participatory Democracy which gave the experiences in Japan, Canada, Great Britain, Italy and Sweden.

The Report from the recently completed International Co-operative Youth Seminar was next. It emphasised that youth should be involved not just as co-operators of the future, they should be recognized and involved as co-operators of today too. It suggested means by which they can play a greater role today and in the future, such as:

- * the establishment of an international co-operative network for youth. News items and publications would be exchanged. Use of the Internet and other modern technology can also facilitate the work of this network;
- * the holding of regular international seminars, workshops and congresses, among others;
- * having representatives of youth on boards of co-operatives, even if only on a quota basis.

Sven Ake Book, the outgoing Chairman of the Research Committee, said that the Committee was particularly happy that the statement was flexible and general enough to suit all types of co-operatives.

The Congress accepted the recommendations of the Board on the Statement, which was subsequently adopted by the General Assembly, the highest authority of the Alliance.

Bernard Kadasia

Statement on the Co-operative Identity

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International Co-operative Alliance

Statement on the Co-operative Identity

Definition

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Values

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Principles

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

1st Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership

Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected

representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6th Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7th Principle: Concern for Community

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

Working for Consumers

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by the International Co-operative Alliance ICA

February 1996

Working for Consumers

Consumer co-operatives have been called upon to continue working tirelessly to speak for all consumers, the less fortunate as well as the fortunate worldwide. This was a general consensus at the Consumer Committee (ICCO) plenary meeting of the ICA Centennial in Manchester.

Emphasis was put on all consumer co-operatives to make sure that they continue to speak out on all issues, especially now that the privatisation of services from telephone to water, from gas to garbage and from houses to hospitals is a common phenomenon in most countries.

It was saddening to note that several governments had chosen to cut funding of consumer co-operatives in the name of privatisation and open market, the meeting noted.

Meanwhile an agreement has been reached whereby the International Consumer Co-operative Organisations and EURO COOP will establish a constructive and complimentary collaboration.

According to a press release in Manchester issued after a meeting of the two parties, this collaboration will be of great possible benefit for co-operative organisations in Europe represented by EURO COOP and those associated at world level within ICA which represents the five continents.

EURO COOP, which was established in the late 50s, is one of the strongest consumer movements in EU member countries whose main objective is to fight for fairer co-operative legislation and for a larger Co-operative Movement in Europe.

Theodore Ndee and Evgenia Kvitko

ICMIF Focuses on Members' Intellectual Capital

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A New, Yet Experienced, ICMIF Focuses on Members'
Intellectual Capital

The International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF) is in the unusual and enviable position of being a new organization which came into being (on 1 January 1993) with 70 years of experience already behind it, Chairman Tan Kin Lian said as he addressed some 175 delegates from around the world to the first conference of ICMIF held in Manchester on 16-18 September.

The history of this Federation, founded in 1922 as the insurance committee of ICA, is almost exclusively in the co-operative sector, he said. "Although we decided three years ago that we should open our doors a bit wider (to mutual insurers which form part of the social economy), the unique co-operative approach to business is still an essential part of our purpose." Mr Tan was referring to constitutional changes approved by the Tokyo conference in 1992, which resulted in a renewal of the Federation and in the addition of an M for mutual in its former acronym ICIF.

Among new members that have joined ICMIF since then are three mutuals, from Austria, Israel and Poland, and it now represents more than 150 insurers worldwide grouped in some 75 member organisations, including conference host, the CIS (Co-operative Insurance Society) of Manchester, the very first co-operative insurer in the world. Alan Sneddon, Chief General Manager of the CIS, welcomed delegates and described how, in the face of rapid changes in the UK market, his organisation maintained a leading and special position built upon the co-operative basis of trading.

Guest of honour at the opening session was Pauline Green, Labour and Co-operative Party Member of the European Parliament, who paid tribute to the achievements of co-operative insurers around the world. Describing Europe as a co-operative vision, not just an economic club, she said the European Union (EU) was a model of economic and political co-operation which could hold good in other parts of the world.

A special guest was ICA President, Lars Marcus, who lauded ICMIF as the strongest and best-organised specialised organisation of the ICA, and challenged members to work toward spreading insurance services more evenly among established and emerging markets around the world.

A principal session of the conference was devoted to a review of the ground the Federation has covered in implementing the Strategic Review Group (SRG) recommendations since the last conference. Hans Dahlberg, Chief Executive, said more and more organisations are attempting to put a value on the intangible assets of knowledge, skill and information systems. "It is to this intellectual capital that ICMIF services, put together, make a significant contribution."

In markets becoming similar, in a world getting smaller, the international exposure which ICMIF provides to managers of its member organizations cannot easily be duplicated on the individual initiative of an insurer or the collective initiative of a few, he added. "When there are generally

accepted accounting principles for intellectual capital, an ICMIF membership will count for a great deal, as it provides a global reach for local strength."

The main seminar of the conference was on social welfare provision, with presentations from a number of countries exploring whether it was a fitting opportunity in changing markets where governments were withdrawing from social services.

The conference also included a development forum. It examined new approaches to co-operative and mutual insurance development, from networking to strategic alliances and joint ventures, in a dozen markets previously driven by planned economies.

In his keynote speech to the forum, ICMIF Development Manager Zahid Qureshi pointed out that in 1970 the well-to-do countries - USA, Canada, Japan, Australia and Western Europe - accounted for 15% of the world population and 75% of the gross domestic product (GDP). "In 1992, the same countries controlled 80% of the world's wealth. The insurance gap is even wider, with the well-to-do countries accounting for 92% of all insurance worldwide."

Just as it is the existence of a middle class that lends stability to the social and economic well-being of a country, the existence of what may be called middle-economy countries will help provide some socio-economic stability in the world, he said. "It is vital that the present trend of a growing gap between developed and developing countries is reversed, through activities which focus on the progress of emerging economies - such as insurance, which fosters savings and investments while covering risk, for industry and commerce as well as individuals and families."

Zahid Qureshi

Five New Members for ICA

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February 1996

Five New Members for ICA

Five new members were admitted into membership of the ICA at the time of the ICA Centennial Congress:

Co-operative Bank of Kenya Ltd., Kenya

Credit Union and Savings Association Ltd., Zambia

Nationwide Insurance Enterprise, USA

National Credit Union Association Inc., Australia

Tonga Co-operative Federation Ltd., Tonga

bringing the membership to 212 national and eight international organisations from 93 countries.

Training Co-operative Communicators

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February 1996

Training Co-operative Communicators

The ICA Communications Committee (ICACC) has developed one of its important functions as providing training opportunities for co-operative journalists.

The second ICA workshop for young co-operative journalists from the Third World and Eastern European countries was organised by the ICA Communications Department on behalf of the ICA Communications Committee in September 1995. The Workshop was financed primarily by the ICACC, with some funding from the European Union. The CWS, Co-op Bank and Inter Press Service also contributed resource persons to the course.

The Workshop started with a week's theoretical training session at the International Co-operative College in Loughborough. The second week of the Workshop was practical training and implementation of the newly learned skills in Manchester, writing and editing the Congress News Bulletin, a daily bulletin published for the more than one thousand participants of the ICA Centennial Congress.

Judging from the feedback that the Congress Bulletin received from its readers, the Workshop was very successful. The bulletin was said to be good, straightforward reporting that covered well the multitude of events and issues during the Congress week.

The success was also reflected in the enthusiasm that the participants showed during both busy weeks. There was a good team spirit and a strong personal engagement to learn and work hard, essential prerequisites for a successful learning experience.

There were 14 co-operative journalists from Egypt, India, Kenya, Poland, Romania, Russia, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

The feedback from the workshop has been excellent and an assessment has been prepared based on questionnaires circulated to participants. A copy of the Assessment Report is available from the ICA Office in Geneva.

After analysing the results of the Workshop, the ICACC Executive Committee pledged that it will organise similar workshops in the future.
Kalevi Suomela

Are you surfing the Net for ICA?

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February 1996

Are you surfing the Net for ICA?

The Internet and how it can spread the Co-operative Message was the major theme at a Communications Seminar held in Manchester on 17 September.

The meeting which was attended by over fifty communicators from Europe, North America, Asia, Africa and Australia, was an ideal opportunity for ICA to demonstrate some of the recent progress in its Internet Project, including the co-op gopher, a type of on-line information bank, which ICA has set up in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin Centre of Co-operatives in Madison.

Director of Communications of the ICA, Mary Treacy, says this electronic information bank is already very popular with US students and receives an average of 4,000 hits (the number of times it is consulted) per month. Increasingly co-op organisations throughout the world are making use of the Internet to communicate by e-mail or to obtain and diffuse information about the Co-operative Movement. Several have contributed information to the ICA gopher.

CWS announced in Manchester that it would be making a web-server available to ICA and its member organisations. ICA already has its home page available on the server (see box below for address).

Early next year these pages will be expanded to include home pages on the organisations which have already contributed information to the ICA Gopher.

Ms Treacy stresses that the ICA strategy should be backwards compatible so that the new technology does not widen the gap between rich and poor member organisations. Members from developing countries are encouraged to contact their local member of the Association of Progressive Communications (APC). A list of addresses can be obtained from Gabriella Sozanski at the ICA Office in Geneva.

The second theme of the Communications Seminar was a case study on the Co-op Bank and how its ethical policy has increased business, which was presented by Chris Smith, responsible for the development and communication of the Bank's ethical policy.

Phil Anzeze

Governments Urged to Set Co-ops Free

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Governments Urged to Set Co-ops Free

The International Co-operative Banking Association (ICBA) has a new President, Claude Beland. Mr Beland was unanimously elected in Manchester by the ICBA Board. He takes over from Terry Thomas of the UK, who has been the President since 1988.

Mr Beland, who comes from Canada, is the first President of ICBA from the Francophone countries. During his tenure of office Mr Beland hopes to strengthen the association and to promote collaboration among all the association's members. One of his aims, he said, will be to play a strong role in setting up a concentrated structure among co-operative financial institutions in the Americas.

Mr Beland stressed that the honour must be shared by the whole co-operative sector of Quebec. The appointment, he said, attests to the growing role played by the Movement Desjardins at the international level.

The outgoing President of ICBA said that during his tenure of office, ICBA became a regional-structured organisation. The benefits of a regional organisation, Mr Thomas said, were to help ICBA attract more members and at the same time lower the cost of membership, both in terms of subscription and travel, which was particularly important for less developed countries.

The ICBA is a forum where financial co-operative institutions from across the world discuss major issues. At one of the ICBA sessions, discussion centred on the problem of separating co-operatives and government in developing countries. ICBA Regional Chairman for East, Central and Southern Africa, Mr E.K. Mureithi, who delivered his regional report said this problem has affected the performance of co-operatives in the region and he urged governments to set co-ops free from government administration to enable them to manage their own affairs. Mr Mureithi also called upon co-ops in the area to recruit and hire qualified members of staff, if they expected to perform well. African co-ops, he said, require a radical change in the next century.

Phil Anzeze

Research Committee Elects New Chairman

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Research Committee Elects new Chairman

Roger Spear from the UK Open University has been nominated as the new chairman of the ICA Research Committee. Formal nomination took place at the plenary meeting in Manchester on September 18, the second day of an open, two-day long Co-operative Research Forum held in connection with the ICA Centenary Congress.

The excellent developments of the ICA research activities over the last ten years were recalled by several speakers during the meeting. These formerly modest annual research officer meetings have become an impressive organisation that arranges major forums and symposiums for both university people and managers of co-operative organisations. At the same time the range of topics dealt with in the meetings has increased considerably to cover all possible forms and aspects of co-operative activities.

Roger Spear, the new chairman, intends to continue the Research Committee's future work upon much the same lines advocated by Sven Ake Book. He stressed the importance of keeping the forums and seminars truly open and believes this is best achieved by keeping the participation fees low. To do this successfully the Committee needs financial subsidies.

Roger Spear also stressed the benefits of preserving the meetings as dialogue forums of practitioners and academics. Many excellent research reports unfortunately do not reach all the interested readers and this was seen as a major challenge to include within the ICA communications strategy.

Kalevi Suomela

Second ICA Co-operative Health Forum

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February 1996

24 Countries at Second ICA Co-operative Health Forum

The 2nd International Co-operative Health and Social Care Forum held on 18 September brought together 117 representatives and observers from 24 countries across the world to exchange experiences on the issue in Manchester. Michael Stubbs from the United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and Chandra Mouli from the World Health Organization also participated and gave their support to the meeting.

The very critical situation in most third world countries and the shifting of priorities to other more attractive issues in the first world resulted in the Japanese taking the lead in convening co-operatives involved in medical, social care and related issues to the first Forum during the 1992 Congress in Tokyo. Recognising the relevance and importance of the subject, ICA took the initiative to organise the 2nd Forum on the subject at the Centennial Congress.

Speakers from four regions presented their experiences and national as well as sectoral case studies completed the picture on the present situation in the health and social care sector.

As a conclusion of the discussion the following relevant recommendations were drawn up:

- * an agreement in principle on the creation of a new ICA specialised body for the co-operative health and social care sector;
- * an agreement for an interim Steering Committee comprised of representatives from each ICA region;
- * an agreement for analysing and preparing a background study to be presented to the ICA Board concerning the establishment of a new specialised body on health and social care.

The Steering Committee had its first meeting after the Forum and agreed on the work plan. Members of the Committee are: Dr. S.Kato, Medical Co-op Committee of JCCU, Japan - Chairman and representative of the Asian region; Dr. Arnaldo Silvestre Mallmann, Director of UNIMED, Brazil - representative of the American Region; and Dr. Francisco Carreno, Vice-President of Espriu Foundation, Spain - representative of Europe. Secretary of the Steering Committee is Arsenio Invernizzi, Senior Project Analyst of ICA Head Office, Geneva.

The members agreed to contribute in equal proportion to the direct costs of support activities provided by ICA Secretariat for the Committee for a period of six months.

The Committee would be responsible - in consultation with the Health Organisations of each ICA Region - for drafting the rules, members provisions, funding formula, definition of work strategies and programme, and staff requirements of the new ICA body.

Gabriella Sozanski

Newly-Elected ICA Leaders

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Newly-Elected ICA Leaders

Lars Hillbom (KF Sweden) - ICA Vice-President for Europe

Hakaru Toyoda (Ja-Zenchu, Japan) - ICA Vice-President for Asia and the Pacific

Bernard Wolimbwa (Uganda Co-operative Alliance) - ICA Vice-President for Africa

Claude Beland (Confederation des Caisses Populaires et d'Economie
Desjardins du Quebec) - Board Member

Wilhelm Kaltenborn (VdK Germany) - Audit and Control Committee Member

CICOPA's Three-Point Plan

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February 1996

CICOPA's Three-Point Plan

Members of CICOPA, the International Organisation of Industrial, Artisanal and Service Producers' Co-operatives, met in Manchester on September 16-17, 1995.

They discussed the progress of the organisation's programme and its future. They also held elections for the Executive Committee.

CICOPA's development programme is based on three principles. Firstly, CICOPA tries to help development of producers' co-operative organisations in some countries where it is now possible to get technical support from one of the ICA Regional Offices, where apex co-operative organisations approve it and where public co-financing is possible.

Then, its first aims are creation (if it does not exist in the country) of a producers' co-operative union, or federation and of a first permanent service of advice and help for co-operative management (mainly marketing and financial management). No lasting development could be realised with feeble and isolated enterprises.

Finally, its steadfast rule is to help create and develop such a service with the financial participation of beneficiary co-operatives themselves. This service would continue as a partnership in the first instance and CICOPA would ensure that the recipient organisation could continue without their help before withdrawing their financial support.

The current programme covers about 20 countries from all over the world. Repayment rates for credit under CICOPA programmes are a remarkable 100%. Normal recovery by other organisations with similar programmes is said to be about 50%.

The World Bank and the European banks are some of the major agencies with which CICOPA collaborates. CICOPA is keen to see that the activities it initiates do not collapse when its support ends. Thus, support is given on a declining scale where the recipient initially contributes 20%. By the fifth year the recipient organisation should be supporting 100% of the costs.

At the end of the meetings, members of the Executive Committee were elected and for the first time in its history a woman, Ms Leeladivir Prasad, was elected to the Board.

Ben Kadasia and Gregory Prouttskov

Concern for Fisherfolk

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Concern for Fisherfolk

The ICA Fisheries Committee which met on 18 September showed great concern for the economic and physical well-being of the fisherfolk who constitute the weakest of the weak. Members from India and the Republic of Korea suggested more insurance for the fisherfolk as sea fishing endangers their lives. Marketing of their catch so as to get a suitable price was thought necessary, too, because in the absence of a strong marketing infrastructure, the exploitation of fishermen still continues unabated.

A representative from Japan suggested that fisheries co-ops need to be further strengthened so as to face competition. He said fisheries co-ops in Japan transact over 60 per cent of Japan's total annual fisheries production and greatly contribute to the development of fishing communities.

The committee decided to hold ICA Fisheries Committee ODA (Overseas Development Agency) seminars in India and Sri Lanka in November-December, 1995.

M.L. Sharma

New Constitution for ICA Women's Committee

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New Constitution for ICA Women's Committee

Because of the structural changes within ICA and the absence of regional committees in the present term, the ICA Women's Committee adopted a new Constitution at its meeting in Manchester and, at the same time, changed its name to the ICA Global Women's Committee.

Annual Global Meetings will be held in conjunction with General Assemblies and, in alternate years, with one of the Regional Assemblies.

Susan King, Secretary, ICA Global Women's Committee

Europe Elects New Leader

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February 1996

Europe Elects New Leader

On 19 September in Manchester, the ICA European Regional Assembly agreed on the following priorities for the ICA work programme for 1996-1997:

- * Strengthening of co-operatives in Eastern and Central Europe;
- * Code of practice, governing methods and management control systems;
- * Sustainable human development.
- * Gender issues as part of all programmes and activities;
- * Co-operative image in Europe: improving information and communication.

Some of these issues must also be followed up from a global perspective or in certain cases included in the development of cross-border collaboration between the national and/or sectoral co-operative movements.

Elections took place also at the Regional Assembly where Lars Hillbom, candidate of KF, Sweden, was elected Chairman for a term up to 1997. The other candidate for Chairmanship, Giuliano Vecchi, remained member of the European Council. Raija Itkonen of Finland is the new Vice Chair in addition to Ota Karen (Czech Republic). The meeting also elected one new member, Hans Detlef W=FClker, candidate of the German co-operative movement and co-opted Juan Luis Arrieta from Euskadi, Spain in place of Javier Sanz. Other members of the Council are: P.Bartus - Hungary, V.Ermakov - Russia, J.-F.Hoffelt - Belgium, E.Pflimlin - France, K.Rasmussen - Denmark, M.Rybar - Slovak Republic and R.Trodin - Sweden.

Gregory Prouttskov and
Codruta Angelescu

New Committee Replaces INCOTEC

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February 1996

New Committee Replaces INCOTEC

Co-operative educators and trainers attending the INCOTEC meetings in Manchester voted unanimously to replace INCOTEC, the ICA International Committee for Training and Education in Co-operatives by a new Committee to be called the ICA Global HRD Committee.

The underlying thinking behind the new committee will include focus, centrality of HRD to co-operatives, flexibility, relevance, functionality, and sustainability. More specifically, the committee will:

- * provide a focal point for HRD work in co-operatives;
- * be open and flexible in its work and in its membership;
- * promote collaboration amongst agencies and organisations active in Co-operative HRD;
- * be an interactive network;
- * aim at answering the real needs of the ordinary members through the HRD and educational framework of the ICA and its member organisations.

The current Executive Committee will continue for another two years and be joined by representatives from the ILO, SCC, the ICA Regional Office for the Americas, and Indonesia. The ICA will provide Secretariat services to the Committee.

Dr Robert Houlton, the outgoing Chairman was praised and thanked for his contribution to HRD in Co-operatives during his tenure. Dr Yehudah Paz, formerly Vice-Chairman of INCOTEC, was confirmed as chairman for the interim committee.

A key task for the interim committee will be to clarify the nature and activities of the new committee. It will also be expected to come up with the proposals on how to raise resources to sustain the committee.

The Executive Committee and the Plenary were followed by a workshop on networking in Co-operative HRD. Reports given at the workshop showed that there were many HRD networking activities being carried out in Africa, the Americas, and Asia-Pacific. The ILO COOPNET Project was shown to be a major player in these activities.

It was agreed that networking should take maximum advantage of the Internet and other modern technologies. However, it should be borne in mind that there are cases where publications, actual getting together and other modest methods could be more appropriate.

Gregory Prouttskov and Ben Kadasia

Inter-Coop Creates Ideal Logistics Model

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February 1996

Inter-Coop Creates Ideal Logistics Model

Manchester, 19th September, 1995: The deliberations at the meetings of the members of the Inter-Coop ended on a positive note with the members agreeing to create an ideal logistics model. This model will be a description of list of systems required to ensure efficient management of supply chain. According to Ole Dueholm, the spokesperson for Inter-Coop, this is the most significant step forward for the organisation.

The meeting also decided to continue the education programmes for the senior co-operative managers. The programme would involve taking them through a number of disciplines and case studies related to marketing, strategic planning and retailing in general.

The Board of Inter-Coop has decided to change the rules and provide all members a seat on the Board.

Co-ops 'Well Placed' to Influence Tourism

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Co-ops 'well placed' to influence tourism

The key role to be played by Co-operative organisations in the development of responsible tourism in the next millennium has been underlined at a major seminar organised by Tourism International Co-operative and Associated (TICA).

This event, allied to the ICA Centennial Congress in Manchester, brought together Co-operative and other "popular" tourism organisations from all over the world to debate the issues facing the sector beyond the year 2000.

Among the panel of speakers from the international tourism industry was Willie Tucker, Chief General Manager of the Midlands Co-operative Society, which operates 75 travel agencies in the UK. He told the audience that the greatest challenge in the next millennium lay in travel's fourth dimension - its power to educate, to broaden the mind and to bring people from different cultures closer together.

Charting the Co-op's tremendous growth in the UK travel business, he commented: "Travel is about the fulfilment of people's dream- it's about providing them with new cultural experiences, coupled with relaxation and the opportunity to broaden their minds."

"When early Co-operators first became involved in travel in this country, they recognised its potential - meeting other people from different environments and different cultures is an invaluable experience - so much the better, they believed, if the means of travel could be made more affordable so that as many people as possible could benefit."

He added that in seeking to do this over the years, the Movement in the UK had lost sight of its original aim in promoting travel as a means of education and enlightenment. "We are not here to 'nanny' our customers and tell them how to behave," he said. "As Co-ops however, we do have a responsibility to emphasise the many benefits that tourism has to offer in terms of personal development."

The international Co-operative Movement, he added, was in a good position to influence world governments and ensure that tourism, the world's biggest industry, was developed responsibly beyond the year 2000 both in social and environmental terms. "Despite its importance to the world's economy, not all governments give tourism the kind of serious consideration it deserves," he said. "Certainly the international Co-operative Movement, with its involvement in many spheres of economic activity, is well placed to act as a pressure group and lobbyist in this respect."

Outlining the work of his 100-member organisation, Raymond Stelandre, secretary general of the Bureau of International Social Tourism (BITS) said that the concept of "popular" tourism did not mean cheap holidays for poor people - but should always represent the best possible standards and the greatest opportunities for personal enhancement. Great progress had been made in bringing basic holiday rights to workers across the world but much remained to be done.

Other speakers at the seminar included Tony Bennett, Managing Director of the UK travel agency Going Places, who spoke on the impact of technology on the travel business beyond 2000 and Ole Andresen, General Manager of the Danish co-operative travel company, Dansk FolkeFerie.

Philip Edwards

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Youth in Movement at 3rd ICA Youth Seminar

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Youth in Movement at 3rd ICA Youth Seminar

Seventy young people between the ages of 16 and 26 attending the Third International Youth Seminar at the Co-operative College in Loughborough sent a delegation to Manchester to present the young people's views on the co-operative principles debate to the ICA Centennial Congress.

The seminar, which took place from 17 to 22 September, focused on young people, co-operation and the media and tackled different but interrelated issues, such as co-operative behaviour and values; structures and forms of co-operatives; different types of media, including radio, TV, print, satellite and the internet.

Its aim was to promote friendship and exchange of experience among the young co-operators who came from twenty-three countries across the world (Argentina, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Hungary, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Uganda, United Kingdom and Zimbabwe) and ultimately promote positive images of young people and co-operatives to the media and to create an informal network through which the young co-operators could continue to exchange information and experiences once they returned to their respective countries.

In their statement to the Congress, members of the youth seminar addressed three issues: education, democracy and the future in which they refuted the oft quoted view that they were co-operators of the future. "Youth are not co-operators of the future, we are the co-operators of the present".

The seminar was a lively event in which the young co-operators participated fully, putting into practical action the concepts of co-operation, education and democracy which they so enthusiastically endorse.

International Day of Co-operatives 1995 Celebrated

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International Day of Co-operatives 1995

The first UN International Day of Co-operatives was celebrated by ICA members worldwide. Some chose to hold joint celebrations with the United Nations representational offices or agencies, others with their governments and nearly all held cultural celebrations and activities in the communities in which they serve.

ICA members ensured the wide diffusion of the message of the Co-operative Day Message and of the message of UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, by having it published in their language in national, regional and local newspapers in addition to the co-operative press. ICA members in Cyprus, Czech Republic, Fiji, Italy, Portugal, Hungary, Kuwait, Morocco, Myanmar, Uganda, United Kingdom were able to have the message reprinted by the national press with articles on their movements and the ICA Regional Office in West Africa ensured the reprinting of the message in Côte d'Ivoire. Co-operative Day inserts reprinting the message and carrying news items of the co-operative activities were also included in the July 1st issues of the Fiji Times, and The New Vision (Uganda).

A television address by the Chairman of the Board of Centrosoyus in Russia and interviews of co-operative members in Myanmar were broadcasted on the occasion of the International Day. Radio programmes on the co-operative movement were also aired in Morocco, Myanmar, and Thailand on this occasion.

Co-operative movements in Argentina, India, Iran, Malaysia, Myanmar, Romania, Senegal and Sri Lanka used the International Day to have policy dialogues with their governments. For example, in Argentina, a Sub-Commission on co-operative matters was established, while in Sri Lanka, co-operative organizations presented recommendations to their government on amendments to co-operative legislation.

Youth and co-operatives was addressed by several movements on the International Day of Co-operatives. University seminars, school events, and children's competition focusing on co-operatives and their role in society were sponsored by movements in all regions.

Co-operative movements also carried out activities of support. For example, the Cypriot co-operative movement sponsored a blood drive and donated a car to assist the blood donation team. The German Housing Co-operative Movement collected donations from its members to co-sponsor, with the European Union, a co-operative development project in Manila on the occasion of the Day.

Finally, the Day was an occasion to honour persons and organizations that had made significant contributions to the movement. One example was the Kuwaiti Government which awarded the International Labour Office (ILO) with a plaque for their invaluable assistance in promoting successful co-operatives.

Homing in on Principles

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Homing in on principles

At its plenary meeting in Manchester on September 17, the Housing Committee of the ICA discussed assistance for Co-ops in Central and Eastern Europe, especially in the Czech Republic, Poland, Russia and Slovakia.

While the problems of housing co-ops and their development in the Americas and Asia were discussed, the committee laid more stress on principles. Housing co-operatives pursue their aims and give expression to their values by acting on the following principles: open and voluntary membership, members' economic participation, commitment to service, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, co-operation among co-operatives and concern for the community and future generations.

Dr. Claus Hachmann from Germany stressed the importance of democratic control by members. Ownership of a housing co-operative should rest with those who use its services. Members should have equal voting rights and be encouraged to participate in their co-operative.

Members should contribute fairly to the capital of their housing co-operative and share fairly in the results of its operation. The co-operative should allocate surpluses in such a way that no member gains inappropriately at the expense of another.

The ICA has again taken the lead by reaffirming its commitment to community development through a landmark step of including "concern for community and future generations" as the new seventh principle of Co-operation.

Krzysztof Tomaszewski and
Sami Monier

About this Issue

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About this Issue

This special issue of ICA News has been compiled from three issues of the ICA Centennial Congress News which was written by the following participants on the ICACC's Second International Workshop for Journalists: Codruta Angelescu (Romania); Phil Anzeze (Kenya); Geoffrey Chipolyonga (Zambia); Igni Igunduura (Uganda); Bernard Kadasia (Kenya); Natalia Kisseleva (Russia); Eugenia Kvitko, (Russia); Sami Monier (Egypt); P. Nair (India); Theodore Ndee (Tanzania); Gregory Prouttskov, (Russia); M.L. Sharma (India); Sudarshan Srinivas (India); Krystof Tomaszewski (Poland).

In Manchester the participants were assisted by Iain Williamson, Julie Bowers, Steven Kay and Paul Schofield (Co-op Union), Mary Treacy and Laura Wilcox (ICA); Kalevi Suomela (Finland); Zahid Qureshi (ICMIF); Melanie Bannister, and Rashana Sweidan (CWS).

Many thanks go to DGXXIII of the European Union, Inter Press Service, CWS, Co-op Union and the Co-op Bank for their sponsorship and to the ICA Communications Committee for making the whole venture possible.

Don't Sit on your Laurels, Says Marcus

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Don't Sit on Your Laurels, Says Marcus

Outgoing ICA President Lars Marcus has strongly advised co-operators not to sit on their laurels but to strive for further advancement.

Mr Marcus, who has effectively led the ICA for over a decade, gave this advice to the world co-operators in a special interview with the ICA Congress News team.

Stressing the need for co-operators to adjust to the changing economic order, he said the ICA has made a great impact in the development of co-operative movements in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. It was the dissatisfaction of the members with mediocre results that led ultimately to success.

He has great hopes for the ICA and the movement as long as new initiatives and formulae for economic development are embraced by co-operators for survival. He mentioned that democracy is the key word.

Giving examples of the communist revolution of 1917 and the disastrous effects of government control on co-operatives, Mr Marcus emphasised that only democracy could save co-operatives from disintegrating. He cautioned co-operative leaders not to turn a deaf ear to members as discontentment could ruin the movement.

Mr Marcus was happy that the ICA had gained recognition from the United Nations and said that the attendance of the then UN Secretary-General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, at the 1988 Congress in Stockholm was a great milestone.

During his tenure in office, Mr Marcus spent his time convincing governments on the importance of independent co-operatives and he firmly believes that the ICA activities yielded positive results in Eastern Europe.

Mr Marcus joined the Co-operative Movement in Sweden in 1951 at the age of 20 and has since then worked his way through up to the ICA Presidency. He remembers very well that at the time he took office, there was lack of confidence from the membership. The change of office from London to Geneva could have been a contributing factor.

His future plans are a guarded secret but he obviously would like to have some fun as he reflects upon his past.

Geoffrey Chipolyonga
and P. Nair

ICA Calendar

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February 1996

ICA Calendar

22 March 1996
ICA European Council
Stockholm, Sweden

22 - 24 May 1996
ICA Co-operative Ministerial Conference
Mauritius

10 - 14 June 1996
Regional Assembly for Asia-Pacific
Kuala Lumpur

6 July 1996
International Co-operative Day
Worldwide Celebration

15 - 17 August 1996
Regional Assembly for Africa
Dakar, Senegal

30 October 1996
Regional Assembly for Europe
Budapest, Hungary