

**ICA General Assembly**  
**Rome (Italy), 5 - 6 June 2008**



Candidate Speech  
by Mr. Won-Byung Choi,  
Chairman, National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, Korea  
at the ICA Extraordinary General Assembly, Rome  
6 June 2008

Honorable ICA President, Mr. Ivano Barberini, distinguished cooperative leaders, ladies and gentlemen! I am deeply honored to be here today before you, running for an ICA Board Member.

I feel very lucky because I was picked as a single candidate even if we have more distinguished figures here than me. This in turn means that NACF should make a much bigger contribution to the international cooperative movement as NACF has now developed into the 4th largest of the ICA Global 300 cooperative organizations in the world.

Before I got here, I attended, as an invited speaker, the ICA Asia-Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference held in Abudabi, the United Arab Emirate.

At that meeting, I told the Ministers, "NACF, since its inception in 1961, has made a remarkable achievement and made a significant contribution to agricultural and rural development, but in recent years, NACF and its member farmers are facing difficult external and internal situations.

"Under these circumstances, NACF is pushing forward with an innovative reform program to struggle through such hardships and increase the real benefits for its 2.4 million farmers."

In addition, I met with Mr. René Carron, President of Crédi Agricole in Paris on my way to Rome, and we reaffirmed cooperation and solidarity between the two sides. We held a conversation about how to strengthen existing cooperative business relationship with each other.

We shared with each other the view that cooperatives should actively seek for more positive business cooperation as other types of enterprises do with market barriers lowered due to increased globalization.

Here in Rome, the last destination of my business trip, I will also have a lot of lessons to learn from this invaluable meeting to decide how to restructure ICA.

With your permission, I would like to briefly tell you about what I have learned during this trip. First, if we wish to work together as cooperatives to tackle challenges from globalization, we should translate it into action in no time. Second, this means that cooperation among cooperatives should be upgraded to substantive business cooperation at the international level. Finally, we need to remind ourselves of the reason why ICA was formed 113 years ago.

If I should have the opportunity to work with you, I will do my best for the sake of development and prosperity of the international cooperative movement in close cooperation with all the other ICA Board Members.

Thank you very much for your attention.