

“Let’s remember who we are!”

ICA Director General, Iain Macdonald’s address to the ICA General Assembly rallied members to take the movement forward in a purposeful and effective manner. Iain summarises the main points.

“In my address, I expressed both pride in the scope and reach of the global co-operative movement and frustration that our influence and importance continue to be overlooked. As confirmed by this year’s Global 300 listing launched at the GA, we are a large part of the world economy—indeed, the tenth economy of the world. But, we need some serious support from governments.

ICA is growing at an effective rate with 20 members joining since 2006. The President and I are always impressed by the huge enthusiasm for ICA whether in the UK, Italy, US, China, Vietnam, Peru, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Lesotho or Mexico. We constantly strive to provide our members with more relevant and effective services such as the 300 and Expo 2008 - the first world co-operative fair.

But what I also told the GA is that we need *your* help to make all this work through your participation at regional and general assemblies as well as your input for regional programs. Most importantly, we need to convince our governments of the rectitude of our case.

As indicated in our annual reports, 2005 and 2006 have been a watershed in ICA history. We have supported COPAC (Committee for the Advancement and Promotion

of Co-operatives) and our UN links with three major conferences. We have established the International Accounting Standards Working Group. We support DotCoop as the most obvious definition of the co-operative model. We have developed a special relationship with ILO, particularly through the efforts of ICA Deputy Director, Maria Elena Chavez Hertig. We continue to link more closely with World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU).

In the difficult field of development in Africa, we are working hard by taking some tough but effective decisions and I thank our partners, particularly in Canada and Sweden, for their work. Indeed, the Tsunami showed that we can all work together, and a worldwide disaster protocol is now in place. *Co-operating Out of Poverty* is building all the time, too, with the ILO, and all our regions have increased their efforts in this area.

Influence, communications and intelligence is where we have probably become most evident. Our websites and the *Digest* are now well-established sources of important information, and what about *Global 300*, *Developing 300* and *National 100*? We are a major economic force and we now have the tools to project this.

At last, governance and restructuring are really happening with major progress in all directions. At the GA, I took the opportunity to present

the *Draft Strategic Plan 2009-2013*. My role in preparing the Global plans will include consultation with the four regions and their directors on how they would like the plan to be presented collectively to the Board. The final will be approved at a special General Assembly in 2008.

I particularly look forward to our sectoral organisations being on our Board, and our Youth Representation becoming a full member.

Finally, let’s remember who we are! We are for rich and poor, for the disadvantaged and the necessities of business, for the alleviation of poverty through socially responsible and sustainable enterprise, for commercial success with social awareness, for peace and social justice—a superior business model for a fair globalisation and ethical competition. Let’s be bold and proud about who we really are—not capitalist business, not state-controlled—but people-based democratic enterprise.”

DG’s Report



Iain Macdonald
Director-General

“Let’s be bold and proud about who we really are... people-based democratic enterprise.”

Glasgow ‘09

Swap your sarong for a kilt. In 2009. The next ICA General Assembly will be held in Glasgow, Scotland from 27 Sept - 2 Oct 2009.

GA 2009 will be hosted by Co-ops UK and Co-operative Development Scotland.



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