



8th Asia Pacific Ministers' Conference on Co-operative Legislation and Policy

Theme – “ Fair Globalization through Co-operatives”

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Address by Ivano Barberini,

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Right Hon'ble Prime Minister of Malaysia, Hon'ble Minister of Entrepreneur and Co-operative Development, Government Representatives of Asia Pacific Region, Co-operative colleagues, Ladies and Gentleman, dear friends,

Your participation in this Conference, Mr Prime Minister, is an honour for co-operators of Malaysia and the Asia-Pacific Region, as well as for global ICA and its members.

I am very thankful for the invitation to address participants in this very important meeting and to be here in this beautiful country.

Thank you also to ICA member organizations of the Asia Pacific Region, particularly our Malaysian host, Ministry of Entrepreneur and Co-operative Development with support from ANGKASA, for organizing this event and mobilizing the support of the

Governments. Mr Prime Minister, ANGKASA's dedication in the pursuing of the development of favourable co-operative policies and legislation reforms is well known by global ICA. Your Excellencies Government representatives, I would like, on behalf of the International Co-operative Alliance, to congratulate and thank you with a deep deference and to wish the greatest success to this Conference.

This conference is an occasion to continue the profitable Co-operative – Government dialogue on the role and the contribution of co-operatives in the globalised economy and in a borderless world.

As you know, the dialogue began in 1990 in Sydney, where the first Conference was held, and since then it has proven to be a very effective way to promote the development and the strengthening of good legislative practice in the Region. It

provides the occasion for co-operative leaders to talk directly to Co-operative Ministers and official.

In these years as President of the ICA, I had the opportunity to meet co-operators and to visit the co-operative movements of nearly all the Countries of this region.

I became familiar with the valuable initiatives carried out by ICA ROAP in support of the development and the diffusion of the co-operative movement, highlighting its usefulness and effectiveness in harmony with the economic changes taking place in the most dynamic region of the world.

Co-operation is committed in fighting against poverty and in providing education and training for all. Where co-operatives flourish, they are important means of

creating and spreading knowledge and employment, achieving social integration and mobilising resources, market access for ordinary people.

To successfully continue working in this direction, co-operation between institutions and the co-operative movement is a fundamental requirement.

Legislation has always been one of the major focuses for the ICA, who is committed in ensuring that is supporting of co-operative principles.

International Institutions and national Governments around the world recognize co-operatives as a resource for a fair globalisation and economic development, based on social justice, aiming at improving the condition of life of people. At the same time, they are major local actors with a capacity that is built on trust and accountability. This is helpful to understand the local dimension, essential to understand the global dimension. And vice versa.

Their potentials can be fully expressed, by putting into practice the Recommendation 193 of ILO and inviting Governments and Institutions to support co-operative development.

The co-operative network has more than once proven to be useful to create and share trust and knowledge, to learn how to enterprise and to manage complexity, by uniting entrepreneurial efficiency and social responsibility. This is what modern society greatly needs, particularly now, when it is becoming evident that the world can no longer continue in a direction leading to an ever-growing increase in inequalities and poverty.

The risk of failure in reaching the Millennium Development Goals, the risks to the environment and their repercussions, also economically, the many armed conflicts and the threat of terrorism, show the vital need to adopt a long-term

responsibility towards our planet. Fair globalisation and a stable peace, which is not merely the absence of conflicts, are strictly connected.

According to famous economist John Maynard Keynes, “International peace is based on full employment”. The creation of decent work is a major commitment of co-operatives, and this objective contributes to both economic development and a long-lasting peace.

As member-based organizations, co-operatives put people first. And as value-based enterprises, they embody the very principles of corporate social responsibility. It is for this nature that co-operatives are recognized to be the best-suited enterprise to achieve a fair globalisation.

However, to play this role and to succeed, they need a favourable environment, which must be the result of public policies together with the efforts of co-operators to reinforce the co-operative identity.

Understanding the entrepreneurial character of co-operatives is a fundamental basis for any discussion on their role in local markets and local developments.

A fair globalisation requires appropriate policies and shared values, institutional infrastructure and the respect of the rules.

The legislative context should provide the laws and the tools to compete in the global market respecting a universal criteria accepted by the UN, ILO and other International Organizations.

Right Hon'ble Prime Minister of Malaysia, Hon'ble Ministers and Statespersons,
Ladies and Gentleman and Dear Friends,

It is a privilege to be here, to learn from others and to contribute to the support of the co-operative movement.

Meetings like this help us to derive strength from our collaboration with each other.

I look forward to a rewarding Conference and I am confident that the fruitful dialogue between co-operative organizations and Government Institutions will continue, each respecting the other's role and responsibility, in the general interest of all citizens.

I am really sorry that our Israeli friends are unable to attend this conference.

It is true that the situation in the Middle East area is going through a difficult phase. However, especially for this reason, Israeli and Palestinian co-operators are committed now, more than ever, to building the peace process through “person to person” relations and through development projects in Palestine, co-operating with each other with the support of EU and co-operative organizations from other Countries.

The ICA is the largest NGO in the world and represents co-operatives from every culture and creed throughout the world since 1895. We are committed to peace and social justice and through our values and principles our membership is open to all.

Our Israeli movement is well known for its support for the peace process and the two state solution with Israeli and Palestine living side by side in peace.

ICA will continue to request that all co-operators could have access to countries where we organise our conferences. It is a basic requirement of our movement

I'd like to express warm welcome, best wishes for a pleasant stay, and good work to everyone.

Thank you very much

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