

***** Embargoed till Friday 26 June 2015, 7.30pm UK time *****

The International Co-operative Alliance announces the early retirement of its President

The International Co-operative Alliance today announces the retirement of its President, Dame Pauline Green to take effect at the close of the Alliance's general assembly in Antalya, Turkey, on 13 November 2015.

Brussels, 26 June 2015 – Dame Pauline Green, the first woman president in the 120-year history of the Alliance announced her early retirement on the 26th June at the UK's Co-operative Congress in Birmingham. Dame Pauline, who has been actively engaged with UK co-operatives for 35 years, was elected President of the Alliance, the global representative body, in 2009 and re-elected in 2013 for a further four years.

Speaking to the annual meeting of the UK Co-operative movement in Birmingham, Dame Pauline took the opportunity to recognise that in her words, *"I owe so much to UK co-operators who have supported me throughout my career, firstly as a Co-operative Member of the European Parliament, then as the CEO of Co-operatives UK. Latterly their collective support gave me the incredible opportunity to work at international level, initially within the European region of the Alliance, and for the last six years as the global President. It has been the greatest privilege to represent them."*

In a letter to the Directors of the Alliance informing them of her decision, Dame Pauline stated: *"In 2009 together we promised radical change. We have made good on that promise and built significant added value for our member co-operatives. We have enhanced our representational role at global level beyond recognition, and now produce annual global statistics for the movement that are used by decision-makers across the world. We have a global strategy: The Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade, that has received worldwide recognition, huge membership engagement, and is core to national co-operative strategies in many countries. We have successfully launched a global marque that is already being used in 98 countries. Membership has grown year on year, our visibility and profile continues to rise, and more importantly the global family of co-operatives is more united and cohesive than ever."*

Acknowledging that her decision to retire was precipitated by the decision of the Co-operative Group that it could no longer support their commitment for the funding of the role for the global President beyond the end of 2015, Dame Pauline said that she has become convinced that this is the right moment to stand down but that she *"will always be immensely proud to be a member of this great worldwide movement"*.

Charles Gould, Director-General of the International Co-operative Alliance: *"We regret the early retirement of a much applauded President, but we deem ourselves fortunate to have enjoyed the privilege of Dame Pauline's leadership. Under Dame Pauline's presidency, both the Alliance and*

the co-operative movement have benefited from a significant rise in profile. One of the great benefits of the reforms of the last six years has been the strengthened governance of the Alliance, its greater cohesion, and its representativeness of both co-operative businesses and national apexes. The Alliance is confident that, as a result of the work of Dame Pauline, a very strong list of president candidates will establish itself. We are excited to see a new Alliance president take office and propel the movement forward, building a better and more equal world.”

The President of the International Co-operative Alliance is the chief representative of the Alliance and presides over the General Assembly and Board. S/he also provides the policy and organizational leadership of the Alliance, in collaboration with the Director-General. The Alliance’s Election Committee will issue a call for nominations for President with timelines following its Board meeting, late July 2015.

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About the International Co-operative Alliance

The International Co-operative Alliance (<http://www.ica.coop>) is a non-profit international association established in 1895 to advance the co-operative social enterprise model. The Alliance is the apex organisation for co-operatives worldwide, representing 282 members across 93 countries (figures of June 2015). The members of the Alliance are national level co-operative federations and individual co-operative organisations.

The International Co-operative Alliance works with global and regional governments and organisations to create the legislative environments that allow co-operatives to form and grow. Towards media and public, the Alliance promotes the importance of co-operatives’ values-based business model.

Yearly, the Alliance publishes the World Co-operative Monitor (<http://www.monitor.coop>), the index of the world’s largest co-operative and mutual enterprises. The Monitor demonstrates the economic impact of co-operative enterprises worldwide. The third edition of the World Co-operative Monitor has revealed a global turnover of 2.2 trillion USD for the world’s top 300 co-operatives. Co-operatives generate partial or full-time employment for at least 250 million individuals worldwide, either in or within the scope of co-operatives, making up almost 12% of the entire employed population of the G20 countries.

Operating from a global office in Brussels, Belgium, the Alliance is organised with four Regional Offices (Europe, Africa, Americas, and Asia-Pacific), and eight Sectoral Organisations (Banking, Agriculture, Fisheries, Insurance, Health, Housing, Consumer Co-operatives, and Worker Co-operatives).

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Press Release

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