

PRESS RELEASE - ILO Centenary Declaration 21 June 2019

The ILO commits to promoting cooperatives and social and solidarity economy in its Declaration for the Future of Work

During the 108th International Labour Conference on the occasion of the Centenary of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the 'ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019' has been adopted today. The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) applauds the Declaration and the recognition of cooperatives and social and solidarity economy in the final version.

The ICA, holding an observer status in the ILO, followed the negotiations of the Committee of the Whole elaborating the Declaration during the period of negotiations.

The text states as follows: “The ILO must direct its efforts to (...) supporting the role of the private sector as a principal source of growth and job creation by promoting an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises, as well as **cooperatives and the social and solidarity economy** in order to generate decent work, productive employment and improved living standards for all”.

The Declaration recognizes that, in these times of “transformative change in the world of work” and “persistent inequalities”, “it is imperative to act with urgency to seize the opportunities and address the challenges to shape **a fair, inclusive and secure future of work for all**”.

Having the ICA committed itself to “respect, promote, and act diligently to support the fundamental tenets of decent work” through the ICA *Declaration on Decent Work and Against Harassment*, we welcome the ILO’s commitment “to a world free of violence and harassment”.

The ICA furthermore acclaims the ILO engagement to developing “its human-centred approach to the future of work, which puts workers’ rights and the needs, aspirations and rights of all people at the heart of economic, social and environmental policies”. We share an identical view, as the basis of what defines a cooperative is the voluntary union of persons to achieve common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations in a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

“The cooperative movement welcomes the final Declarations and wants to highlight the fruitful collaboration with the ILO since its creation. As responsible for providing work to 10% of the world's

employed population, cooperatives are crucial actors for building a better future, today”, has declared the President of the ICA, Ariel Guarco.

This historic text has been adopted on the occasion of its 100 years of existence. The result is the outcome of two intense weeks of negotiations between governments, trade unions and employers’ organizations from the whole world. The ICA wishes to express its appreciation for the work carried out by the ILO’s Cooperatives Unit in supporting the role of cooperatives for the future of work all these years.

The approval of this Declaration precedes the ILO-ICA Conference on the Future of Work on Monday 24 June, where a new ILO-ICA Memorandum of Understanding will be signed.

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR

About the International Labour Conference

The member States of the ILO meet at the International Labour Conference, held every year in Geneva, Switzerland, in the month of June. Their objective is to craft and adopt international labour standards and supervise the application of Conventions and Recommendations at the national level. Social and labour questions of importance to the entire world are also discussed on this occasion and resolutions and guidelines are likewise passed.

About the International Cooperative Alliance

The International Cooperative Alliance is a non-profit international association established in 1895 to advance the cooperative social enterprise model. The International Cooperative Alliance is the voice for cooperatives worldwide, representing more than 310 cooperative federations and organisations across 109 countries. 12 % of the humanity are cooperators. Through its membership, the International Cooperative Alliance represents 1,2 billion people from any of the 2.94 million cooperatives worldwide. The largest 300 cooperatives in the world have combined annual revenues of 2.16 trillion USD (2015) and 280 million people around the world (10% of the employed population) secure their livelihoods in cooperatives, either through direct employment or by organizing through a cooperative.

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

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

