

To the Members-owners of the Mountain Equipment Co-operative
Vancouver
Canada

24 September 2020

Dear Members of the Mountain Equipment Co-operative,

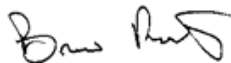
We have been informed of the difficulties which your cooperative is encountering, and this has drawn all our attention and solidarity.

Mountain Equipment Co-operative (MEC) is one of the largest consumer cooperatives in Canada. Many of us, while visiting Canada, have been at the MEC and appreciated its extraordinary dynamism and quality. Like in any cooperative, the 5 million members and owners of the MEC need to exercise their democratic voice to shape the future of their cooperative. They need time to investigate the potential financial re-structuring that safeguards its cooperative identity and mission. It is fundamental that they exercise their rights in this critical juncture. Any decision regarding the sale and termination of the cooperative cannot be taken without the approval of the members' assembly. Members should be able to exercise their rights to democratic member control (2nd cooperative principle) and ownership (member economic participation, 3rd cooperative principle) and seek a viable solution through cooperation among cooperatives (6th cooperative principle). As per the international definition enshrined in the ICA Statement on the Cooperative identity (1995) and in ILO Recommendation 193 (2002), cooperative members are not simply clients, but the co-owners of the cooperative enterprise that they control democratically.

Allowing the MEC to maintain its cooperative value and identity will be in the interest not only of its members-owners but also of the surrounding communities and of Canadian economy and society as a whole.

We are with you! We trust you will find the solution! Be strong!

In cooperation,



Bruno Roelants
Director-General

The International Cooperative Alliance is the global organisation that has been serving, promoting and representing cooperatives and cooperative members for 125 years. It is estimated that there are around 3 million cooperatives in the world today, with 1.2 cooperative members, and that they provide employment to around 280 million people (10% of the world's employed population). Cooperatives represent important market shares in key sectors, like banking, insurance, agriculture, retail etc., and are expanding rapidly in innovative sectors such as IT and platforms.

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