



A look back on two years of co-operative meetings

*“The co-operative movement is
a vector of change for a better
world. The time is now!”*

MONIQUE F. LEROUX



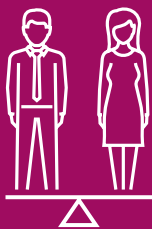
ECONOMY AND
LEADERSHIP



SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT



INTERCO-OPERATION



GENDER EQUALITY AND
THE NEXT GENERATION



INNOVATION

Message from the president

It is my great pleasure to present to you this report on our past two years of active collaboration in support of the common good. Before turning to the achievements and highlights, I would like to address the central and essential component in the progress made over those two years: you! It was thanks to the support and effort that each and every one of you put into it that we managed to unite, promote and develop the co-operative movement. Your commitment and dedication are the reason why we can look forward to success in the coming years and to ensuring the co-operative movement's solid standing in the global economy.

Ever since the Antalya Conference, major projects have been emerging, with noteworthy results. I am referring in particular to the partnership agreement signed with the European Commission, the third edition of the International Summit of Co-operatives, and the pivotal meetings at the United Nations and the B20. There has been some outstanding work throughout the Alliance's territory. The assistance provided to the regional offices' teams would be one example, and another would be the tremendously productive discussions held by our committees, such as the *Leadership Circle* and the *Co-operative Round Table*. Without a doubt, the impetus for our movement's growth and recognition can be attributed to the relentless efforts applied by each and every one of us.

The pillars of co-operative success

The image that came to mind as I was preparing this report is that of pillars representing our collective efforts over the past two years. Those pillars would be the following:

- 1. Economy and leadership**
- 2. Sustainable development**
- 3. Interco-operation**
- 4. Gender equality and the next generation**
- 5. Innovation**

The following pages flesh out those pillars with illustrations of our collective successes as reminders of our shining moments. We will see that our efforts to strengthen those pillars helped build a global co-operative movement engaged, leading and growing. I invite you to continue pursuing those actions—anchored in the implementation of the *Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade*—with all of the passion you have shown. That is how co-operative businesses will be able to contribute to the development of harmonious, equal and innovative workplaces, fair and sustainable economies, and a bright tomorrow for future generations.

I am proud of the work we have done together. You are the builders of the future. You have what it takes to strengthen the pillars of our society in order to build a better world.

With my deepest co-operative appreciation,

Monique F. Leroux

Acknowledgements

I would like to start by thanking the members of the Board of Directors for their tireless work. In 2015, when I came on board, the Alliance was dealing with a number of financial, organizational and strategic challenges. Together, we addressed each one and introduced solutions that depended upon our openness, resilience and perseverance. I thank you for your devotion to the co-operative movement and its members.

I would like to thank Charles Gould—Chuck to his friends—for his many years of service. In his seven years as Executive Director of the Alliance, he introduced the *Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade* and moved it forward while protecting the interests of our members and of the co-operative movement.

A big thank you to the many members on the Alliance's different committees, as well as to the regional and sectoral offices' teams. Not only has your work helped advance the co-operative business model, but it also helped spread it throughout the world, to all sectors. Thank you for taking the co-operative message and for making the case for our movement within your networks.

A special thank you to the Alliance's employees. Even if yours is one of the smaller teams, your efforts have a tremendous impact. The quality of your work and your perseverance enable the Alliance to remain solid and to keep going.

Thank you as well to the members of the Alliance. You are the power that enables it to pursue its actions. Your unlimited trust is what it takes to move mountains. It has been a privilege to work on your behalf.

In closing, I would like to extend a warm thank you to all those who welcomed us in their businesses, organizations or co-operative associations, giving us the opportunity to discover their world, issues and successes. Your stories and co-operative achievements have inspired and enabled us to achieve our mission, which is to represent you.

I am grateful to each and every one of you for your unrelenting support over these past two years of collaboration.

FIRST PILLAR

Economy and leadership



“Increasing the number, size, and scope of co-operatives worldwide results in a more inclusive and successful global economy.” – Kathy Bardswick (Canada)

“Promoting an inclusive economic growth as to be considered as a priority in the sectors of education, innovation & trades.” – Jean-Louis Bancel (France)

“It is important to realize that co-operatives are in an expansion period and our business model has now moved into the modern era.” – Li Chunsheng (China)

We are proud to affirm that the co-operative business model is currently the fastest growing business model. Co-operative businesses are assuming an ever greater role in local, national and international economies.

Over the past two years, we have made the co-operative movement’s voice heard in international forums and at major economic gatherings. Through its efforts, the Alliance has highlighted the importance of the co-operative business model in stabilizing the global economy. It also demonstrated that it would be possible to generate economic benefits through an approach that revolves around protecting human beings and our planet.

The following paragraphs provide a few examples of noteworthy representations that have helped solidify this first pillar of co-operative success.



THE INTERNATIONAL REACH OF THE CO-OPERATIVE VOICE

Business 20 (B20)

At the B20, the official fringe meeting for the G20, which brings together decision-makers from around the world, we put forward recommendations in the following three areas: employability, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and trade.

The Alliance’s recommendations touched on the importance of winning conditions for creating an environment that is conducive to creating sustainable businesses, quality jobs and terms and conditions that help local producers access global markets. As co-chair of the working group on SMEs, I had the chance to present those recommendations, which represent sustainable aspirations for our businesses.

I would like to thank all of the co-operators who contributed to the work done over the past few years. Thanks to you, the B20 currently recognizes the key place of co-operatives, and their role in developing a sustainable economy and a more equitable world. However, it is understood that a great deal still remains to be done before world leaders can assign to co-operatives the conditions and rules that will enable them to contribute to the global economy alongside the public and private sectors.



*Please refer to page 16 for photo captions.





THE CO-OPERATIVE BUSINESS MODEL IN A CHANGING WORLD

International Economic Forum of the Americas

Ours is a rapidly changing world. On the one hand, unprecedented technological advances emerge almost daily, and on the other hand, social inequalities proliferate at an alarming rate. The International Economic Forum of the Americas' Conference of Montreal provided a platform where we could articulate the power to act of co-operative businesses within this changing world.

In particular, we expressed the need to establish a plural economy in which co-operative businesses will play a key role in fostering community development. We also illustrated the strength and resilience of the co-operative model and its stabilizing effect on the economy. One point in particular captured the audience's attention: even though co-operatives are anchored at the local level in their community, they have significant positive repercussions globally.



THE RISE OF THE COLLABORATIVE ECONOMY

World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) Conference & International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF) Biennial Conference

These two events gave us the opportunity to pursue discussions about the key role of co-operative businesses in the new collaborative economy. We talked about the fact that the co-operative model and the collaborative economy share major similarities in terms of values, key principles and the focus on the community, but also differ substantially in terms of how they implement their practices. It became clear that co-operative businesses must be actively involved in the new economy and must apply their influence to ensure that fair and transparent modes of management are set in place.



OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING MAJOR EVENTS GAVE US THE OPPORTUNITY TO SOLIDIFY THE PLACE OF CO-OPERATIVES IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY:

- ICMIF Conference, England, 2017
- B20 Meetings, Turkey, 2015; China, 2016; Germany, 2017
- International Economic Forum of the Americas, Canada, 2017
- Business Convention Canada-France, Canada, 2017
- World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) Conference, Vienna, Austria, 2017
- Economic Meetings, Aix-en-Provence, France, 2016
- International Summit of Co-operatives, Quebec City, Canada, 2016
- High Level Contact Group of the European Association of Co-operative Banks (EACB), England, 2016
- Montreal's Conference "Shaping A New Era of Prosperity", Canada, 2016

"Co-operatives help promote sustainable prosperity for people and communities. There has never been a better time to promote our model!" – **Charles Gould (Unites States)**

SECOND PILLAR

Sustainable development



“Sustainable Development Goals are key issues for our planet, and co-operatives are key players in their achievement.” – Petar Stefanov (Bulgaria)

“Co-operatives play a role of integrating people into the society and market. They put the people at the center of their decision making” – Eudes de Freitas Aquino (Brazil)

“Our co-operatives around the world contribute significantly to helping refugees and providing essential services to people.” – Carlo Scarzanella (Italy)

The second pillar of co-operative success is dedicated to sustainable development. In 2015, the United Nations (UN) adopted a set of 17 sustainable development goals to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and guarantee prosperity for everyone. Specific targets were identified for each goal, with the aim of achieving them by 2030.

In order to ensure that these sustainable development goals are achieved, governments, businesses of different kinds from various sectors, corporations, individuals—essentially everyone—must get actively involved, make firm commitments, and change their procedures.

The co-operative movement is the first economic group to recognize that these actions are unavoidable if this great planetary project is to succeed.



FORMAL COMMITMENT BY THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

High-level meeting at the United Nations

In 2016, at a high-level meeting at United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York City, we reaffirmed the co-operative movement’s commitment to pursue the sustainable development goals. Our key contribution to the goals set by the UN was presented to several ambassadors, as well as to UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, and to representatives of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).



This commitment had a number of positive consequences. We will mention two of the main ones. First, it marked a pivotal moment in the Alliance’s history, whereby the co-operative movement stood out for its involvement as the first economic group to actively commit to some of the ambitious and coherent goals of an undertaking towards a sustainable world. Second, it prompted hundreds of co-operative businesses to introduce tangible measures to truly help make this a better world.





THE POWER TO ACT OF CO-OPERATIVES

International Summit of Co-operatives

The International Summit of Co-operatives, the world gathering of co-operative heads and leaders, was held in Quebec City, Canada, a few months following the announcement of our commitment to the UN sustainable development goals.



More than 3,000 participants from 116 countries came to Quebec City to address the major global trends, and today's and tomorrow's economic and financial issues. The panels and activities were organized around five major themes: food security, employment, access to health care and social services, poverty and financial inclusion, and climate change and sustainable development. The co-operative leaders also had the opportunity to talk about their ambitions and about best practices at several pre-summit events, including umbrella and sectoral organization, and Proxfin¹ network meetings. This was an incredible business networking opportunity.



The participants also took part in a brainstorming session to identify different options for achieving the sustainable development goals. This unprecedented activity affirmed our capacity to act and the power of our network. Together, we demonstrated that the co-operative business model is one of the answers to today's major socio-economic and environmental issues.



CO-OPERATIVES AS VECTORS OF CHANGE

International Seminar on Co-operatives and the Sustainable Development Goals

"The co-operative movement is a vector for change towards a better world. Our businesses lend a human face to the global economy because they place "human beings" at the centre of business decisions."

Those are the words with which we launched the *International Seminar on Co-operatives and the Sustainable Development Goals* (SDG's), an event organized by Unimed, the world's largest medical supplies co-operative, and by OCB (Organização das Cooperativas do Brasil) and OCESP (Organização das Cooperativas do Estado de São Paulo).

Our co-operative businesses serve more than one billion members from coast to coast, guarantee 250 million jobs, and generate US\$3 billion in annual revenues. These outcomes are part of the reason we can be so proud of our movement. However, they are understated if we take the following information into consideration: in addition to what is both a significant and positive economic impact, co-operatives stem poverty and inequalities, support food safety and sustainable agriculture, produce clean energy, help refugees and offer essential services to communities. Moreover, that extensive list keeps growing when one takes into consideration the steps we take in support of gender equality, inclusiveness and the creation of lasting jobs.

Together, at the Seminar in São Paulo, Brazil, we pushed our analysis even further on the co-operative movement's ability to prod things along in the right direction for everyone. The panels brought together co-operative leaders and governance bodies of the co-operative movement to discuss everyone's role in the movement and what measures should be taken to optimize its impact on our societies and our planet.



¹ Proxfin is an international network of some 30 community financing institutions, as well as *Développement international Desjardins* (DID), whose members are committed to combining sustainable financial performance and social benefits, which they see as two inseparable objectives.



GETTING ACTIVELY INVOLVED FOR A BETTER WORLD

Coops for 2030 campaign (www.coopsfor2030.coop)

The Alliance is currently organizing the international *Coops for 2030 campaign* to demonstrate the impact of the co-operative movement on the achievement of the sustainable development goals. A report on that initiative was shared with the political representatives and economic leaders.

Hundreds of people demonstrated their engagement by committing to these ambitious goals, to the actions identified to reach them and to the expected results. We encourage you to consult the *Coops for 2030 campaign* website (www.coopsfor2030.com) and to take part in this massive collective initiative. It is through the strength of our numbers that we will manage to build a better world. Together, we can make a difference.



THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT - HELPING TO SHAPE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Canada Summit 2017 – The next 150 Years: Building a Sustainable Future

The Canada Summit 2017 – The next 150 years: Building a Sustainable Future sparked a great deal of discussion around the interventionist economic policy known as protectionism. Our contribution as a global movement was to affirm that co-operative businesses create harmonious exchanges, protect the interests of communities and people, and lend a human dimension to globalization, all while acting responsibly to ensure a sustainable future for societies around the world.

We have demonstrated to the world's leaders that our business model is an integral, even essential, part of the long-term solution to the economic, social and environmental issues addressed at the Summit.



THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS HELPED DEMONSTRATE THAT THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IS A KEY PLAYER IN ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

- International Seminar on Co-operatives and the Sustainable Development Goals, Brazil, 2017
- Canada Summit 2017 – The next 150 Years: Building a Sustainable Future, Canada, 2017
- Coops for 2030 international campaign, www.coopsfor2030.com, underway
- International Summit of Co-operatives, Quebec City, Canada, 2016
- Celebration of the International Day of Co-operatives at the United Nations, United States, 2016
- Official high-level meeting at the United Nations, United States, 2016

“Co-operatives are drivers of development all over the world and essential actors in achieving the SDGs by 2030.”
– Ariel Guarco (Argentina)

“We are true builders of sustainable development. We have an important role to play in our societies”
– Won-Byung Choi (South Korea)

THIRD PILLAR

Interco-operation



“The values and the principles of the co-operative movement are what inspires co-operation between co-operatives.” – Martin Lowery (Unites States)

“By encouraging Co-operation between Co-operatives we can create a better fairer world for everyone.” – Ben Reid (England)

The concept of interco-operation is a key component in the co-operative business model because it connects the members to one another. Those links lead to bonds of trust on which fair and lasting business relationships are built.

Interco-operation is presented here as the third pillar of co-operative success because it not only helps make our model unique, innovative and current, but also highlights a key component of the co-operative movement: the strength of our network.



BUSINESS DECISIONS WITH A FOCUS ON HUMAN BEINGS

The partnership agreement with the European Commission

The partnership agreement with the European Commission signed in 2015 led to several productive exchanges, whether during visits to large co-operatives or invitations to sit on panels. We cannot underestimate the positive results of the first two years of this partnership.



The work done during that time gave the regional offices the opportunity to increase the support provided to their members and the activities proposed in the local communities. By strengthening the structure of those offices, we launched a process of ensuring the momentum of actions on the front lines. That dynamic will in turn certainly lead to new exchanges among local, national, and— thanks to sustained work—international co-operatives. Everything starts with creating bonds of trust between the players so that a network of businesses can then focus its efforts on developing sustainable markets.



The global reach of the Alliance

Amidst the many activities associated with implementing the partnership with the European Commission, the Alliance’s regional offices organized several events attended by hundreds of co-operators. From Montevideo in Uruguay, to Hanoi in Vietnam, as well as Malta in the Mediterranean and Casablanca in Morocco, these major events helped promote the co-operative model throughout the continents.



The local achievements presented at these events on the one hand raised awareness on the part of the invited socio-economic leaders about co-operative know-how, and helped strengthen our global network. I want to acknowledge the tireless efforts and dedication of the regional offices. You are instrumental in spreading the word about the co-operative successes to every corner of the planet. Your work is essential to ensuring that the co-operative message reaches around the world.



INTERCO-OPERATION AT THE CORE OF OUR ACTIONS

Leadership Circle and Co-operative Round Table

The Alliance struck two committees, the *Leadership Circle* and the *Co-operative Round Table*, to ensure that the organization's strategic actions supported the objectives of the *Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade*, with an eye to the global context within which co-operative businesses evolve. We had several opportunities throughout the year to talk to the members of those committees, which include some 20 world leaders at the head of major co-operatives. Their contributions are essential: on the one hand, they enable us to get a feel for the circumstances faced by co-operative businesses, which operate in a number of regions and activity sectors, and on the other hand, to reflect collectively on innovative and lasting solutions for addressing the current and coming social challenges. This is one way the Alliance connects directly with primary co-operatives around the world, and creates a platform for discussions in support of business development.



This year, in order to strengthen these collective initiatives and maximize our interco-operative impact, we struck two committees for a meeting that took place in Montreal. Information was exchanged about innovative projects with a lot of potential, leading to co-operative business opportunities. They are presented with the pillar dedicated to innovation (see page 14 of this report).



INTERCO-OPERATE TO GLOBALIZE AT THE HUMAN SCALE

Annual meetings of the Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité and the Business Convention Canada-France

These two events brought together several political and economic leaders from France, Canada and the United States to discuss trade agreement issues. We were proud to join those panels, and to be recognized far and wide as one of the strongest economic forces on the planet. Co-operatives may well cultivate discretion in international trade, but their successes cannot be kept under wraps.



This was an opportunity to affirm that co-operative businesses are confident builders, demonstrating a lasting confidence that spreads to the workers, consumer members, partners and communities. Those links naturally lead to commercial arrangements in which everyone comes out a winner, and to globalization at a human scale. Those bonds of trust are made possible because of our ability to “interco-operate”.

OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING MAJOR EVENTS GAVE US THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR INTERCO-OPERATION:

- Business Convention Canada-France, Canada, 2017
- Annual meetings of the Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité (CQCM), Canada, 2017
- International Summit of Co-operatives, Quebec City, Canada, 2016
- Co-operative panel, luncheon conference of the CQCM in collaboration with the Chambre de commerce de Québec, Canada, 2016
- Consumer Co-operative Worldwide, Belgium, 2016
- Shaping A New Era of Prosperity Conference, Canada, 2016

“With the co-operative movement, we have a tremendous opportunity to work together and to use the strength of our network.”
– Anne Santamäki (Finland)

FOURTH PILLAR

Gender equality and the next generation



“Let’s all collaborate to close the gender gap, and build a better world”
- **Gabriela Ana Buffa (Argentina)**

“We have the power to act for a more equal, fair and promising world for future generations.” - **Aditya Yadav (India)**

By their very nature, co-operative businesses promote inclusion and equality. They represent fair and equitable workplaces for women at every professional level, as well as stimulating environments for the next generation.

Over the years, co-operatives have demonstrated that leadership based on inclusion, democracy, transparency and discipline are keys to success. That type of management fosters the establishment and maintenance of the conditions required for workers of all ages to grow on the personal and professional levels, regardless of whether they come from highly developed and competitive settings or from developing situations.

Gender equality and the place of the next generation are both key to the future of our businesses, and symbolize the fourth pillar of co-operative success.

THE NEED FOR INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Senate Symposium on the 150th Anniversary of Canadian Confederation, and First meeting of the Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders at the White House

The place of women and of the next generation in organizations here and elsewhere may well have evolved a great deal since the last century, but it still remains fragile and clearly indicates that the battle is not yet won: every society must continue to join in. Co-operative businesses act as role models in that regard, but a great deal of work still remains to be done. We were fortunate to have platforms such as the Senate Symposium on the 150th Anniversary of Canadian Confederation, and a meeting with other Canadian and American women of influence (business women and entrepreneurs) at the White House where we were able to talk about our actions and the efficiency of our model.

As a key player in the battle against economic exclusion and poverty, the co-operative movement can promote an inclusive message. It must resonate strongly in every business sector, and must do so around the world. The future of any business essentially depends on the people who are at the centre of its actions. A focus on the inclusion, education and well-being of those persons is essential to the growth of those businesses.



We presented some of the data demonstrating the co-operative movement's leadership in regard to equality. In 2015, for example, worldwide, 48% of insurance mutuals and co-operatives had at least three women on their board of directors, compared to 17% in the industry overall².

In order to bring about significant improvements, let alone change, and for them to last within a business, studies indicate that the following three conditions must be met:

1. a clear commitment at the highest decision-making level;
2. a clear plan, complete with quantitative objectives and timelines; and
3. human resource management policies that integrate the established priorities.

Co-operative businesses are open to inclusive practices. Our management methods, which promote gender equality, and recognition and training for new talents, will end up convincing institutions and businesses, and will have a positive social, economic and political impact.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge all of the work done by the Alliance's youth network and gender committee. Your contribution is an important component in our ability to act and remain leaders in this area. You are a tangible support for our efforts.



OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING MAJOR EVENTS HAS HELPED DEMONSTRATE THE LEADERSHIP OF CO-OPERATIVES IN GENDER EQUALITY AND THE PLACE OF THE NEXT GENERATION:

- Senate Symposium on the 150th Anniversary of Canadian Confederation, Canada, 2017
- First meeting of the Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders at the White House, United States, 2017
- International Summit of Co-operatives, Quebec City, Canada, 2016
- Women's Forum for the Economy and Society, France, 2016

"Thinking long-term and thinking about the next generation are the foundations of sustainable development and of a progressive economy." – **Anders Lago (Sweden)**

"When we talk about inclusive growth, it's about education and providing opportunities to everyone."
– **Ramón Imperial Zúñiga (Mexico)**

² Source: International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF)

FIFTH PILLAR

Innovation



“We have to build on our rich history to ensure a co-operative future based on our power to innovate.” – **Akira Banzai (Japan)**

“Innovating, it’s stimulating our co-operatives to answer the needs of our members, our communities, our societies.” – **Gregory Wall (Australia)**

“A sustainable & inclusive growth rests in strong and progressive co-operative businesses, driven by innovation.” – **Seah Kian Peng (Singapore)**

Robotics, Internet of things and artificial intelligence are among the technological and digital advances that provide opportunities to be seized for our movement. Co-operative businesses cannot simply adapt to new trends. They must adopt them and help them progress. Our capacity to innovate is anchored in our business model.

We must remain leaders in innovation. Openness, flexibility and ingenuity in our management methods are what make it possible for co-operative businesses to make the shift with confidence and to pave the way for start-up co-operatives that are just stepping into the markets. It is for these reasons that innovation is presented as the fifth pillar of co-operative success.

Innovation in businesses is also something to be cultivated. We must constantly revisit our strategies and methods to ensure that co-operatives remain ahead of the game and contribute to a sustainable future in which every innovative means is used to benefit workers, members, business partners and communities.

PURSUING OUR ACTIONS FOR A CO-OPERATIVE DECADE

Creation of an action plan for achieving our objectives

The Alliance is a worldwide movement and the voice of co-operative businesses that are developing in a range of activity sectors. This internal context, in conjunction with the changing global context, is what prompted the Alliance’s Board of Directors to make an observation about the Alliance’s situation and to address the measures that must be put in place to obtain the best conditions for achieving the objectives of the *Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade*.

In the interest of ensuring the continued benefits of its actions, the Board of Directors started its brainstorming sessions in Sydney, Australia, and continued them in Stockholm, Sweden, in Quebec, Canada and in São Paulo, Brazil. Several key topics were addressed, including relations with members, finances, governance and communications.

The fruits of these labours were compiled into an action plan for the Alliance, and shared with the regional and sectoral offices, as well as with the Alliance’s members, in order to obtain their comments, ideas and thoughts. This plan, which was unanimously supported by the Board of Directors at its meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, elicited reactions and a great deal of enthusiasm, which bodes well for the Alliance’s future work.

In essence, this collective strategy equips the Alliance to be able to unite, promote and develop the co-operative movement through innovative and lasting solutions.





CO-OPERATIVES, BUSINESSES AHEAD OF THE TIMES

Work by the *Leadership Circle* and *Co-operative Round Table* committees

At the meetings of the *Leadership Circle* and *Co-operative Round Table* committees, we witnessed the ability of co-operatives to create innovative solutions and demonstrate great leadership in business development. The members representing some of the major global co-operatives³ presented some inspiring business initiatives. These included online platforms aimed at promoting and facilitating online commercial exchanges among co-operative businesses (B2B), and between businesses and consumers (B2C).



Alongside those project presentations, we discussed an overarching solution that could bring together several co-operative initiatives: the creation of an International Co-operative Centre. Not only would it promote the creation of bonds of trust among co-operative businesses and connect them on a sustainable basis, but such an entity would help start up training and research projects while strengthening the avant-gardiste aspect of the co-operative movement by continuously improving our business model. This project would result in a single platform from which to launch the co-operative business world to another level.

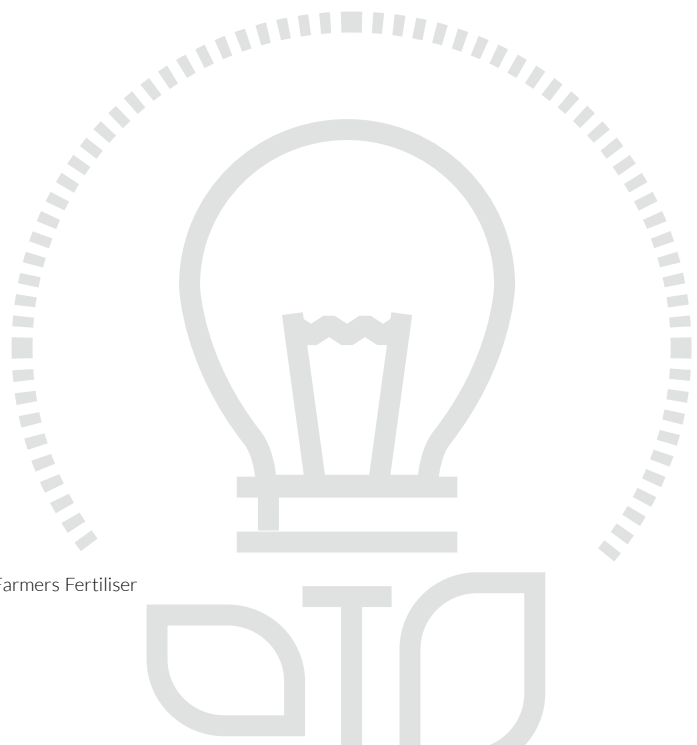


Co-operatives for a Better World global campaign

Initiated by Howard Brodsky, Co-Founder, Chairman and Co-Chief Executive Officer of CCA Global Partner and member of the *Leadership Circle*, the *Co-operatives for a Better World* marketing campaign has already achieved great success and motivated 14 countries to take part.



The global viral impact of that campaign is a first for promoting the co-operative model. This multi-faceted campaign is helping to achieve exposure for our business model among co-operative business employees, consumers and partners. As well, the promotional material provided, including videos, helps co-operators adapt the contents in order to then promote the co-operative model in their own circles. We would like to take this opportunity to warmly thank the organizers for their key assistance with spreading the co-operative message and renown of our movement.



³ All-China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC), Coop Israël, Indian Farmers Fertiliser Co-operative (IFFCO) and Unimed

THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AND VISITS HELPED UP EXCHANGE AND BUILD ON OUR ABILITY TO INNOVATE:

- Leadership Circle and Co-operative Round Table, England & France, 2016; Canada, 2017
- Alliance Board of Directors meetings, Brazil & Bulgaria, 2017
- International Summit of Co-operatives, Quebec City, Canada, 2016
- 31st CIRIEC (International Centre of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy) International Congress, France, 2016
- Co-operatives & Mutuels Canada (CMC) General Assembly, Canada, 2017
- Visits to co-operative businesses in Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, England, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and the United States, 2016 & 2017



PHOTO CAPTIONS

The captions indicated the people in the photos, from left to right.

B20 Meetings

1. José Perez, Secretary General, IHCO; Rodrigo Gouveia, Director of Policy, and Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance; Faye Lageu, Senior Vice-President, Business Intelligence, , ICMIF, Germany, 2017
2. B20 Meeting, Antalya, Turkey, 2015
3. B20 Meeting, Berlin, Germany, 2016

International Economic Forum of the Americas

4. John Parisella, Senior Advisor, Business Outreach, NATIONAL Public Relations, guest professor, fellow at the Montreal Centre for International Studies (CERIUM), and Quebec's former delegate general in New York - Washington; Timothy Sargent, Deputy Minister for International Trade Canada; Patricia Scotland, Commonwealth Secretary General; Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance; Gabriela Ramos, OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa to the G20; Carl Burlock, Senior Vice-President, Financing and Investments, Export Development Canada (EDC), Canada, 2017
5. John Parisella, Senior Advisor, Business Outreach, NATIONAL Public Relations, guest professor, fellow at the Montreal Centre for International Studies (CERIUM), and Quebec's former delegate general in New York - Washington; Timothy Sargent, Deputy Minister for International Trade Canada; Patricia Scotland, Commonwealth Secretary General; Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance; Gabriela Ramos, OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa to the G20; Carl Burlock, Senior Vice-President, Financing and Investments, Export Development Canada (EDC), Canada, 2017

World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) & International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF)

6. Representatives of the Brazilian delegation at WOCCU, Austria, 2017
7. ICMIF Biennial Conference, England, 2017

United Nations High-Level Meeting

8. On the official panel where we formally presented the co-operative movement's commitment to pursue the UN's sustainable development goals, United States, 2016
9. With Canada's and Mongolia's Ambassadors, Marc-André Blanchard and Sukhbold Sukhee, and UNDESA Director Daniela Bas, United States, 2016
10. Representatives of our delegation at the United Nations, United States, 2016

International Summit of Co-operatives

11. Ambassadors Conference, 3rd International Summit of Co-operatives, Canada, 2016
12. Representatives of the International Proxfin Network, 3rd International Summit of Co-operatives, Canada, 2016
13. Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance, 3rd International Summit of Co-operatives, Canada, 2016
14. Sukhbold Sukhee, Ambassador of Mongolia, United Nations; Harald Braun, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany, United Nations; Guy Cormier, Chair of the Board, President and Chief Executive Officer of Desjardins Group; Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance; Horacio Sevilla Borja, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ecuador, United Nations; Sarah Mendelson, United States Ambassador to the United Nations Economic and Social Council; Marc-André Blanchard, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada, United Nations, Canada, 2016

International Seminar on Co-operatives and the Sustainable Development Goals

15. International Seminar on Co-operatives and the Sustainable Development Goals, São Paulo, Brazil, 2017
16. Representatives of the Alliance Board of Directors, São Paulo, Brazil, 2017
17. Marcio Port, President of Sicredi Pioneira RS; Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance; Raúl Colombetti, President of the Sancor Seguros Group, Brazil, 2017
18. Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance; Stéphane Larue, Canadian Consul General, São Paulo, Brazil, 2017

Coops for 2030 Campaign (www.coopsfor2030.coop)

19. Image from the Campaign Annual Report

Canada Summit 2017 – The next 150 Years: Building a Sustainable Future

20. Daniel Franklin, Executive Editor, The Economist; Dominique Anglade, Minister of Economy, Science and Innovation, Quebec; David MacNaughton, Canadian Ambassador to the United States; Marcia Moffat, Managing Director, BlackRock Canada; Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance, Canada, 2017
21. Denis Coderre, Mayor of Montreal; Dominique Anglade, Minister of Economy, Science and Innovation, Quebec; Philippe Couillard, Premier of Quebec; Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance, Canada, 2017

Partnership agreement with the European Commission

22. Klaus Niederländer, former Regional Director for Europe, Sifa chiyoge, Regional Director for Africa, International Co-operative Alliance; Neven Mimica, Commissioner, International Co-operation and Development, European Commission; Charles Gould, Executive Director, International Co-operative Alliance; Savitri Singh, Program Director, Asia-Pacific Region and Manuel Marino, former Regional Director of Coop Americas, International Co-operative Alliance, Belgium, 2016
23. Members of the European Commission partnership project team, 2017
24. IV Cumbre Cooperativa de las Américas, Montevideo, Uruguay, 2017
25. 10th ICA Asia Pacific Co-operatives Ministers' conference, Hanoi, Vietnam, 2017
26. 2017 Co-operatives Europe General Assembly & Elections, Malta, 2017
27. Co-operative Ministerial Conference, Casablanca, Morocco, 2017

Leadership Circle and Co-operative Round Table

28. Members of the *Leadership Circle* and *Co-operative Round Table* committees, Bulgaria, 2017

Annual meeting of the Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité

29. Michel Leblanc, President of the Chambre de Commerce du Montréal Métropolitain; Jean Charest, lawyer and former Premier of Quebec; Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance; Pierre Pettigrew, Executive Advisor, International, Deloitte, Canada, 2017

Business Convention Canada-France

30. Harout Chitilian, municipal councillor for the district de Bordeaux-Cartierville, Montreal; Simon Durivage, news anchor and journalist; Monique F. Leroux, President, International Co-operative Alliance; François Boscher, President of the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Française au Canada, Canada, 2017

Senate Symposium on the 150th Anniversary of Canadian Confederation

31. Official presentation to the Senate commemorating the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation, Canada, 2017
32. With Aditya Yadav, Chairman, Uttar Pradesh Co-operative Federation, Chairman, Indian Farmers Fertiliser, Co-operative and Alliance Board member, Brazil, 2017

33. Canadian senators, including Kim Campbell, first woman to serve as Prime Minister of Canada, Michaëlle Jean, Secretary General of La Francophonie and former Governor General of Canada, George Furey, Speaker of the Senate; Serge Joyal, Senator and Symposium Coordinator; Lucie Moncion, former President and CEO of the Alliance des caisses populaires de l'Ontario; Bob Rae, former Premier of Ontario, Canada, 2017

Meeting at the White House

34. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada; Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders; Donald Trump, President of the United States, 2017

Alliance Board of Directors meetings

35. Representatives of the Alliance Board & team in São Paulo, Brazil, 2017

36. *Women's Forum for the Economy and Society*, Deauville, France, 2016

37. Meeting of the Board of Directors of the International Co-operative Alliance in Sofia, Bulgaria, 2017

38. With the members of the Board of Directors, Petar Stefanov, President of Consumer Co-operative Worldwide and Central Co-operative Union awarding of the highest co-operative distinction – Bulgaria, 2017

39. Meeting of the Board of Directors of the International Co-operative Alliance in São Paulo, Brazil, 2017

40. With Mr Jean-Louis Bancel, Mrs Melina Morrison, Dr Andrew Crane and Mr Terry Agnew at the *Diner Trade & Investment*, Sydney, Australia, 2016

41. Meeting of the Board of Directors of the International Co-operative Alliance in Stockholm, Sweden, 2016

Leadership Circle and Co-operative Round table

42. Joint meeting of the two committees in Montreal, Canada, 2017

43. *Leadership Circle*, Bercy, France, 2016

44. Jean-Louis Bancel, President, Coop FR; Odile Kirchner, déléguée interministérielle à l'économie sociale et solidaire, Direction générale du Trésor; Monique F. Leroux, Présidente, International Co-operative Alliance; Jean-Philippe Poulnot, responsable for Political Partnerships, Groupe Up, France, 2016

Field visits to co-operatives & other events

45. Meeting at CCA Global Partner, United States, 2016

46. Official meeting with Dr. Udai Shanker Awasthi, General Director, Indian Farmers Fertiliser Co-operative, England, 2016

47. Visit of a local co-operative with Petar Stefanov, President, Consumer Co-operative Worldwide and Central Co-operative Union – Bulgaria, Boyka Dobрева, Director General Trade, CCU & Executive Director, COOP Trade and Tourism AD and Irena Sarieva is Deputy Director, DG Trade, CCU, Bulgaria, 2017

48. Desjardins Group General Assembly, Canada, 2016

49. Visit to the OP Financial Group co-operative with Reijo Karhinen, President and CEO of Banque OP Finlande in Helsinki, Finland, 2016

50. Meeting at Caisse d'Épargne, France, 2016

51. Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada (CMC) General Assembly, Canada, 2017

52. Visit of a local co-operative, China, 2016

53. Visit of a dairy co-operative, Fukushima, Japan, 2016

54. Visit of a local co-operative, South Korea, 2016

55. Representatives of the Japanese Co-operative Movement, Japan, 2016

The landmark collective achievements covered in this overview truly are something of which we can be proud. Together, we strengthened the pillars so that the Alliance and co-operative businesses can continue to build a better world that is more inclusive, fair and equitable. We joined forces to perpetuate a global co-operative movement engaged, leading and growing.

In a collective and collaborative manner, we built bridges that the Alliance, its committees, regional and sectoral offices, members and partners can use to fulfill the co-operative movement's main mission, which is to keep fostering socio-economic development in communities in ways that focus decisions around human beings. The brainstorming sessions and work carried out in that regard pave the way to a prosperous and sustainable co-operative era. I urge you to harness all the passion in your beings as you continue your efforts to **unite, promote and develop** the co-operative movement.

Monique F. Leroux



**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT MAJOR
ACHIEVEMENTS BY CO-OPERATIVES:**

www.ica.coop

www.monitor.coop

www.co-operativesforabetterworld.coop

www.coopsfor2030.coop

www.sommetinter.coop/en



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