

MEDIA RELEASE

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The theme for the 2018 International Day of Co-operatives has been unveiled

The theme for the 2018 International Day of Co-operatives is "**sustainable consumption and production of goods and services**". It gives an opportunity for co-operatives to show how they run successful businesses while respecting our natural environment and the resources it offers. The theme was unveiled in the presence of the President of the International Co-operative Alliance, Ariel Guarco, at the event "[Cooperatives: Developing people-focused strategies to end poverty](#)". This was organized by the [Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives \(COPAC\)](#) in the framework of the [56th session of the Commission for Social Development \(CSocD56\)](#) in New York.

"We believe that co-operatives are an important and efficient instrument to fight poverty. Co-operatives bring people together in a democratic and equal way. They allow people to take control of their economic future and, because they are not owned by shareholders, the economic and social benefits of their activity stay in the communities where they are established. These are two very important characteristics of cooperatives especially when it comes to fighting poverty", said Mr Guarco. He mentioned several co-operative experiences and presented the latest results of the online platform called [Coops for 2030](#), including examples of pledges that co-operatives around the world are taking to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There have been 300 pledges from 100 co-operatives in 40 countries so far.

With "sustainable consumption and production of goods and services" as theme in mind, co-operators from around the world are invited to participate in selecting the **#CoopsDay** slogan. Until noon on the 8th of February (UTC-5), Twitter users can vote for one of three potential slogans:

1. Sustainable societies through co-operation
2. Choose a co-op: for a greener planet, for a common future, for a better world
3. Choose co-op: Together for the planet

Want to help pick the #CoopsDay slogan? Cast your vote [here](#)

The 2018 International Day of Cooperatives will be celebrated on the **7th of July**.

Why this theme?

Co-operatives have sustainability in their DNA, with **concern for community** as the seventh of their guiding principles.

The 2018 International Day of Co-operatives theme is aligned with that of the 2018 High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF): "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies". During the HLPF in July, UN Member States will review progress towards achieving the following [Sustainable Development Goals](#): 6 (clean water and sanitation), 7 (clean and affordable energy), 11 (sustainable cities and communities), 12 (responsible consumption and production) and 15 (life on land).

Co-operatives have two centuries' experience building sustainable and resilient societies. Among the examples, agricultural co-operatives work to maintain the longevity of the land where they grow crops through sustainable farming practices. Consumer co-operatives support sustainable sourcing for their products and educate consumers about responsible consumption. Housing co-operatives help ensure safe dwellings. Cooperative banks contribute to stability thanks to their proximity to their clients and provide access to finance at local level and are widespread even in remote areas. Utility co-operatives are engaged in the transition to cleaner electricity and rural access to energy and water. Worker and social co-operatives in a number of sectors like health, communications, tourism, etc. aim to provide goods and services in an efficient, planet-friendly way, while creating long-term, sustainable jobs.

Through #CoopsDay, local and global policymakers can learn how co-operatives contribute to more sustainable and resilient societies and work towards including co-operatives in policy processes related to sustainability issues.

ENDS

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR

About the International Day of Cooperatives

The United Nations International Day of Cooperatives is celebrated annually on the first Saturday of July.

The aim of this celebration is to increase awareness on cooperatives, highlight the complementary goals and objectives of the United Nations and the international cooperative movement, underscore the contributions of the movement to the resolution of the major problems addressed by the United Nations and strengthen and extend partnerships between the international cooperative movement and other actors.

In 1992, following a concerted lobbying effort by the cooperative members of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and COPAC members, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the first Saturday of July 1995 to be International Day of Co-operatives, marking the centenary of the establishment of the Alliance, by resolution [47/90 of 16 December 1992](#).

Indeed, since 1995, the Alliance and the United Nations have been setting the theme for the celebration of the International Day through COPAC, a multi-stakeholder partnership of global public and private institutions, the Alliance being a founding member, that champions and supports people-centred and self-sustaining cooperative enterprises as leaders in sustainable development.

About the ICA

The International Co-operative Alliance is a non-profit international association established in 1895 to advance the co-operative social enterprise model. The Alliance is the voice for co-operatives worldwide, representing more than 300 co-operative federations and organisations across 105 countries (figures of January 2017).

One in every six people on the planet are co-operators. Through its membership, the Alliance represents 1,2 billion people from any of the 2.94 million co-operatives worldwide. The largest 300 co-operatives 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 co-operatives, either through direct employment or by organizing through a co-operative.

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 people-centred co-operatives' values-based business model.

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 service and industry cooperatives).