

MEDIA RELEASE

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Bruno Roelants appointed as new Director – General of the International Co-operative Alliance

Today, the International Co-operative Alliance Board has appointed Bruno Roelants as the new Director-General. Mr Roelants will begin his new role in the coming weeks, succeeding Charles Gould who last year announced his decision to retire.

Bruno Roelants currently serves as Secretary General of CICOPA, the sectoral Organisation of the International Co-operative Alliance for industry and services – a role he has held since 2002. Under his leadership, membership of the organisation increased from 18 countries in 2002 to 32 countries in 2018.

Mr Roelants, who brings more than 30 years' experience within the co-operative movement, will be the 16th Director-General of the Alliance which was founded in 1895.

Commenting on the appointment, Ariel Guarco, who was elected President of the Alliance in November, said: "We are very happy to have reached a consensus and have been able to choose between people of very high level. We believe that Bruno Roelants is a highly trained person with a broad experience in the co-operative movement that will allow him to carry out and play an excellent role".

In accepting the appointment Mr Roelants said: "I am humbled by your decision to appoint me to this position, and I commit myself to serve you as a Board, and the wider co-operative movement, as well as I can possibly can. It is a big honour, but more importantly, I am filled with enthusiasm at taking up this new position, just when a new President and a new Board have been elected". "I will need the help of all of you in the International Co-operative Alliance. As with the smallest co-operative, you don't get anywhere without co-operating".

The Search Committee made the selection from a very strong pool of women and men from every region of the world, and was supported in the task by the Global Recruitment Specialists firm.

Bruno Roelants will succeed Charles Gould, who has been the International Co-operative Alliance's Director-General since 2010, having worked with the board of directors on developing its Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade as well as increasing its influence within global policy-making bodies.

Commenting on his retirement, Mr Gould said: "The past seven years with the Alliance have been extremely fulfilling. It has been a real privilege to work with such a great staff team, board and members. I'm now looking forward to continuing to support the co-operative movement from a distance especially at this time when it has so much to offer to the world."

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR

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).