



2016

A YEAR OF CO-OPERATIVE MEETINGS

TOGETHER FOR A CO-OPERATIVE AND MUTUAL MOVEMENT CLOSELY
CONNECTED TO ITS MEMBERS, ENGAGED AND GROWING

UNITE, PROMOTE AND DEVELOP

Dear colleagues,

What an exceptional year we have just had! 2016 saw the International Co-operative Alliance significantly strengthen its position. We experienced the full power of the words *Unite, Promote and Develop*. I believe that this would be a good time to give you a first full update.

Over the past year, our Movement racked up a series of firsts.

First, we signed a historic agreement with the European Commission for \$10 million over five years to support the development of co-operatives and mutuals around the world. This agreement, which was structured in close collaboration with Co-operatives Europe, promotes tangible assistance to regions and sectors for local development.

Collectively, we attended numerous forums. I am thinking in particular of our participation in the B20s in Turkey and China, and now the work underway in Germany.

We also organized major events in the United Nations to promote our ability to act for the well-being of our communities.

I thank and congratulate all those who were involved in our efforts to provide active representation on behalf of the International Co-operative Alliance.

I would also like to thank everyone who is involved in the regions, sectors and committees. Your work and commitment helped the Movement progress.

I would like to highlight the work of the Leadership circle and the Co-operative round table, which brought to the fore a number of concrete ideas and initiatives, including the "Co-operatives for a better world" marketing campaign, as well as Blue Ribbon projects on capital.

Those two committees also evaluated how co-operative and mutual businesses can work together on the global stage to enhance our contribution to the economy, by creating a centre of expertise or e-commerce platforms. Your contribution is essential.

Moreover, 2016 was also a year when more of our members were brought together through numerous regional, national and global thematic and sectoral conferences. The third edition of the International Summit of Co-operatives is another telling example of this mobilization. Launched in 2012, that event has become a concrete demonstration of the strength of our Movement. For that third edition, we had close to 3,000 participants from around the world representing more than 116 countries. The Summit demonstrated the tenacity, coherence, solidity, weight and diversity of every aspect of the co-operative and mutual Movement: social innovation, democratic participation, creativity, collective action and flexibility. Together, we affirmed our leadership on the international stage.

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We are also the first global economic group to engage in a concrete undertaking in support of sustainable development piloted by the United Nations. Our final declaration, which we will be tabling before that organization, will be supported by an action plan aimed at highlighting those projects. That plan will guide our actions until 2030.

Finally, I want to underline the considerable amount of work undertaken by the board of directors for the second phase of our *Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade* and on the strategic reflections aimed at giving us the means to achieve our ambitions. For the first time in an official manner, in 2016, regional and sectoral managements, along with the board of directors, shared their priorities and development plans. Their work will continue into 2017, as the Alliance conducts an extensive consultation with its members. The outcome of our collective work will be shared at the next Alliance's general assembly and global conference, in Malaysia.

The co-operative model has always been remarkably adaptable and innovative. The co-operative approach, cast against the backdrop of human values, is a reasoned and reasonable economic and social model, both engaged and engaging, imbued with a keen sense of social justice and resolutely turned to the future. Thank you all, dear members who, through your contributions to the Alliance, demonstrate your trust in our organization.

I wish every one of you an excellent year ahead: 2017 promises to be every bit as full, shaped by cooperation, faith and optimism. We represent the potential for a better world, one that is more fair, inclusive and prosperous.

Cordially and in cooperation,



Monique F. Leroux
President

OVERVIEW OF THE FIRST YEAR AS PRESIDENT OF THE ALLIANCE

The following pages provide a sketch of that first year, during which we all witnessed the tremendous progress made by the Co-operative Movement, starting with our meeting in Antalya in November 2015, up until the B20, which took place in December 2016, more than a year after that key event. This overview reflects a number of meetings amidst a series of actions and achievements we accomplished over the year. I invite you to consult the annual reports of the Alliance, the regions and the sectors for a full report on our collective results.

● A COLLECTIVE START TO A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

On Friday, November 13, 2015, we eagerly launched into a new adventure together. Yet, what struck me most at our general meeting in Turkey was the flagrant contrast between our Movement and the current situation. The international co-operative and mutual Movement is a widely varied entity that is filled with the family spirit and the sense of outreach. The bonds that unite us are strong. Yet, just as we were coming to that realization, Paris was hit by the terrorist attacks. We went through that shock together. We commiserated over the incomprehensibility of it all. The co-operative ideal is more necessary than ever. We must remember that we are battling exclusion, which is the first breeding ground of ideological hijacking.

During this tremendously busy year, you frequently shared with me your trust and support. I thank you for that. Representing you is a privilege.

Soon after the elections were over, we launched into the very full agenda ahead of us. We went to the B20 in Turkey, where we made our mark. I would like to thank all those who contributed to the discussions. During the meetings, we came together as a team to position co-operatives and mutuals as key contributors to the global economy.

We also took part in COP21 in France. At the same time, I had the opportunity to take part in a conference on “Civil Society engaged for climate transition”. A big thank you to Jean-Louis Bancel, President of Groupe Crédit Coopératif, for that invitation.

For the first time, the High Level Contact Group of the European Association of Co-operative Banks (EACB) met with the Chairman of the Financial Stability Board and Governor of the Bank of England. We were proud to emphasize the contribution of the financial co-operative Movement and the importance of adapting the global financial structure to the co-operative model. Thank you to Hervé Guider for organizing this meeting.



B20 2015 in Antalya, Turkey



COP21 in Paris, France



Meeting between the European Association of Co-operative Banks (EACB) and the Chairman of the Financial Stability Board



Alliance's general assembly and global conference in Antalya, Turkey

THE AUSTRALIAN CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IS VERY DYNAMIC, WELL ORGANIZED AND CLOSE TO ITS MEMBERS AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

● SIGNING OF A HISTORIC AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND MEETINGS BETWEEN THE ALLIANCE'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND AUSTRALIA'S CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

Our first board of directors meeting following the general assembly and global conference in Turkey took place in Sydney, Australia. We came together for the first strategic session. That was where the Alliance launched the brainstorming process, with the initial emphasis on our strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities available to us. That was also when we launched the work for the grant by the European Commission, which soon led to the official signing in Brussels.



Members of the board of directors in Sydney, Australia



Signing of the agreement with the European Commission in Brussels

I would like to extend my gratitude to Greg Wall of the Capricorn Society and Melina Morisson of the Business Council of co-operatives and mutuals (BCCM) for their warm welcome, and the field visits with representatives of Australia's co-operative Movement.



Investment & Trade dinner given by the Alliance in Sydney, Australia

We took advantage of our presence in Australia to continue on to New Zealand, where we met with the representatives of the co-operative Movement, in particular the people of Fonterra and the New Zealand local federation. Once again, we were welcomed by ardent supporters of cooperation.

"And I think that when we look at co-operative organizations, we see that many of them are innovative. It is important to realize that innovation is in the DNA of the co-operative Movement. It is something that has to be acknowledged, and innovation must be valorized in both our members' attitudes and in the way our organizations respond to their needs,"

indicated Monique F. Leroux during an interview with interest.co.nz



Visit to the Fonterra co-operative, New Zealand

● WORKING FOR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

In April, a number of events took place in Rome. We exchanged with representatives of the Italian government to promote the actions of the co-operative and mutual Movement, as well as our business model. A fruitful meeting on the issues facing financial co-operatives was also held with Andrea Karner and colleagues from the Confédération internationale des Banques Populaires (CIBP).



Meeting with CIBP in Rome, Italy



Representatives of the Italian co-operative Movement

At a meeting with the leaders of the Italian co-operative Movement, we had the opportunity to address their Movement's diversity and their specific issues. I would like to thank Carlo Scanzanella of the Associazione Generale Co-operative Italiane, as well as its President, Mr. Altieri, the President of Confco-operative, Mr. Gardini, and the President of Coopitalia, Mr. Luetti, for the highly productive discussions.

"Co-operative businesses are fully engaged in long-term capitalism, and help promote sustainable prosperity for people and communities. Long-term, or sustainable, capitalism defines how co-operatives contribute to development. The financial system must work for the people, for the communities. Impulsive decisions and a focus on quick results are to be avoided in favour of a much longer and more sustainable horizon,"
emphasized Monique F. Leroux at the conference at the LUMSA university.

Our Movement was front and centre during the annual general meeting of the Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité. A luncheon-conference was organized in partnership with the Chambre de commerce de Québec to discuss co-operative issues and development. More than 300 people took part in the panel, which was composed of representatives of co-operatives, including Garry Lavoie, Executive Director of Coopérative funéraire des Deux Rives, as well as government representatives such as Fatima Marouan, Minister of Handicrafts, Social Economy and Solidarity of the Kingdom of Morocco, and Dominique Anglade, Minister of Economy, Science and Innovation of the Government of Quebec.



Co-operative panel, luncheon-conference organized by the CQCM in collaboration with the Chambre de commerce de Québec



Co-operatives Europe General Assembly in Brussels



Consumer Co-operative Worldwide in Brussels

● BEST PRACTICES AND GREAT CELEBRATIONS

2016 marked the 10th anniversary of Co-operatives Europe. At the annual general meeting, we highlighted the organization's major achievements during the previous years. We also discussed refugee issues. I was particularly touched by those discussions and our Movement's involvement.



Ms. Xia and Mr. Li Chunsheng

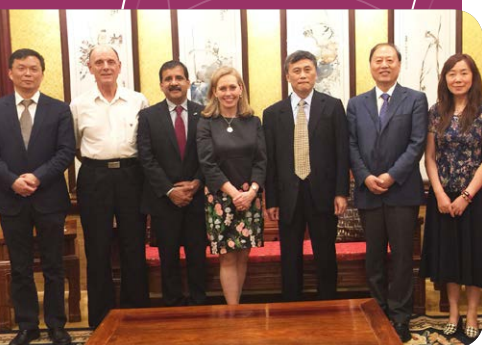
The Consumer Co-operatives Worldwide conference, in collaboration with Euro Coop, at the European Economic and Social Committee, also took place in Brussels at the same time. We discussed best practices, particularly in regard to the traditional sales of co-operative products and e-commerce. My deep gratitude to Dirk Lehnhoff and Petar Stefanov for organizing these two important events.

● THE POWER TO ACT OF ASIAN CO-OPERATIVES



Representatives of Japan's co-operative Movement

Last May, we visited Japan to discuss co-operative issues in the Alliance's Asia and Pacific region. I had the opportunity to meet with the minister responsible for agriculture, forests and fishing, Hiroshi Moriyama. What touched me the most during that trip was a visit to the Fukushima Mirai Agricultural Co-operative Association to meet the region's cooperators. The resilience of co-operatives in Fukushima and their contribution to rebuilding the city moved me to no end. You really have to see it to fully appreciate the importance and involvement of agricultural co-operatives in Japan. This is a tangible example of our capacity to act for the well-being of our communities. Thank you Msrs. Okuno, Banzai and Asada for the warm welcome.



Representatives of China's co-operative Movement



Representatives of the Korean Movement



Fukushima agriculture association



Presentation to the NACF



With Mr. Li Chunsheng

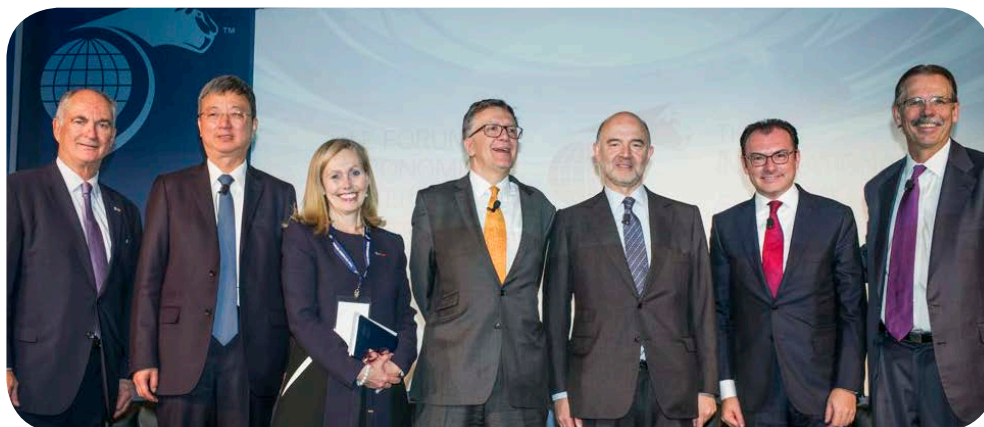
The visit to Korea provided the opportunity to meet with the new president of the NACF, KIM Byeong-won, and with the Korean co-operative Movement. That meeting revealed to me what an important contribution the co-operative Movement is making to agriculture, food distribution and innovative infrastructures.

The trip to Asia ended with a stop in China. The welcome extended to us by Mr. Li Chunsheng of the All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC) and past president of the Asia-Pacific region was exceptional. We addressed the importance of distribution to consumers. The three presidents of the Alliance member organizations attended the meeting, including Ms. Xia of the All China Federation. A very special thank you to Balasubramanian Iyer, Regional Director of the Alliance's Asia and Pacific region, for organizing these unforgettable visits.

● CO-OPERATIVES AS A SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN MODEL

During the opening panel at the conference of Montreal entitled “Shaping A New Era of Prosperity”, we had the opportunity to highlight the modernity of the co-operative model. Among other things, we pointed out that, by their very nature and culture, co-operatives and mutuals have a stabilizing effect on the economy. The high-level panel consisted of Mr. Min Zhu of the IMF, Pierre Moscovici of the European Commission, Luis Videgaray Caso of the Mexican government, Glenn Hutchins, the founder of Silver Lake, the moderator, John Authers, of the *Financial Times*, and the Chair of this Conference, Gil Rémillard.

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Conference of Montréal, Canada

● THE SCANDINAVIAN CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT, INSPIRING AND INNOVATIVE!

Our second board of directors meeting was in Stockholm, where we met with the Swedish co-operative and mutual movement. That board of directors stood out for the way it shared, for the very first time, strategies from every sectoral organization with the members of the board and regional managements. I would like to thank Anders Lago, President of the HSB, for his outstanding hospitality.



Board of directors in Stockholm, Sweden





SOK, in Helsinki, Finland

After the second board of directors meeting, we travelled to Finland, where met with Mr. Reijo Karhinen of the OP Financial Group, Mr. Kari Jordan of the Metsä group, and Mr. Taavi Heikkilä of the S-Group. Among other things, we discovered an innovative forest management model at Metsä. We noticed the diversity of their activity sectors and the innovativeness with which they expanded their contribution to the economy. We appreciated the warm welcome, and extend special thanks to Anne Santamäki of SOK, for having coordinated the visit.



Visit to the Op Financial Group in Helsinki, Finland

During a brief stop in London, I had time to exchange with our collaborator, Mutuo's Peter Hunt. I would also like to thank David Roberts of Nationwide for having welcomed me, thereby giving me the opportunity to how society is evolving. Gentlemen, I am grateful for our frank and fruitful conversations.

● WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

On June 29, we went to the United Nations, where we were able to meet with DESA, ILO and FAO representatives and discuss the contribution of the co-operative and mutual Movement to the sustainable development of communities. We were treated to a private breakfast with Canada's Ambassador, Marc-André Blanchard, and close to a dozen ambassadors and the UN Deputy Secretary General, Jan Eliasson, to discuss how society is evolving. It was a key moment in terms of the impact, visibility and recognition of the co-operative Movement.



Day of meetings at the United Nations in New York, United States

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT HAS UNDERTAKEN TO ACTIVELY HELP PURSUE THE UN GOAL TO ENSURE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR ALL OF US.



With UN Ambassadors of Canadian & Mongolia and DESA Director at the the United Nations

● THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW OPERATING MODEL

July was a very busy month, among others with the *Rencontres économiques d'Aix-en-Provence*. At that event, we discussed the current social context and the possibilities offered by co-operatives and mutuels in terms of bringing stability. We were also welcomed by *Groupe UP* which kindly hosted the Alliance's Leadership Circle. Thank you to Jean-Philippe Poulnot. At that strategic meeting, we shared the different co-operative projects underway to promote business development and explore the manner in which the Alliance could assist them. That meeting, in addition to the work done during the Co-operative Round Table, where some 20 members gathered to discuss interactive marketing initiatives, created a momentum for thinking about the introduction of new business platforms. International co-operative business community (hub) creation projects were also put forward. All of these ideas are very stimulating.



Economic meetings in Aix-en-Provence, France



Ministry of Finance in Bercy, Paris, France



Leadership Circle at Groupe UP in Paris, France

"We must ensure that people are at the centre of economic decisions in an approach aimed at social development," indicated Monique F. Leroux at the conference *"Is human capital the future of countries?"*, Economic meetings d'Aix-en-Provence.

As part of these discussions with the members, I took part in a number of meetings, including in Manchester at CCA Global Partners, in order to promote the business community's interest in the topic. Thank you to Howard Brodsky for his hard work and his contribution to organizing the exchanges at the International Summit of Co-operatives in the pursuit of this momentum created by the Leadership Circle, as well as for his vision in the marketing campaign entitled "Co-operatives for a Better World."

Two key events took place right before the International Summit of Co-operatives. The first one was the 31st CIRIEC International Congress, which brought together a number of researchers and think tanks in our Movement, and the second was in Budapest, where I addressed a meeting of European investors. On both occasions, with their different audiences, I had the opportunity to highlight what makes co-operatives so special, particularly in the current political and economic context.



CCA Global Partners in Manchester, United States



CIRIEC International Congress in Reims, France

● CLOSE TO 3,000 PARTICIPANTS TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD

October 2016 was marked by the third edition of the International Summit of Co-operatives, which brought together close to 3,000 managers, decision-makers and leaders from the co-operative and business communities. More than 116 countries were represented. You contributed to the success of that event by getting involved as participants or panelists. I believe that we will not soon forget that third edition and the power to act of our Movement!

The different panels and complementary activities were organized around the five main issues of food safety, employment, access to health care and social services, poverty and financial inclusion, as well as climate change and sustainable development. Several pre-Summit events, including meetings with the umbrella organizations, sectors and the Proxfin network, enabled the Movement's leaders to discuss issues, our ambitions and best practices in countries around the world. All of these discussions fed into the Summit's conclusion, which focused on our contribution to the sustainable development goals. The Summit declaration and our collective commitments to the sustainable development goals will be officially tabled before the United Nations in 2017.

Thank you to all of the participants, panelists, speakers and organizers for their contributions to this tremendous collective event.



2016 International Summit of Co-operatives



Annual General Meeting of the Alliance in Quebec City, Canada



"There has never been a better time to promote the co-operative model!"
Monique F. Leroux emphasized in her opening remarks at the 2016 International Summit of Co-operatives.

"We need the co-operative Movement to achieve the UN sustainable development goals,"
indicated Marc-André Blanchard, Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations, during the 2016 International Summit of Co-operatives.

● CO-OPERATIVES, A LEVER FOR THE COLLABORATIVE ECONOMY AND GENDER EQUALITY

After the Summit, in response to an invitation from the Women's Forum, I participated in the panel on the collaborative economy. The co-operative and mutual Movement have to rise to the occasion in terms of grasping the opportunities offered by this new economy, and understanding the challenges it brings. We must position ourselves because this economy shares principles with the co-operative Movement, such as responding to local demand and buying local. We can influence the outcome to ensure that it benefits communities.



Women's Forum in Deauville, France

"Co-operatives help stabilize economies and promote social responsibility and community interests,"
indicated Monique F. Leroux at the Women's Forum.

● B20: FOSTERING THE RECOGNITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CO-OPERATIVES

As the year-end approaches, we return to Germany for the B20. The Alliance once again made its mark with a significant delegation including several executives, such as Shaun Tarbuck and his team at ICMIF. I had the privilege of co-chairing the thematic group on small and medium-sized enterprises while my colleagues joined the different task forces. Our goal was to make leaders aware of the benefits of the co-operative and mutual model. With the support of the co-operative leaders in the Alliance and the ICMIF, we made some dynamic presentations aimed at ensuring that the challenges and advantages of the co-operative and mutual model are taken into consideration in the recommendations of the B20.



B20 in Berlin, Germany

In conclusion, this document aims to provide a brief overview of our different meetings, actions and achievements. 2017 will most certainly be filled with more collective meetings and challenges. As of now, we know that the next board of directors meeting will be held in Brazil, in March, and the next one after that in Bulgaria in July, and many of us will be attending the annual general meeting in Malaysia. I am very much looking forward to seeing you there again.

Once more, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the work and contributions by the Alliance teams, the regions and the sectors around the world. I thank every one of you for your engagement as leaders of our great global co-operative Movement. Thank you for your trust and your tremendous collaboration.



TO KNOW MORE ON THE MAJOR CO-OPERATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS AND THE ACTIVITIES TO COME:

www.ica.coop

www.moniqueleroux.coop/en

www.sommetinter.coop/en

www.monitor.coop

www.co-operativesforabetterworld.coop

www.coopsfor2030.coop

www.malaysia2017.coop

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