



OCTOBER 11-13

COOPERATIVES: THE POWER TO ACT

**Unveiling of the Program for the Third International Summit of Cooperatives:  
Cooperatives: The Power to Act at the Core of the Global Economy**

**Quebec City, Canada, October 21, 2015** – The International Summit of Cooperatives, which will run from October 11 to 13, 2016 in Quebec City, Canada, is ready to unveil its program. Under the theme of *Cooperatives: The Power to Act*, the Summit will show the real impact of cooperatives and mutuals at the local, national and international levels, and the pivotal role they play in terms of the key global issues listed in the United Nations' post-2015 development agenda.

The program will start by covering the new socioeconomic and geopolitical realities around the world. It will then address the challenges faced by cooperatives and mutuals in a constantly changing economy, as well as the opportunities. Finally, it will help cooperatives identify the actions that could provide solutions to the development issues listed by the UN.

The program will include world renowned speakers, and will draw on cross-sector studies. The themes addressed will interest not only cooperatives and mutuals, but also any executive, entrepreneur or individual who wants to develop business opportunities, learn more about cooperatives and contribute to the sustainable development of society.

"We have developed a rich program around the main topics of interest to elected officials and heads of cooperatives and mutuals in every sector, as well as to people who strongly support the idea of the sustainable development of businesses and society. The Summit aims to support the long-term development of businesses and to meet the main challenges of sustainable development by promoting the emergence of partnerships among them. We believe that, more than ever before, cooperatives and mutuals are pertinent and can play a decisive role in the well-being of individuals and communities," affirmed Monique F. Leroux, Chair of the Board, President and CEO of Desjardins Group, and co-host of the Summit.

"The Summit will demonstrate the strength and opportunities offered by cooperatives which are the genesis of the modern collaborative economy, but with a deep abiding commitment to ownership by communities in perpetuity. It is worth remembering just how cooperatives have demonstrated their resilience through the economic cycles largely because of their constitutional commitment meet the needs of people," added the President of the International Co-operative Alliance, and co-host of the Summit, Dame Pauline Green.

A four-stage program:

**1. Acknowledging socioeconomic and geopolitical trends**

The world is changing, and doing so at an accelerating pace, and people have new expectations. What are the challenges that businesses will have to face, and what business opportunities will they generate? To answer these questions, we will explore the socioeconomic and geopolitical landscapes. We will also explore new schools of thought, such as sustainable development, long-term capitalism, and shared value.

...2

## **2. Improving our capacity to act – cross-sector challenges**

Participants will have the opportunity to review cross-sector challenges. They will be presented with tools that will improve their capacity to act on issues, such as opening new markets, access to capital, work in the digital era, the cooperative economy, managing big data, and commitment to communities. Special attention will be paid to the reality of smaller cooperatives.

## **3. Demonstrating our capacity to act – sectoral challenges**

Participants will be organized into activity sectors, and invited to share their experiences and challenges. Those sectors will be agriculture and food industries, insurance, banking and financial services, health and social care, wholesale and retail trade, industry and utilities, and wood and forestry. These discussions will also encourage the sharing of strategies that could lead to business partnerships.

## **4. Cooperatives in action to address global challenges**

Amidst the flurry of the United Nations' adoption of a post-2015 development agenda, cooperatives and mutuals provide a key lever in support of sustainable development strategies for solving major global issues such as food security, the employment crisis, access to health care and social services, poverty and financial autonomy, climate change and sustainable development. The participants will have the opportunity to attend workshops where they can work together on developing actions that can provide solutions to these issues.

For additional information, visit [www.intlsummit.coop](http://www.intlsummit.coop).

### **Call for communications and scientific activities**

Researchers interested in the topics involving cooperatives and mutuals are invited to submit their proposals for scientific papers related to the four main Summit themes. The papers that are selected will be compiled and published during the event. For additional information, visit [www.sommetinter.coop/en/call-papers](http://www.sommetinter.coop/en/call-papers).

### **About the International Summit of Cooperatives**

The International Summit of Cooperatives is the world's leading event for business development in the cooperative and mutual community. It offers managers, decision-makers and leaders of cooperative and mutual enterprises of all sizes and in all sectors, as well as anyone in the world of business, a unique venue for reflection, discussion, cooperation and training on major trends, as well as on current and future economic and financial issues. By demonstrating that cooperatives are one answer to the major socioeconomic issues of our times, the Summit aims to promote and foster the development of cooperative enterprises in all countries. The event attracts more than 3,000 participants from 93 countries.

#### **Sources:**

##### **Lucie Gosselin**

International Summit of Cooperatives  
+ 1-514-281-7000, extension 555 4657  
[media@intlsummit.coop](mailto:media@intlsummit.coop)

##### **Jan Schiettecatte**

International Co-operative Alliance  
+ 32 2 743 10 30 Mobile: + 32 478 84 51 30  
[schiettecatte@ica.coop](mailto:schiettecatte@ica.coop)

