



OCTOBER 6-9

2014 International Summit of Cooperatives

**South America – Eight experts from five countries:
Fertile ground for the cooperative model**

Quebec City, Canada, August 14, 2014 — The cooperative model offers sustainable solutions to many of the socioeconomic challenges faced by South American countries, as reflected on the ground. In Argentina for example, the social economy currently generates 10% of the country's GDP. Peru generates numerous jobs thanks to this model, with nearly 70% of the country's workforce involved in the social and solidarity economy. In Latin America as a whole, the emergence of cooperatives and mutuals clearly demonstrates the vivacity of this economic sector.

It therefore comes as no surprise that a number of South American experts will be sharing their expertise at the International Summit of Cooperatives: no fewer than eight authorities from five countries in South America will be among the speakers at the second edition of the event, to be held in Quebec City, Canada, from October 6 to 9.

They will be joining other world-renowned experts like Robert Schiller, Jeffrey Sachs, David K. Foot, and many more who chose the Summit to demonstrate that cooperatives are an important part of the global economy and serve as key socioeconomic actors. They will take advantage of the event to discuss the competitive advantages cooperatives offer in the 21st century economy, marked by faltering growth and volatile markets in a number of regions of the world since the most recent economic crisis. The Summit will be an opportunity to hear more than 196 renowned speakers and discover 27 world-class studies that will make their grand début at the event.

The following experts from Latin America have chosen the Summit as a forum for presenting their vision of the cooperative business model:

- **Ariel Guarco**, President, Confederación Cooperativa de la República Argentina (COOPERAR), Argentina
- **Ricardo Lopes**, President, Federación Argentina de Entidades Solidarias de Salud (FAESS), Argentina
- **Carmelo Paz**, General Manager, Cooperative Rural de Electrificación – CRE Ltda, Bolivia
- **Roberto Rodrigues**, President, National Academy of Agriculture, Brazil
- **Dr. Eudes de Freitas**, President, Unimed do Brasil, Brazil
- **Marcio Lopes de Freitas**, President, OCB Brasil, Brazil
- **Jorge Andres Lopez Bautista**, Director General, Coop Central, Colombia
- **William Bojorquez**, General Manager, Serviperu, Peru

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“The main cooperative innovations within the Latin American experience stem from alternative ways of reducing imbalances through the economic organization of workers, consumers, and small businesses,” explains Ariel Enrique Guarco, President of Confederación Cooperativa de la República Argentina (COOPERAR). “Our presence at the International Summit of Cooperatives is an opportunity to share with the cooperative movement our experience creating democratic economic organizations in economies struggling with tremendous imbalances in income distribution, access to basic social services, and the territorial organization of sectors.”

“Attracting such a large contingent of experts to Quebec City illustrates the growing importance of the cooperative and mutual movement in the world economy,” says Monique F. Leroux, Chair of the Board, President, and CEO, Desjardins Group and a co-host of the Summit. “The Summit, which is clearly becoming a must-attend event for political and socioeconomic leaders, will help showcase the role of cooperative enterprises and highlight all the solutions this business model offers to meet global economic challenges.”

The cooperative movement has proven successful in times of economic and financial crisis, as cooperative enterprises around the world have demonstrated their resilience. They are also an important part of the world economy and serve as key economic actors. In fact, cooperatives represent the equivalent of the world’s ninth largest economy, with revenues exceeding \$2.5 trillion. With more than 100 million workers, they contribute to the livelihoods of one out of every two people in the world.

Related links

Journalists can fill out their requests for media accreditation here:

http://www.sommetinter.coop/cms/en_CA/home/medias/accreditation.html

International Summit of Cooperatives website: www.intlsummit.coop

Current list of panelists and speakers:

http://www.sommetinter.coop/cms/en_CA/home/edition-2014/conferenciers-1.html

Full list of studies to be unveiled at the Summit:

http://www.sommetinter.coop/cms/en_CA/home/edition-2014/etudes.html



About the 2014 International Summit of Cooperatives

Decision makers and influencers from the international cooperative and mutual community will gather in Quebec City, Canada, from October 6 to 9 for the 2014 International Summit of Cooperatives. The Summit's bold, ambitious themes will garner the attention and interest of cooperatives from around the globe as well as world leaders and politicians.

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