



PRESS RELEASE

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2025 UN International Year of Cooperatives launched in New Delhi

The 2025 UN International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) has officially been launched at the ICA Global Cooperative Conference and General Assembly, in New Delhi, India.

The launch ceremony featured more than 3,000 delegates from over 100 countries, including UN representatives, Indian government officials and cooperators.

India's Prime Minister, H.E. Narendra Modi, delivered a keynote address during the ceremony in which he highlighted the important role cooperatives play in the country. India is home to 800,000 cooperatives, including the Indian Farmers Fertilisers Cooperative (IFFCO), the world's largest cooperative by turnover on GDP per capita.

"For India, cooperatives are a way of life," he said. "For the whole world, cooperatives are a business model, but at the same time, cooperation is the basis of our culture. It is a lifestyle."

The Prime Minister described how the partnership between the Government of India and cooperatives was key to sustainable growth, and how this growth "should be seen in a human-centric way".

"The importance of cooperatives is not confined to laws, and regulations, we have to move beyond that," he said, arguing that the "cooperative spirit will be the life of the country".

PM Modi thanked the UN for declaring 2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives.

"In this IYC we will empower this cooperative spirit. We will move forward with this cooperative spirit and we will be empowered, we will be prosperous," he concluded.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres also addressed the conference via a video message.

"Cooperatives like the ones you represent demonstrate the importance of standing together to forge solutions to global challenges," he said. "Hailing from more than 100 countries, you are driving development across communities, large and small, fighting poverty and social exclusion, strengthening food security, helping local entrepreneurs access national and international markets and so much more. Your united efforts are essential as our world confronts complex challenges and strives to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. Watch the full video [here](#)."



Themed, *Cooperatives build a better world*, the IYC is an opportunity for the global cooperative movement to engage in a year-long celebration of their impact and achievements, and plan for a future that builds prosperity for all.

ICA president Dr Ariel Guarco thanked IFFCO along with the other ICA members in India for hosting the conference.

"We live in a complex time as humanity", he said, adding that often crises can lead to cooperative solutions. "We have answers, but we must not close the doors to any questions."

Dr Guarco also praised the Indian government for supporting cooperatives. The UN resident coordinator in India, Shombi Sharp, echoed these remarks, calling India "a nation synonymous with cooperation".

"When people come together the world is a better place," he said, praising the Indian government for creating a Ministry of Cooperatives.

Also speaking at the open ceremony were H.E. DASHO Tshering Tobgay, prime minister of Bhutan, and Hon. Manoa Kamikamica, deputy prime minister of Fiji. Mr Kamikamica.

"Fiji is here to listen, learn and execute," said Mr Kamikamica.

Mr Tobgay said: "In today's world, the cooperative movement has become even more important. There is no better country than India that exemplifies the economic transformative power of collective action."

Over the next 12 months, the ICA will work to increase the visibility of cooperatives and raise public awareness about their contributions to sustainable development; advocate for enabling environment and supportive legal and policy frameworks for strengthening their entrepreneurial ecosystem; and promote the growth and development of cooperatives through capacity-building initiatives, knowledge-sharing, and collaborative partnerships. The ICA is also planning a range of activities to inspire young people to join the movement in 2025.

The UN's first International Year of Cooperatives was celebrated in 2012, when cooperatives worldwide highlighted their contributions to socio-economic development, particularly their impact on poverty reduction, employment generation and social integration.

Get involved:



The United Nations General Assembly resolution proclaiming the International Year of Cooperatives 2025, invites all Member States to consider taking action towards establishing national mechanisms, where appropriate, such as national committees, to prepare for, observe and follow up on the International Year of Cooperatives, in particular for the purpose of planning, stimulating and harmonising the activities of the governmental and non-governmental agencies and organisations concerned with the preparations for and observance of the International Year;

Find the guidelines for creating National Committees [here](#).

[Apply for the IYC logo](#).

Organisations interested in using the IYC2025 logo must adhere to specific guidelines provided by the UN [here](#). The logo is available in six official languages—English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and Russian.

IYC website

A new website has been created to celebrate the International Year of Cooperatives. Check out the new website [here](#).

For further information contact Leire Luengo, Director of Communications at luengo@ica.coop.

Photos from the launch are available [here](#).

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Photos from the Awards ceremony are available [here](#).

NOTES TO EDITORS:

About the International Cooperative Alliance

Founded in 1895, the International Cooperative Alliance is a non-profit international association established in 1895 to advance the cooperative social enterprise model. The International Cooperative Alliance is the voice for cooperatives worldwide, representing more than 308 cooperative federations and organisations across 106 countries. Through its membership, the International Cooperative Alliance represents 1,2 billion people from any of the 2.94 million cooperatives worldwide. The largest 300 cooperatives in the world have combined annual revenues of 2.4 trillion USD (2021) and 300 million people around the world (10% of the employed population) secure their livelihoods in cooperatives, either through direct employment or by organising through a



cooperative. The International Cooperative Alliance works with global and regional governments and organisations to create the legislative environments that allow cooperatives to form and grow. Towards media and public, the International Cooperative Alliance promotes the importance of people-centred cooperatives' values-based business model. Operating from a global office in Brussels, Belgium, the International Cooperative Alliance is organised with four Regional Offices (Europe, Africa, Americas, and Asia-Pacific), and eight Sectoral Organisations (Banking, Agriculture, Fisheries, Insurance, Health, Housing, Consumer Cooperatives and service and industry cooperatives).