

The Way Forward: Cooperatives and Development

(Cancun, 17 November 2011)

THE PARTICIPANTS TO THE CICOPA-IHCO CONFERENCE WISH TO EMPHASIZE THE NEED TO FOCUS ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AT ALL LEVELS:

- (1) The importance for the cooperative movement to be committed to continuing to develop itself (for example each cooperative could help establish another one);
- (2) The importance of promoting cooperatives through legislations based on the cooperative identity and standards (definition, values and operational principles), local support to enterprises and a favorable enabling environment (as stipulated in the ILO Recommendation 193);
- (3) The importance of fostering a strong public policy for the development of cooperatives, with supporting budgets at all levels (for example commitment to public procurement);
- (4) The importance of fostering a more democratic governance by stakeholders in economic activities;
- (5) The importance of fostering multi-stakeholder cooperatives that can group under the same economic unit as the producers, the users etc.;
- (6) The focus on data and statistics aimed to assess the importance of cooperatives on all levels;
- (7) The importance of cooperation between economic actors at the meso level (support institutions in training, counselling, finance etc, as well as horizontal groups and consortia) ;
- (8) The importance of sustainable long-term employment for development;
- (9) The importance of credit and finance in development, but with a re-appraisal of conventional micro-credit, and a stronger focus on productive activities and larger units than micro-businesses (inclusive finance);
- (10) The importance, for territorial development, of developing productive activities in industry and services, including social, health and community services in a spirit of cooperation between cooperatives and other actors from the various sectors;
- (11) A stronger link between the local/regional (micro/meso) aspects of territorial development and the global aspects;
- (12) A focus on auditing and research with the aim to assess the concrete results of development policies and initiatives;
- (13) The promotion of cooperation between the cooperative movement and development institutions at all levels (intergovernmental organisations, development NGOs, national development agencies etc.) valorising the role of each of them, with an emphasis on self-self cooperation (local, regional, continental and inter-continental) ;
- (14) The importance of ensuring cooperation and providing opportunities for young people to learn and practice cooperativism within and outside the formal education system.

