



Dear members,

We wish you, your family, and staff a very happy, healthy, and peaceful 2022! We would like to thank you for your generous support and active participation throughout the year!

In November, the 15th ICA-AP Regional Assembly at its hybrid meeting in Seoul elected a new Board and a new set of office-bearers. The board has representation from across all the subregions and is well equipped to lead the region for the next four years. Dr. Chandrapal Singh Yadav from India was elected as President and Mr. Cai Zenhong from China and Dato Dr. Abdul Fattah Abdullah from Malaysia as Vice Presidents. The other members of the board are Ms. Chitose Arai from Japan, Ms. Natalie Browning from Australia, Mr. Mohamadali Zeygami from Iran, Mr. Sung-hee Lee from Korea, Mr. Min Raj Kadel from Nepal, Mr. Antonio Aranas from the Philippines, Mr. Sarath Weerasiri from Sri Lanka, and Dr. Nguyen Ngoc Bao from Vietnam. Mr. Alireza Banaeifar, who was elected as Chair of the Youth Committee, will be the Youth representative on the board. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize the leadership provided by Mr. Li Chunsheng and the previous board for their dedicated work in advancing the growth and development of cooperatives in the Asia-Pacific region.

The 33rd ICA World Congress on the theme, Deepening the Cooperative Identity, was held from December 1 to 3 in Seoul. The Congress was held in a hybrid manner under the shadow of the lingering COVID-19 pandemic with its ever-recurring variants. The Congress provided the opportunity for members to come together in person and celebrate 125 years of ICA and 25 years of the Statement of Cooperative Identity (SCI). To provide the Asia-Pacific perspective, we organised a series of online consultations with members from the Philippines, Nepal, Iran, ASEAN and MENA (with our ICA Africa Office) region, and India to reflect on the SCI in their day-to-day operations and engagement with

stakeholders. We relaunched COOP Dialogue that covers views of members, cooperators and practitioners. The SCI continues to be seen as foundational and integral to the sustenance and growth of the cooperative movement. It helps connect this vast movement across countries, divided by geography and culture, and offers cooperators a noticeable sense of collective belonging that is unparalleled in a globalized world. We encourage you to read the first edition and share your comments.

The ICA Asia and Pacific region has 113 members from 31 countries. During the year, we were joined by the Matara District Health Cooperative Society, Sri Lanka; the Network Consolidated Cooperative Bank (NCCB), Philippines; National Yuva Co-operative Society Ltd. (NYCS), Centre for Cooperatives and Livelihoods – Autonomous (CCL), Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), and the Tamil Nadu Small Tea Growers ICTFs Federation Ltd. (INDCOSERVE), India; and the Educational Cooperative Union of Limited Liability, Jordan. The country snapshots provide a rich overview of the history, policy environment, case studies and international engagement.

We mourn the passing of Dr. Gopal Saxena, Dr. Daman Prakash, Mr. P. Nair, and Mr. Mohammad Sharif Bhajji. Dr. Gopal N. Saxena served as the Chairperson of the ICA-AP Committee on Cooperative Research. He joined India's largest farmers' cooperative, IFFCO as a junior statistician and retired as Director of Cooperative Development after a career spanning 43 years. He was closely associated with the ICA-AP Research Committee for over a decade until he retired in 2016. Dr. Daman Prakash worked in ICA-AP from 1962 to 2002. During his illustrious career, he held various positions - Director Agriculture Cooperative Management, Technical Advisor in Sri Lanka with the ICA-SCC-NCC/SL Co-operative Teachers' Training Project, Chief Technical Advisor with ILO in Indonesia, and Senior Consultant with JA-Zenchu of Japan. In 2014, at the first National Cooperative Congress of Nepal, Prime Minister Shushil Koirala presented him the 'national award of appreciation' for his contribution for the promotion of cooperatives. Mr. Nair had joined ICA-AP in 1987 as Communications Officer and served as Secretary to various ICA-AP committees during his tenure until 2007. He was instrumental in organizing research conferences and workshops as part of his committee activities. Mr. Mohammad Sharif Bhajji got involved in the world of cooperatives in his early years and continued his father's legacy through cooperative housing societies where he established many hospitals, schools, rehabilitation centers and recreation parks. In his long career, he served as a secretary of Cooperative Housing for over 20 years and contributed to the betterment of Sindh Province in Pakistan as the Secretary of Sindh Provincial Cooperatives Union. He served as a Board Member of the Cooperative Housing International (CHI), the sectoral organization of ICA, from 2009 to 2013.

The COVID-19 outbreak disrupted our planned physical activities across the region and we continued to use the online platform to carry out our activities. The Third Asia-Pacific Cooperative Youth Summit on the theme, Celebrating Youth as the Torchbearers of the Cooperative Identity, was held in July. The Summit held virtually attracted 3,500 registrations from 23 countries. The winners of Coop Pitch were: Eco-Clean (Indonesia), a platform cooperative for cleaning-service providers; Himalayan Hemp Cooperative (India), a community of artisans and farmers creating eco-conscious products; and Udara Cooperative (Malaysia), food production through aquaponics systems. A multistakeholder consultation on "Autonomy and Independence of Cooperatives in India" was held in September to discuss the prospects for the cooperative sector, considering the current political economy in India. The consultation gave space to share the different views and experiences of the panellists and brought forth an Anand declaration, containing a brief set of actionable policy recommendations. The ICA-AP Cooperatives in Educational Institutions organized an online global workshop on the theme, 'Building and Strengthening Cooperative Identity among Youth through Cooperatives in Educational Institutions' to bring perspectives from experts on global best practices and recommendations to strengthen Cooperative Identity among youth. The ICA-

AP women committee organized regular events and during the ICA Congress organized the 11th Asia-Pacific Cooperative Women Forum, “Why Cooperative Identity matters to Women,” in a hybrid manner. The forum deliberated on how the Cooperative Identity positively impacts women cooperative members and the challenges experienced by women in practising cooperative principles and values; and what can be done to further strengthen the impact. The ICA-AP Consumer Committee organized a series of webinars to highlight the role played by cooperatives to bridge the gap between producers and consumers during the pandemic and innovations underway.

We celebrated International Day of Cooperatives, #RebuildBetterTogether and showcased how cooperatives in the Asia-Pacific region are meeting the COVID-19 pandemic crisis with solidarity and resilience and offering communities a people-centered and environmentally just recovery. The training programs under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan continued to be carried out online. The ICA-EU Partnership on Cooperatives in Development People-Centered Businesses in Action Project came to an end in August and was successful in addressing the Project’s three strategic priorities – Sustainable Development Goals, Youth Inclusion and Work, and Ownership. ICA President Ariel Guarco attended a National Cooperative Conference organised by the Indian cooperative movement under the leadership of NCUI and IFFCO to welcome the Union Minister of Home Affairs & Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah.

We are thankful to our MBO sponsoring organizations – ACFSMC, Angkasa, JCCU, and NACF. We continue to receive generous support from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Government of Japan to foster leadership and develop cooperatives in the Asia and Pacific region. The ICA-EU Partnership on Cooperatives in Development People-Centered Businesses in Action helped to strengthen the capacity of the federation, increased advocacy, and improved the visibility of cooperatives as development actors. During the year, the regional office continued its engagement with Aflatoun International, Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development; Fairtrade Network of Asia and Pacific Producers; Institute of Rural Management, Anand; Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. (GCMMF, AMUL), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, Mahila Abhivruddhi Society, Andhra Pradesh (APMAS), Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), SEWA Cooperative Federation, The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

We look forward to your continued support in 2022! The significant event in 2022 is the General Assembly (June) to be held in Seville, Spain which will elect a new ICA Global Board. We look forward to seeing you at these and other events!



Dr. Chandrapal Singh Yadav
President



Balasubramanian Iyer
Regional Director