

PRESS RELEASE

11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers Conference Held in Jordan, Fostering Partnerships between Governments and Cooperatives

[29 April, Dead Sea, Jordan] - The 11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers Conference (APCMC) was inaugurated today, marking the commencement of a crucial gathering aimed at fostering cooperation, dialogue, and actionable strategies to drive inclusive growth and sustainable development across the Asia Pacific (AP), Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Organized by the International Cooperative Alliance Asia-Pacific (ICA-AP) and hosted by the Jordan Co-operative Corporation and the Ministry of Agriculture, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan the conference brought together key stakeholders from government bodies, cooperative enterprises, civil society organizations, and international agencies. These included high-level Government officials from 17 countries (Egypt, Fiji, India, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, and UAE), cooperative leaders and renowned experts from 28 countries and senior officials from the African-Asian Rural Development Organization, International Labour Organisation, and Food and Agriculture Organization united in their commitment to advancing the cooperative movement for the betterment of communities.

Set against the picturesque backdrop of the Dead Sea in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, this landmark event underscored the significance of cooperative-government partnerships in shaping the socio-economic landscape of the AP and MENA region.

Mr. Abdelfattah Al-Shalabi, Director General of JCC warmly welcomed all to the 11th APCMC at the Dead Sea, symbolizing safety and hospitality. He praised King Abdullah II's role and highlighted Jordan's efforts in supporting cooperatives. He noted that the conference aims to discuss partnerships for cooperative resilience, sustainable development, and inclusive growth in Asia Pacific, Middle East, and North Africa. He emphasized Jordan's values of warmth and hospitality, fostering international cooperative efforts.

In his address, Dr. Chandrapal Singh Yadav welcomed everyone to this historic conference in Jordan, the first in the Middle East, highlighting cooperatives' role in socio-economic development and the need for strong government-cooperative partnerships. He expressed his gratitude for the gracious hospitality extended by the hosts and said the conference aims to foster discussions, analyze partnerships, and strategize for sustainable development in Asia Pacific and MENA. He also touched upon the pivotal study undertaken by ICA-AP on enhancing government support for cooperatives. He noted that anticipation is high for the conference to yield actionable resolutions, enrich partnerships and advancing towards shared goals of resilience and inclusivity.

His Excellency Khaled Mousa Shehadeh Alhuneafat, Minister of Agriculture, highlighted cooperatives' role in economic growth, youth employment, and women's empowerment. He wished success to all attendees and said that Jordan extends its traditional hospitality with the greeting "Ya Hala".

The conference agenda encompassed a wide array of topics, including the state of cooperatives in the Asia Pacific, enhancing government-cooperative partnerships, leveraging digitalization for inclusive growth, and promoting gender equality within the cooperative sector.

Featuring interactive panel discussions and statements from government officials, it provided participants with ample opportunities to exchange insights, explore synergies, and co-create actionable solutions.

As part of the conference proceedings, a critical study has been commissioned to assess the current landscape of governmental support for cooperatives and identify opportunities for strengthening collaboration between state entities and cooperative enterprises.

The 11th APCMC holds profound significance as the first-ever edition to be hosted in the Middle East region, underscoring the growing recognition of cooperative principles as a catalyst for sustainable development and social cohesion.

The International Cooperative Alliance Asia-Pacific extends its sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Jordan Cooperative Corporation for their gracious hospitality and invaluable support in hosting this momentous event.

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About International Cooperative Alliance Asia-Pacific (ICA-AP)

ICA-AP is the regional office of the International Cooperative Alliance, representing 110 cooperative organizations from 29 countries across the Asia-Pacific region. Through the promotion of cooperative identity, advocacy, collaboration, and capacity building, ICA-AP strives to empower cooperatives to thrive and fulfil their potential as drivers of sustainable development, social inclusion, and economic prosperity.

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