

▶ ILO DG Gilbert F. Houngbao's message on the occasion of International Cooperatives Day

English:

Today, I am pleased to join the international community in celebrating the International Day of Cooperatives. The cooperative movement is one of the oldest and largest business networks in the world dating back more than a century. In fact, the promotion of cooperatives is embedded in constitutional mandate of the ILO. The cooperative model means people working together. Equitably and democratically to improve their lives and those of their communities. It's in model that has helped pull people out of poverty and has proven to be resilient in times of crisis. This year's theme is about how partnerships can accelerate sustainable development. With their values and principles, cooperatives are indispensable partners and have a critical role to play in the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

This has been recognized in the UN General Assembly Resolution on promoting the Social and Solidarity Economy for Sustainable Development which was adopted in April this year. And last year's International Labour Conference adopted a resolution on decent work and the Social Solidarity Economy of which cooperatives are a crucial part. Cooperatives can also contribute to the global accelerator on jobs and social protection for just transitions which has the potential to help countries around the world to create 400 million decent jobs and to extend social protection coverage to the 4 billion people who are unfortunately currently excluded. This international day is a key moment to show very clearly how cooperatives are helping to create a more inclusive and resilient world.