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Mongolia: draft resolution

Cooperatives in social development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [47/90](#) of 16 December 1992, [49/155](#) of 23 December 1994, [51/58](#) of 12 December 1996, [54/123](#) of 17 December 1999, [56/114](#) of 19 December 2001, [58/131](#) of 22 December 2003, [60/132](#) of 16 December 2005, [62/128](#) of 18 December 2007, [64/136](#) of 18 December 2009, [65/184](#) of 21 December 2010 and [66/123](#) of 19 December 2011 concerning cooperatives in social development,

Recognizing that cooperatives, in their various forms, promote the fullest possible participation in the economic and social development of all people, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, are becoming a significant factor of economic and social development and contribute to the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing also the important contribution and potential of all forms of cooperatives to the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), including their five-year reviews, the World Food Summit, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the 2005 World Summit,

Noting with appreciation the potential role of cooperative development in the improvement of the social and economic conditions of indigenous peoples and rural communities,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;¹

¹ [A/68/168](#).



2. *Notes with appreciation* the celebration of the International Year of Cooperatives, in 2012;

3. *Encourages* all Member States, as well as the United Nations and all other relevant stakeholders, to continue the activities that were implemented during the International Year of Cooperatives;

4. *Adopts* the present resolution and the annex thereto as the Plan of Action on Cooperatives for 2012 and Beyond, based on the outcome document of the expert group meeting held in Ulaanbaatar in 2011, for the promotion of cooperatives for sustainable socioeconomic development, so as to ensure a focused and effective follow-up to the activities of the Year;

5. *Draws the attention* of Governments to the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General to focus support on cooperatives as sustainable and successful business enterprises that contribute directly to employment generation, poverty reduction and social protection, across a variety of economic sectors in urban and rural areas, to review the prevailing policies, laws and regulations affecting cooperatives and to identify strategies for legislative frameworks in support of cooperative growth;

6. *Invites* Governments and international organizations, in partnership with cooperatives and cooperative organizations, to strengthen and build the capacity of all forms of cooperatives, especially those run by the poor, young people, women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, so that they can empower people to transform their lives and communities positively and build inclusive societies;

7. *Encourages* Governments to intensify and expand the availability and accessibility of research on the operations and contribution of cooperatives and to establish methodologies for the collection and dissemination of comparable global data on and the good practices of cooperative enterprises, in collaboration with all stakeholders, and to raise public awareness of the nature of cooperatives, their strengths, their values and principles and their contributions to sustainable development;

8. *Invites* Governments, relevant international organizations, the specialized agencies and local, national and international cooperative organizations to continue to observe the International Day of Cooperatives annually, on the first Saturday of July, as proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/90;

9. *Invites* Governments, in collaboration with the cooperative movement, to develop programmes aimed at enhancing the capacity-building of cooperatives, including by strengthening the organizational, management and financial skills of their members, while respecting the principles of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and to introduce and support programmes to improve the access of cooperatives to new technologies;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the relevant United Nations and other international organizations and national, regional and international cooperative organizations, to continue rendering support to Member States, as appropriate, in their efforts to create a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives, providing assistance for human resources development, technical advice and training and promoting an exchange of experience

and best practices through, inter alia, conferences, workshops and seminars at the national and regional levels;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including the implementation of the Plan of Action on Cooperatives for 2012 and Beyond.

Annex

Plan of Action on Cooperatives for 2012 and Beyond

A. Establishing effective policies, laws and regulations

1. In order to establish policies, laws and regulations conducive to the formation, growth and stability of cooperatives, Governments should review the prevailing policies, laws and regulations that have an impact on cooperatives and identify strategies to create supportive policy environments for cooperatives. In this regard, it is important that all relevant stakeholders work together to:

(a) Use research to determine the relationship between legislation and the effective operation and development of cooperative enterprises;

(b) Implement effectively existing guidelines and develop binding guidelines at the regional and/or national level;

(c) Ensure that legislation and/or regulations do not hinder the access of cooperatives to financial resources.

2. Governments, international institutions, cooperative enterprises and all other relevant stakeholders are encouraged to collaborate to establish appropriate legal, regulatory and/or policy frameworks for the effective operation, growth and development of cooperative enterprises, as follows:

(a) Cooperative enterprises are encouraged to engage with governments at all levels in order to promote a deepened understanding of the operational strengths and weaknesses of cooperative enterprises within the existing legal, regulatory and/or policy frameworks and to provide advice on possible improvements to the legal, regulatory and/or policy environment;

(b) Governments are encouraged to use empirically based, participatory strategies for the amendment, modernization and/or establishment of laws, policies and regulations which affect the business status, operational environment and membership structure of cooperative enterprises, to ensure that there are no legal, regulatory and/or policy deterrents to the effective formation, operation and growth of such enterprises, especially with regard to access to financial resources, and that they account for the distinctive business culture and philosophy of cooperative enterprises;

(c) In the establishment and/or reformulation of laws, regulations and/or policies affecting cooperative enterprises, decision makers are invited to be guided by established and agreed upon regional and international policy guidelines such as the United Nations guidelines aimed at creating a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives^a and International Labour Organization Recommendation No. 193 concerning the promotion of cooperatives.

B. Increasing public awareness

3. In order to increase public awareness about cooperatives and their contributions to sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, Governments,

^a See A/56/73-E/2001/68, annex.

international institutions, cooperative enterprises and all other relevant stakeholders must work together to:

- (a) Promote a clear and shared definition and characterization of cooperatives;
- (b) Highlight the strengths of cooperative enterprises in promoting sustainable development;
- (c) Identify and assess ways and means of raising awareness about cooperatives.

4. Governments, international institutions and other economic actors and stakeholders should recognize the mutual benefits of having a sound cooperative movement as a complementary alternative to public and private ownership enterprise models.

5. Governments, international institutions, cooperative enterprises and all other relevant stakeholders should work together to promote cooperatives as autonomous, voluntary associations of people united to meet common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations, through a membership-owned and democratically controlled enterprise. Greater appreciation and emphasis should also be given to the particular values-driven nature of cooperative enterprises, on the basis of member control, empowerment, self-development and social awareness.

6. Governments, international institutions, cooperative enterprises and all other relevant stakeholders should work together to promote cooperatives as schools of democracy at the local level. Cooperative democracy can help the development of political democratic processes at the community level and thus enhance democratic practice at the national level.

7. Efforts should be made to promote wider understanding and promotion of the cooperative enterprise model by ensuring the integration of lessons on cooperative business models and cooperative development into formal and non-formal educational curricula at all levels, and in this regard:

- (a) In order to broaden the diversity of business structures, there needs to be effective exposure of the cooperative business model to the uninitiated and creation of a demand for the same from the grass-roots upwards;^b

- (b) Governments, the United Nations and other international institutions need to collaborate for active implementation of educational programmes and training on the cooperative model and its contributions to social development, as well as for improving the availability of information, especially in developing countries;

- (c) The United Nations and other international institutions should support Governments in identifying financial sources to strengthen cooperative education and integration.

8. Cooperatives, Governments and international institutions should work to sensitize mass media to the distinctive nature of cooperative enterprises and to the

^b The present proposal limits itself to a management and business administration studies perspective. It should be understood that coordination with public policy measures would be a necessary task (i.e., education and knowledge relating to diverse social economy/cooperative business structures is ultimately most useful in an environment in which such entities may be created).

unique ways in which they contribute to social and economic development in order to promote a more accurate and positive portrayal of cooperative enterprises.

C. Promoting the formation and sustainable growth of effective cooperatives

9. In order to promote the formation and growth of independent and sustainable cooperatives for socioeconomic empowerment, Governments, international institutions, cooperative enterprises and all other relevant stakeholders must work together to identify:

(a) Important factors and practices for the successful operation of cooperatives;

(b) Priority capacity-building strategies to promote and strengthen cooperatives.

10. Cooperative enterprises must place greater emphasis on human resource development and other capacity-building efforts in order to ensure an effective and sustainable operational structure. In this regard, the operations of cooperative enterprises should be grounded in cooperative values and principles and agreed upon in international forums, and should demonstrate the alignment of commercial and social interests. Educating and training future cooperative executives, managers, bankers, accountants, consultants and lawyers who have both technical knowledge and a solid foundation in cooperative thought and values, as well as a sophisticated understanding of different models of enterprise, is crucial for institutional implantation of cooperatives as one of many solutions to social and economic problems. In this regard:

(a) Emphasis should be placed on member engagement and member empowerment at all levels of the organization;

(b) Cooperatives should collaborate with relevant stakeholders to ensure effective managerial strategies and leadership development. In this regard, Governments, training institutions and other relevant stakeholders should work together to develop a set of tailored methodologies and tools for capacity-building in cooperatives;

(c) Governments and international institutions should work with cooperative enterprises and other relevant stakeholders to develop codes of good governance and leadership handbooks specifically tailored to the general institutional structure and management needs of cooperative enterprises.

11. Cooperatives must be ever cognizant of their own role in revitalizing and re-energizing the cooperative movement, and as such, should develop visionary, enlightened and committed leadership as well as embracing good corporate governance.

12. For a sustainable cooperative movement capable of contributing even more effectively to poverty alleviation, cooperatives need to respond with flexibility and innovation to changes in their political and economic environment.

13. Cooperative enterprises should work to increase the participation of women and youth in cooperative membership, as a means of improving the sustainability of cooperative organizations.

14. Cooperative enterprises should work with Governments, academia and relevant sectoral experts to ensure that technology is being effectively utilized in ensuring cost-effectiveness, productivity and sustainability. In that regard, cooperatives must make efforts to diversify and expand their reach into emerging and non-traditional sectors with significant impact on social and economic equality, such as energy, food supply, transportation and education.

15. The United Nations should establish a biennial forum on cooperatives to boost the development and success of cooperative enterprises, focusing on best practices, applied research, technical support, new technologies and rewards.

D. Promoting research and developing an information database on cooperatives

16. Efforts to increase public awareness of cooperatives and to promote the formation and sustainable growth of independent and effective cooperatives must be supported by descriptive and accessible research and data. Efforts should thus be made to:

- (a) Identify available research and make it accessible;
- (b) Address gaps in knowledge and data on cooperatives;
- (c) Develop a global database of comparable and harmonized information on cooperatives.

17. Effective dissemination of available research is essential for identifying available information and existing gaps; as such, the international community should work through the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives to establish an accessible, searchable database of information on existing research and researchers in the area of cooperatives and the contributions of cooperatives to social development. New information technologies should be utilized to systemize and simplify the process of accumulating the information.

18. In order to develop a field of cooperative studies for use at the national, regional and international levels, efforts should be made to utilize a research methodology that brings together applied and conceptual research, where cooperative enterprises are directly involved in the framing and dissemination of research.

19. Efforts should be made to make research usable and understandable by non-researchers and non-academics, by presenting it in multiple ways and in diverse forums.

20. Governments should be encouraged to work with cooperative enterprises to assign resources to research and development initiatives on cooperatives and their contributions to social and economic development. A percentage of income from cooperative enterprises should contribute to a tax or incentive-based fund to be utilized for research and development on and for cooperatives. The utilization of those funds should be overseen by a body of stakeholders from cooperative enterprises.

21. Research focused on cooperatives as social innovators should be emphasized, in order to highlight the cooperative business model as a sustainable and effective agent for social and economic development.

22. Effective research is necessarily supported by the availability of valid and reliable data. As such, cooperative enterprises, Governments and international institutions should work together to develop an agreed set of core indicators and

related extensions to allow for the collection of comparable data at the global level. In this regard:

(a) In order to support this effort, an ad hoc expert group should be established, under the auspices of the United Nations, with representation of all relevant stakeholders;

(b) Determined indicators should be included in the *United Nations Statistical Yearbook*, in order to encourage attention to such statistics by national Governments;

(c) Governments should work with international institutions to develop the capacity to integrate data collection on cooperatives into national statistical data frameworks;

(d) The United Nations, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, should use the determined indicators to produce core input to a periodic report on the state of cooperatives and their contributions to development.

E. Implementation considerations

23. Collaboration among Member States, the cooperative movement and all stakeholders should be promoted in mobilizing resources and funds for the implementation of the Plan of Action.

24. Stakeholders need to organize and conduct midterm assessments of progress made against the Plan of Action. Such assessments should identify resource constraints and challenges that have an adverse impact on the implementation of the Plan and identify lessons learned in the process.

25. On the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Cooperatives, in 2022, it is recommended that stakeholders review their contributions to the implementation of the Plan of Action and assess how their activities and programmes have supported its objectives.
