

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COOPERATIVES

3 July 2010

With an egalitarian ethos, participatory decision-making, common ownership and commitment to goals beyond the profit motive, cooperatives are expanding opportunities for women in local economies and societies throughout the world. As the theme of this year's observance puts it so well: "Cooperative enterprise empowers women."

As the world economy continues to face many difficult challenges, cooperatives are providing a valuable service to many women, especially those in vulnerable communities that lack state services or traditional private sector initiatives.

Through membership in cooperatives, women are developing self-help strategies, generating their own income and assets, and learning how to overcome entrenched biases and prejudices. In the process, cooperatives are playing an important role in advancing the Millennium Development Goals.

Cooperatives are a reminder to the international community that it is possible to pursue both economic viability and social responsibility. I urge the adoption of policies conducive to the creation and expansion of cooperatives – especially those that facilitate the participation of women.

On this Day, and as we prepare for the observance of the International Year of Cooperatives in 2012, I encourage Governments to continue working with cooperatives and civil society organizations in our common effort to realize internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. By cooperating, we can truly build a better world.