

[STATEMENT]

## Making a sustainable future through Co-operative movement

International Day of Cooperatives

2 July 2016

We, Global Social Economy Forum (hereafter GSEF), join major representatives and actors of the Social and Solidarity Economy (hereafter SSE) in the world in celebrating this year's International Day of Cooperatives with its slogan 'Co-operatives: The power to act for a sustainable future' in 2016. The day aims at increasing awareness on cooperatives and the cooperative movement, and at acknowledging the contribution of the movement to resolve major social problems we faced and strengthening global solidarity.

GSEF is a global network of SSE to serve as a hub for sharing visions and experiences across international borders and cooperation based on multi-sectoral partnerships for a better world. There are various forms of SSE to accomplish a sustainable development at international/national levels and urban/rural societies. Co-operatives have the longest and traditional form of SSE sectors and are one of the most crucial alternatives of our time to resolve social and economic problems we face nowadays everywhere. Principles such as autonomy, voluntary participation, and democracy from *7 principles of Co-operatives* live in the core of the SSE which aims to simultaneously achieve efficiency, equality, inclusiveness and sustainability based on trust and cooperation. The Sustainable Development Goals (hereafter SDGs), adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2015, also emphasizes collective efforts for sustainable future, which has been a key of Cooperatives' spirits.

A number of SSE activities have played important roles to prevent a wide range of social and economic problems in the world: financial crisis, climate change, food crisis; economic inequality, etc. SSE has provided innovative solutions to these problems, including social housing, regeneration, and sharing economy, and has secured economic and community resilience. In many cases, organizing cooperatives have been the first step to the solution by sharing resources and mobilizing the ordinary people.

On this International Day of Co-operatives, the GSEF calls on UN agencies, central and local governments and social actors to put their utmost efforts on promoting and fostering the SSE including the cooperative movement for inclusive and sustainable development.

GSEF also calls for all stakeholders to "Co-operative" to build more joint, equitable, inclusive and sustainable world based on *7 principles of Co-operatives*. With the SDGs, we affirm the importance of cooperatives and SSE activities to make this change possible through revisiting the values of "Co-operatives" and solidarity.

Global Social Economy Forum