



# General Assembly

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## Seventy-eighth session

Agenda item 24 (b)

**Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, persons with disabilities and the family**

## **Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2023**

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/78/472, para. 57)]

### **78/175. 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, [66/123](#) of 19 December 2011, [68/133](#) of 18 December 2013, [70/128](#) of 17 December 2015, [72/143](#) of 19 December 2017, [74/119](#) of 18 December 2019 and [76/135](#) of 16 December 2021 concerning cooperatives in social development,

*Recognizing* that cooperatives, in their various forms, promote the fullest possible participation in the economic and social development of local communities and all people, including women, young people, older persons, persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples, whose inclusion strengthens economic and social development, and contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger,

*Recognizing also* that, as cooperative enterprises often serve the socially excluded and vulnerable sectors of the population that traditional profit-driven businesses may not be best placed to address, they are therefore important for the support of socially inclusive policies that drive inclusive development, particularly in developing countries,

*Recognizing further* that cooperatives and other social organizations can be instrumental in promoting a just transition while working on climate change adaptation and mitigation,

*Reaffirming* the adoption of the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, entitled



“Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,<sup>1</sup> and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,<sup>2</sup> and noting the acknowledgement therein of the role of cooperatives in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and in relation to financing for development,

*Recalling* its resolution [77/281](#) of 18 April 2023, entitled “Promoting the social and solidarity economy for sustainable development”, in which it recognized that the social and solidarity economy encompasses enterprises, organizations and other entities that are engaged in economic, social and environmental activities to serve the collective and/or general interest, which are based on the principles of voluntary cooperation and mutual aid, democratic and/or participatory governance, autonomy and independence and the primacy of people and social purpose over capital in the distribution and use of surpluses and/or profits, as well as assets,

*Recognizing* the important contribution and potential of all forms of cooperatives to the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, including their five-year reviews, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), 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 United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda,

*Recognizing also* that cooperatives can make important contributions towards and benefit from improved global food security through their role as stakeholders in national pathways of transformation toward sustainable, resilient and inclusive food systems,

*Noting* that, globally, there are about 3 million cooperatives, and 10 per cent of workers worldwide are either employed by a cooperative or are worker-owners within a cooperative,

*Recognizing* that cooperatives may contribute to the economic status of women, as well as to their capacity-building, including education and training in key skills, and promote the social and economic development of all persons, including young people, older persons and persons with disabilities,

*Noting with appreciation* the potential role of cooperative development in the improvement of the social and economic conditions of Indigenous Peoples and rural communities,

*Noting* the proposal contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda” to convene a world social summit in 2025, to be discussed and agreed upon by Member States, including its modalities, title, objectives, scope and possible outcomes, and emphasizing that the possible summit’s outcome should have a social development approach and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

*Welcoming* the efforts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to showcase the role of agricultural cooperatives, including in improving food security and nutrition, particularly in rural areas, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, improving the agricultural productivity of farmers, including by providing capacity-building and training, and facilitating access to markets, savings, credit, insurance and technology, and in so doing strengthen sustainable food systems,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution [70/1](#).

<sup>2</sup> Resolution [69/313](#), annex.

<sup>3</sup> [A/78/187](#).

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

3. *Calls for* the proclamation of another International Year of Cooperatives in 2025, and encourages all Member States, as well as the United Nations and all other relevant stakeholders, to take advantage of the International Year of Cooperatives as a way of promoting cooperatives and raising awareness of their contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and to overall social and economic development;

4. *Encourages* all Member States, as well as the United Nations and all other relevant stakeholders, to share best practices identified through activities implemented during the International Year of Cooperatives and to continue those activities, as appropriate;

5. *Encourages* Governments, as appropriate, to consult with cooperatives as part of their preparations for their voluntary national reviews for the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

6. *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 by strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem for cooperatives, enabling them to further contribute directly to decent employment generation, poverty and hunger eradication, education, social protection, including universal health coverage, financial inclusion and the creation of affordable housing options across a variety of economic sectors in urban and rural areas and to review existing legislation and regulations to make the national legal and regulatory environment more conducive to the creation and growth of cooperatives by improving existing laws and regulations and/or by establishing new ones, especially in the areas of access to capital, autonomy, competitiveness and fair taxation;

7. *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, older persons, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and those in vulnerable situations, so that they can empower people to transform their lives and communities positively and build inclusive societies, and to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people in cooperatives, in particular in their decision-making processes;

8. *Invites* Governments to strengthen efforts to enhance food security and nutrition to foster sustainable production and consumption, to promote the progressive realization of the right to adequate food and to focus efforts on smallholders and women farmers, as well as on agricultural and food cooperatives and farmers' networks, supported by measures to improve access to markets and financial capital, create enabling domestic and international environments and strengthen collaboration across the many initiatives in this area, including regional initiatives;

9. *Encourages* Governments to promote access to information and communications technologies as a vital channel for collaboration and the expansion of cooperatives, especially in rural areas, working towards closing the digital divides, including for all women and girls, persons with disabilities and older persons;

10. *Also encourages* Governments to intensify and expand the availability, accessibility and dissemination of evidence-based research on the operations and contribution of cooperatives, to develop a statistical framework for the systematic collection of comprehensive and disaggregated data on and the best practices of cooperative enterprises, taking into consideration available methodologies, such as

the guidelines concerning statistics of cooperatives, in collaboration with all stakeholders, and to raise public awareness of the linkages between cooperatives and sustainable development, especially in the areas of social inclusion, decent employment creation, poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions, inequality reduction, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and peacebuilding;

11. *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;

12. *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 girls, and to introduce and support programmes to improve the access of cooperatives to new technologies;

13. *Encourages* Governments to take appropriate measures to adopt or develop legislation and policies that provide women with equal access to land and support women's cooperatives and agricultural programmes and enable women's cooperatives to benefit from public and private sector procurement processes and increase trade;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the relevant United Nations and other international organizations and national, regional and international cooperative organizations, to continue to render support to Member States, as appropriate, in their efforts to create a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives, integrating cooperative values, principles and business models into educational programming, including school curricula, as appropriate, 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, within existing resources;

15. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its eightieth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

*50th plenary meeting  
19 December 2023*