

MEDIA RELEASE

Mr Kwek Kok Kwong elected as Board Member of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) – Asia Pacific Board

His successful nomination, together with past and present Singapore representatives on ICA, acknowledged by MCCY to be a driving force in promoting Singapore's co-operative movement

Singapore, 19 November 2016 – Mr Kwek Kok Kwong, Chairman of the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) and Chief Executive Officer of NTUC LearningHub Co-operative, has been elected as one of the board members in the ICA-Asia Pacific Board at this year's ICA Regional Assembly held in New Delhi, India on 18 November. He is one of the 11 newly elected members on the ICA Asia Pacific Board, alongside other elected board members from other Asia Pacific countries such as China, Japan, Korea and India.

The election took place at the 12th Regional Assembly in New Delhi, where over a thousand members gathered to discuss multiple issues concerning the development and growth of co-operative organisations in Asia Pacific. The Assembly plays a vital role in addressing various social issues such as closing the gender gap, promoting livelihood security, and developing industrial and service co-operatives in the region, in sectors such as youth, aging population, health, consumer and social services to strengthen their potential to create sustainable jobs.

Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth said: "I congratulate Mr Kwek on his appointment to the ICA-Asia Pacific Board. This is a vote of confidence in Mr Kwek's ability to strengthen the regional co-operative movement. With two Singaporeans serving on the board (the other on the ICA Global Board¹), this is a strong testimony to Singapore's achievement and contribution to the co-operative sector."

Mr Kwek, who assumed the role as Chairman of SNCF in September this year from Mr Chan Tee Seng, Chief Executive Office of NTUC First Campus Co-operative, said: "The co-operative movement has been a strong business model solving social issues and serving real social needs. Co-operatives, as self-sustaining enterprises, have a global influence economically, socially and environmentally. I look forward to working with my fellow board members to bring co-operative awareness in the region to a greater height."

The ICA is an independent, non-governmental organisation that unites, represents and serves co-operatives globally, with 292 member organisations from 95 countries and represents close to one billion individuals worldwide. ICA was one of the first non-government organisations officially recognised by the United Nations. In 1946, it was accorded consultative status. Today it holds general category consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Co-operatives also play a key role in contributing to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and co-operative businesses have called for greater inclusion of their specific business model in B20 recommendations to the G20. Charles Gould, Director-General of the International Co-operative Alliance, stated: "We see the B20² (Business 20) as an important venue for a range of issues essential to co-operatives as they are for all businesses. We encourage a greater inclusion of the impact and potential of the co-operative model in B20 recommendations."

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¹ Mr Seah Kian Peng, CEO of NTUC FairPrice Co-operative, sits on the ICA Global Board

² B20 is an outreach group of G20 which represents the international business community and brings together business leaders from across the globe.

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ABOUT SINGAPORE NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION

The Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) is the apex body of Singapore's Co-operative Movement, and secretariat of the Central Co-operative Fund (CCF). Formed in 1980 with the aim of championing Singapore's co-operative movement, the apex body represents 99% of co-operative members in Singapore through its 66 affiliated co-operatives. Today, the Movement boasts a base of more than 1.3 million members. SNCF aims to promote and develop co-operatives as sustainable enterprises that address social and economic needs through the co-operative principle of self and mutual help, so as to foster a more resilient society. SNCF is a member of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU).