

# MEDIA RELEASE

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The Australian co-operative sector received global recognition today for its work in promoting UN International Year of Co-operatives, during the presentation of a national commemorative \$1 coin to the global head of the co-operative movement, Dame Pauline Green.

Dame Green, President of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), received the golden coin from Colin Heavyside, chairman of Capricorn Society, the ICA's first member in Australia and the founding supporter of Australia's international year campaign, at an official ceremony at the ICA's General Assembly and conference in Cancun, Mexico.

The coin was produced by The Royal Australian Mint in partnership with the Australian International Year of Co-operatives secretariat. Its building blocks design represents the role that co-operatives play in sustaining populations which might otherwise struggle in a fast-paced global economy.

Australia is the only nation to have produced a national commemorative coin celebrating International Year of Co-operatives 2012. It has also produced a commemorative stamp.

In 2012 Australia has a comprehensive plan to promote public recognition of the co-operative business model, including symposiums, conferences and research. A commemorative yearbook with 50 co-operative stories, a commemorative stamp sheet and a pre paid envelope are other highlights. The Year will also see introduction of new, strengthening national co-operatives legislation paving the way for an improved regulatory framework for co-operatives.

Mr Heavyside said the Cancun coin presentation gave Australian co-operatives the opportunity to return the honour paid to them in March 2010, when Dame Pauline delivered the inaugural address for new mutual businesses body, Social Business Australia (SBA), at Australian Parliament House.

"The 2012 coin is a welcome outcome of the activities of SBA since its launch," said Heavyside.

"The co-op movement is represented in force here in Cancun for the world's launch of the International Year of Co-operatives, and the beginnings of a global renaissance, advanced by proponents within the mutual movement, is set to be irrepressible and effective. 2012 will likely mark the beginning of a new age where the deployment of capital is not only for the purposes of making a profit but also to help add value to people's lives in a dignified manner, where value will be measured in good social outcomes and not only by the dollars earned," said Mr Heavyside.

**Mr Heavyside will be available to talk to the media about Australia's co-operative sector and its 2012 effort after the presentation of the coin in the official media room.**

