

# Preface



Ladies and gentlemen,  
dear friends from the cooperatives,

the United Nations have proclaimed 2012 the "International Year of Cooperatives". In so doing, they pay tribute to the contributions made by cooperatives to the economic and social development in many countries.

One of the outstanding pioneers of our modern cooperative system is Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen; he was born in the Westerwald close to the UN City of Bonn almost 200 years ago and founded the first rural cooperatives. His aim was to combat poverty in the rural areas by offering individuals new economic and social opportunities. Across the world, successful cooperative systems and enterprises have developed out of these early forms of cooperatives.

The International Raiffeisen Union (IRU), which was founded in 1968 on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen, wishes to discuss the role of the cooperative idea in the contemporary world and its future prospects by providing a platform at the International Raiffeisen Conference in Bonn.

As the global association of national cooperative organisations that adhere to the Raiffeisen principles, the IRU wishes to cherish and develop the idea originating from F.-W. Raiffeisen. The International Raiffeisen Conference is meant to contribute to this end.

With this in mind, I hope that this day will give us all fruitful discussions and new insights into our work for the benefit of the cooperative members.

Franky Depickere  
IRU President

## Conference venue

The World Conference Center Bonn is located in the middle of Bonn's former government quarter and next to the river Rhine. The former federal government Plenary Chamber of the World Conference Center Bonn is a very unique location – only here can conferences and events be held, where German parliamentarians once debated.

## World Conference Center Bonn

Bonn Conference Center  
Management GmbH  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 2  
53113 Bonn  
[www.worldccbonn.com](http://www.worldccbonn.com)



## Organizer

IRU  
International Raiffeisen Union  
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## Conference secretariat

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Here you will find the online application form:  
[www.iru2012.mediacompany.com](http://www.iru2012.mediacompany.com)

The conference language is English – all plenary sessions and Working group 3 will be translated in German, French and Spanish.



## The Raiffeisen idea – a model fit for the future

INTERNATIONAL  
RAIFFEISEN CONFERENCE



# The Raiffeisen idea – a model fit for the future

INTERNATIONAL RAIFFEISEN CONFERENCE THURSDAY, 3RD MAY 2012 FORMER PLENARY CHAMBER OF THE GERMAN PARLIAMENT (BUNDESTAG) IN BONN

## Program

08:30 hrs Registration  
Moderation: **Ulrich Wickert**

**10:00 hrs Opening Session**  
Franky Depickere, IRU President

**10:15 hrs Dame Pauline Green**,  
ICA President  
Video Message

**Lectures**  
**Dr. Piet Moerland**, President of the European Association of Cooperative Banks (EACB) and Chairman of the Executive Board of the Rabobank Nederland  
**Hans-Jürgen Beerfeltz**, Secretary of State BMZ  
**Charles Gould**, ICA Secretary General

**11:15 hrs Coffee break**

**11:45 hrs Lectures**  
**The cooperative idea in the various regions of the world**  
**Alpha Ouédraogo**, General Manager Confédération des Institutions financières (CIF), West Africa  
**Ramón Imperial**, Director General Caja Popular Mexicana, Mexico  
**Jaya Arunachalam**, President Working Women's Forum, India

**13:15 hrs Lunch-Buffer**

**14:15 hrs Introduction of the specialized sectoral topics** with focus on identity and governance in plenary sessions:  
**Dr. Hilmar Gernet**, IRU Vice-President and Member of the Board, Head "Politics & Society", Raiffeisen Schweiz

**14:30 hrs Split-up of the participants**  
into 3 working groups

**14:45 hrs General theme of the working groups**  
**Factors of success for cooperative enterprises in the various economic sectors**

**Working group 1**

- Factors of success/Cooperative Difference
- How does a cooperative bank distinguish itself from a usual bank?
- International Development

Head: **Hervé Guider**, Secretary General EACB

**Working group 2**

- Corporate Social Responsibility – Cooperative Difference
- Agriculture/Agricultural Financing
- Legislation

Head: **Peter Püspök**, Chairman of the Board, Oikokredit Austria

**Working group 3**

- The Raiffeisen idea – a model fit for the future of the global world
- International revival
- Entrepreneurial implementation of the Raiffeisen idea

Head: **Dirk J. Lehnhoff**, IRU Vice-President and Member of the Board of DGRV

**15:45 hrs Coffee break**  
Back into the plenary session

**16:15 hrs Lecture**  
**Challenges for cooperatives after the year 2012**, **Prof. Theresia Theurl**, Cooperative Institute Münster

**17:00 hrs Conclusions**  
**Etienne Pflimlin**, IRU Vice-president and Co-President of Cooperatives Europe

**17:30 hrs Closing words**  
**Franky Depickere**

**FRIDAY, 4TH MAY 2012:**  
**SPECIAL PROGRAM**  
(against fees):

**„On the trail of Raiffeisen“**  
(Hamm, Weyerbusch, Flammersfeld)

08:30 a.m. Departure from Bonn  
10:00 hrs Arrival of the buses/Start of the special programm  
13:00 hrs Lunch buffet at the Montabaur Castle  
approx. Participants' departure  
15:00 hrs (Indication ICE to Frankfurt Airport)

**EXHIBITION SPECIAL COOPERATIVES WILL PRESENT THEMSELVES IN THE RECEPTION HALL OF THE PLENARY ROOM**

- DGRV Itinerant Exhibition
- Belgian Raiffeisen Foundation BRS
- Academy of German Cooperatives ADG

