



**International Co-operative
Alliance – Africa**
A Region of the International
Co-operative Alliance

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**ICA-AFRICA PRESIDENT SPEECH ON COOPERATIVE HOUSING AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 2030 CONFERENCE IN EGYPT,
1ST – 4TH DECEMBER 2019**

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen;

Good morning.

I am honored to stand before you this morning to give an address on this year's International Conference on Cooperative Housing, with the theme; '**Cooperative Housing and Sustainable Development Goals 2030**'

The world, for all its imperfections ranging from unbalanced developments, insurgencies, extremism and poverty is in a much better state than we found it; many years ago, when most of us here were born.

Ladies and Gentlemen: I recollect those times when we used to go to school bare footed and walked miles to see a classroom. I recollect the days when our mothers used to give birth at home and to make matters even worse, in delicate cases; when such mothers were rode on a donkey cart to access health facilities. Those are the days when mud walled and grass thatched houses were the order of the day in my village. People and animals sharing

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Social transformation and sustained economic development.

Our Mission:

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a hut was not a big deal those days. Life was not as easy then but there was also some thrilling part in it all!!

Currently, extreme poverty has significantly reduced, the under-five mortality fell almost 50% between 2000 and 2017, massive immunization campaigns have saved millions of lives and literacy rates levels of education have improved significantly. There is recognition of progress in several SDGs in many countries, but there is no single country which is on track to meet the goals.

Even more worrying is that the world seems to be losing ground in many areas: such as the very foundations of the basic needs to human development such as; food, shelter and clothing.

According to The Spotlight on Sustainable Development Goals 2019 report; *Reshaping Governance for Sustainability*; in 2018, 4.2 billion people in the world lived in cities and an additional 2.5 billion will urbanize by 2050. The same report indicates that, 100 million people are homeless and 900 million live in slums and the informal settlements where access to vital services is precarious.

Distinguished Cooperators, Universal, free access to essential public services are the foundations blocks of the sustainable development goals.

The commitment to achieve decent, safe and affordable housing for all tops the SDG 11 target list, and the same is at the core of the **Cooperative Business Model** and actually

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among one of the key sectors as enshrined by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA).

However, rapidly increasing urbanization and demographic rates, insufficient public infrastructure investment, urban gentrification, real estate financing and the privatization of public housing, land and services are making it harder to fulfill the course. Skyrocketing prices for the sale and rent of housing are reshaping cities across income-segregated geographies, expelling low-wage workers and vulnerable dwellers to the outskirts of cities, while forced and violent evictions are a common occurrence.

Africa is the least-urbanized continent, accommodating 11.3 percent of the world's urban population, and the Sub-Saharan region is the continent's least-urbanized area. However, the region's cities are expanding rapidly—by 2050, Africa's urban population is projected to reach 1.2 billion, with an urbanization rate of 58 percent, according UN-HABITAT report. With this rate of growth, Africa will overtake Asia as the world's most rapidly urbanizing region by 2025 according to UN report. Although the nature and pace of urbanization varies among countries, with over a quarter of the world's fastest growing cities, Africa is undergoing a massive urban transition.

Cooperatives in Africa have excelled in providing housing to the most marginalized groups in society as well as aiding different government in meeting their strategy objectives while contributing to employment as for the case of National Cooperative Housing Union (NACHU) in Kenya, Zimbabwe National Housing Cooperative

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Organisation (ZINAHCO) in Zimbabwe and the General Authority for Construction & Housing Cooperatives in Egypt, among other housing cooperatives in Africa.

Distinguished Guests: The ending Blueprint for a Cooperative Decade 2020, recognizes the critical role housing cooperatives play in addressing the socio-economic challenges in the world today.

For instance; by their nature, housing cooperatives members spend majority of their lives in the cooperative; as this is where they make their homes; Housing cooperative members, always take the long-term view in the financial planning and revenue generation to benefit their members and society at large.

Secondly, housing cooperatives play a critical role in providing community with social benefit through the relief of housing. Across the world, housing cooperatives contribute to meeting social policy goals through the provision of affordable, adequate, safe shelter to those in housing need. Moreover, they do so not as clients of the state but as autonomous enterprises that may form partnerships with governments and not be subordinate to them.

Finally, housing cooperatives are committed to the values and principles of the movement already and have incentive to protect their environment that other multiple residential housing businesses do not: through their commitment to community. This

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contributes to the preservation of the environment hence lowering the adverse effect effects of climate change.

Ladies and Gentlemen: As the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Cooperatives approaches, concrete examples of good practices of cooperatives working to implement the Sustainable Development Goals are factual.

By sharing knowledge, partnering and creating synergies, in platforms such as this; will help cooperatives across different sectors to fully realize their critical contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In conclusion, **distinguished guests;** I would like to thank you all for listening and wish you fruitful deliberations in this exciting conference.

Japheth Magomere
President
ICA-Africa

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