

**“More than ever, the world needs cooperation”**

*Monique F. Leroux takes stock of her eight years  
at the helm of Desjardins Group*

**Montreal, April 9, 2016** –“We live in a complex and globalized world. A world that must also face the challenges of food security, climate change, employment, education and financial inclusion. These major challenges concern us all. We cannot remain indifferent because we are all citizens of the world. More than ever, the world needs cooperation. We must choose unity over division. We must focus on what brings us together.”

This conviction grew over Monique Leroux’s eight years as President of Desjardins Group. Today, she shared her beliefs with the caisse delegates present for the Desjardins Group Annual General Meetings at Montreal’s Palais des Congrès.

Monique Leroux believes strongly that Desjardins Group and the global cooperative movement have an essential role to play in a future fraught with challenges. “Moving forward, I will be pursuing my cooperative engagement as President of the International Co-operative Alliance. My three watchwords for the cooperative movement will be: unite, promote and develop. With the strength of our local, regional and national networks, our cooperative movement must take on today’s major challenges. I am confident that with all of you at Desjardins, and with all the cooperatives across the globe, together, we have the power and the responsibility to make a difference in the world.”

**Looking back with pride: “Desjardins is a collective force.”**

In a moving speech, she looked back at her two terms as President of Desjardins Group, explaining how overwhelmed she had been by the responsibility handed to her on March 29, 2008. “I had no idea how intense this trip that I was about to take would be. It was intense in terms of requirements and of collective achievements. But especially intense—and exhilarating—at the human and social level,” she revealed. “Every day for the last eight years, I have seen the incredible strength of cooperation between people who share a common goal. A goal that is bigger than any of us. A goal that is helping us all unite to achieve a single mission: serving our members and clients, and ensuring Desjardins’ survival while maintaining our cooperative values.”

Among her sources of pride, she mentioned:

- The initiatives to better serve members and clients and to simplify their lives, and the creation of the Desjardins Promise.
- The innovative projects that ensured Desjardins’ growth and development, as well as the diversification of its activities across Canada and around the world.
- The improvements to the organization’s performance and financial stability, including strengthening its capitalization in an increasingly strict regulatory environment.

- The organization’s commitment to the development of people and employee engagement, which has made Desjardins one of the Best Employers in Canada, and its adoption of a structured succession plan.
- The expression of Desjardins’ cooperative strength and leadership, through the actions of Développement international Desjardins, the Co-op-Me financial education program, its service offer to cooperatives, its solidarity-based finance activities and the International Summit of Cooperatives.

Ms. Leroux reminded delegates that she began her term with the theme of trust and confidence, which cannot be bought, only earned anew each day. “Trust is at the heart of our profession. And our success as an organization requires us to trust in one another—officers, managers and employees throughout Desjardins. That is what allows us to work together so we can be the best for our members and clients.” “Together, we are a collective force.”

To conclude, Ms. Leroux welcomed her successor, Guy Cormier, emphasizing that he was following in the footsteps of the many distinguished presidents who had worked with officers and employees to move Desjardins Group forward through every era. “I know that you have the abilities and the heart required to continue to write the long and beautiful story of our organization,” she stated. “And I know that you will succeed, for you are not alone. Desjardins’ greatest strength, its people, will be by your side. I therefore wish you every success as our president. Like everyone else in this room, I trust you implicitly.”

### **About Desjardins Group**

[Desjardins Group](#) is the leading cooperative financial group in Canada and the sixth largest cooperative financial group in the world with assets of \$248.1 billion. It has been rated one of the Best Employers in Canada by Aon Hewitt. To meet the diverse needs of its members and clients, Desjardins offers a full range of products and services to individuals and businesses through its extensive distribution network, online platforms and subsidiaries across Canada. Considered North America’s strongest bank according to Bloomberg News, Desjardins has one of the highest capital ratios and [credit ratings](#) in the industry.

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