

**“I want to make Desjardins a single, large, people-focused organization that is modern, performs well and is easy to do business with”**

*Guy Cormier presents his ambitions for the future of Desjardins Group*

**Montreal, April 9, 2016** – Newly elected Desjardins Group Chair of the Board, President and CEO Guy Cormier addressed Desjardins caisse delegates for the first time today. Speaking in Montreal at the cooperative organization’s 2016 Annual General Meetings, Cormier told delegates his goal is to make Desjardins one large, people-focused organization that is modern, performs well and is easy to do business with. He went on to explain the three ambitions he intends to fulfil during his term.

**Reconnecting Desjardins with its purpose**

In Cormier’s own words, “Desjardins used to be number one in people’s hearts, and I’d like it to be that way again.” The new President wants to *reconnect Desjardins with its purpose by refocusing on members and assuming its role as a socioeconomic leader*. He intends to succeed by focusing on youth: “I’m committed to opening Desjardins to young people, whether by a quick and decisive transition to mobile, through a more personalized service offer, or with better support to young entrepreneurs.”

**Harnessing Desjardins’s full potential**

Desjardins faces several challenges in the years ahead and Cormier thinks the organization needs to do more to draw on its strengths. His second ambition is to *harness Desjardins’s full potential*. He urged delegates to foster greater solidarity and work as a team to meet members’ and clients’ needs. “We’re all on the same team; we all have the same logo on our uniform. At the end of the game, we all want people and communities to be the winners.”

Cormier also explained the importance of innovation in his plan. “We all know that in 2016, innovation means going fully digital. We will resolutely enter the financial world of tomorrow, and meet the digital shift head on. But innovating also means adopting new ways of thinking and acting. Innovating is daring. It’s valuing experimentation. It’s encouraging initiative.”

Committing to innovation drives performance, although Cormier added that financial performance isn’t an end in itself. “It’s actually the result of our business performance: the satisfaction of our members and clients, their financial autonomy, and the enrichment of people and their communities. That said, it’s clear that Desjardins Group’s performance must also be financial. The health of our finances is essential to our success and credibility. But money must be at the service of members and communities, and never the other way around.”

According to the President, growth in Canadian and international markets is essential to a strong organization that is able to provide benefits to every caisse and every member and client. “We’ll consolidate, optimize and take full advantage of our recent acquisitions for the direct benefit of our caisses.”

### **Investing in people first**

The new President’s third ambition is to *invest in people first*. “I’m convinced we can’t achieve the ambitions I just talked about with just machines, money and projects. We need people too. Above all, we’re an organization of people at the service of people. It’s our people who will define our evolution. ”

In conclusion, stating his belief that Desjardins has all the tools necessary to become a leader in the financial markets, to keep innovating and to create more wealth for people and communities, Cormier encouraged delegates to continue Alphonse Desjardins’ life’s work. “It’s now up to each of us to make a difference in the lives of people and communities. We should be proud that we’re the only ones who can. We’re not just a financial institution, but a real socioeconomic leader. Imagine everything we can do together to enrich the lives of people and communities!”

### **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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