

“We became a powerful and respected voice of consumers globally as never before. A voice that not only challenged the largest corporations and won, but which also engaged the UN system in ways never seen before to achieve real results for real people.”

Anwar Fazal IOCU/Consumers International President, 1978 - 1984

- Zveza Potrošnikov Slovenije
Svegers Konsumenter
The Network for Consumer Protection in Pakistan
Tribuna Ecuatoriana de Consumidores y Usuarios
Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband
Voluntary Organisation in Interest of Consumer Education
Which? **CHOICE**
- Yayasan Lembhaga Konsumen Indonesia
Jamyat Almuhsitahlik-Lubuhan
Acción del Consumidor
Consumers' Federation of Australia
Fundación por los Derechos del Consumidor
Macao Consumer Council
Consumer Focus
National Association of Consumers
Active Consumers
Advisory Council on Consumer Affairs
Shogata e Konsumentit Shqiptar
Consumer Protection Association of Macao
Associação de Usuário de Bancos, Cajas y Seguros
Associação Geral de Consumidores
PRO TESTE
ATLAS-SIALS
Consumers Association of Burundi
Association for Consumers Action on Safety and Health
Association Force Ouvrière Consommateurs
Tudatos Vásárlók Egyesülete
Asociacia spotrebiteľských subjektov Slovenska
Stowarzyzenie Konsumentow Polskich
Association for the Environment and the Consumer
Association Topolise des Consommateurs
- Association pour la Défense de l'Environnement et des Consommateurs
Association Topolise des Consommateurs
Azad Yeshlahaklylar Birliyi
Belorusskoe Obshchestvo Zashchity Potrebitelei
Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs
Chinese Women's Consumers Association
Citizen, Consumer and Civic Action Group
Comité para la Defensa del Consumidor Hondureño
Consumer Coordination Council
Consumer Law News Network
Consumer Protection Council
Consumer Protection Organization of Nigeria
Consumers Association of Ghana
Consumers Association of India
Consumers Association of Singapore
Consumers' Forum
Consumers Union of Quebec
Nilton Shinshisa Remei
Consumidores y Usuarios Asociados Uruguay
Corporación Nacional de Consumidores y Usuarios de Chile
Hrvatska Udruga Za Zastitu Potrošača
Education and Research Association for Consumers
Estonian Consumers Union
European Association for the Co-ordination of Consumer Representation in Standardization
Consumidores Independientes en Acción
Federación de Usuarios y Consumidores en Acción



- Lithuanian National Consumer Federation
Vekstat Lietuvos Vartotojų Federacija
SOS Consummateurs
Réseau Associatif des Consommateurs de l'Énergie
Consumers' Advocacy Centre
Tukeltyji Koruma Darnai
Association for the Defence of Consumer Rights and Interests
Fundación Bandera Ecológica
Unión de Consumidores de España
Generazione Attiva
Consumers' Federation of Georgia
Consumers Union of Russia
Consumers Empowerment Organisation of Nigeria
Consumer Awareness Organisation
Asociacija potrošača Srbije
Pokret za zastitu potrošača Beograd
African Woman and Child Feature Service
Associação de Defesa do Consumidor
Tanzania Consumer Advocacy Society
Zambian Consumer Association
Institute for Consumer Protection
Nacionalna Organizacija Potrošača Srbije
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Autoridad de Protección del Consumidor y Defensa de la Competencia
Consumer Affairs Authority, Sri Lanka
Consumer Affairs Victoria
Office of the Consumer Protection Board of Thailand
Instituto de Consumo de Castilla La Mancha
Consumer Rights Protection Centre of Republic of Latvia
Dirección de Consumo y Seguridad Industrial, España
Department of Fair Trading and Consumer Affairs, Fiji
Independent Consumer and Competition Commission, Papua New Guinea
Direcção-Geral do Consumidor, Portugal
Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour, Samoa
Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperatives, Kiribati
Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce, Saint Lucia
Ministry of Consumer Affairs Division, Trinidad and Tobago
Department of Consumer Affairs, India
Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour, Israel
Ministry of Industry, Trade and International Trade, Zimbabwe
Ministry of Trade and Foreign Economic Co-operation, Republic of Tatarstan
Ministry of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing, Lesotho
National Authority for Consumers Protection, Botswana
National Authority for Consumers Protection, Romania
Office of Consumer Protection, South Africa
Office of Consumer Affairs, Industry, Canada
Office of Consumer Protection, Canada
Servicio Nacional del Consumidor, Chile
Instituto Nacional de Protección de los Derechos del Consumidor, Dominican Republic
UK Office of Fair Trading
Zambia Competition Commission
Consumer Protection Council, Nigeria
Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection
Consumer Affairs Commission, Philippines
Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department, State Government, of Tamil Nadu
The Consumer Protection Agency, Egypt
Ukrainian State Committee for Technical Regulation and Consumer Policy
Kulturolévisztasó
Fundação de Proteção e Defesa do Consumidor do Estado de São Paulo

CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL

50 YEARS OF THE GLOBAL CONSUMER MOVEMENT

5



1960 - 2010

Athrocconsumo
Verein für Konsumenteninformation
Kultitalai-Konsumentienra ry
UF-Que Choisir
American Council on Consumer Interests
Consumer Guidance Society of India
Asociación Peruana de Consumidores y Usuarios
Associação Portuguesa para a Defesa do Consumidor
Association des Consommateurs du Mali
Test-Achats

Zdrúženje slovenských spotrebiteľov
Association pour la Défense des Consommateurs
Associação Consumatori Urenti

Centro para la Defensa del Consumidor
Comité de Defensa de los Derechos del Consumidor
Confederación de Consumidores y Usuarios
Consumation, logement et Cadre de vie
Consumentenbond
Consumer Association of Malawi
Consumer Council of Zimbabwe
Consumer Council of Fiji

Fohtuugerädet
Consumer Education and Research Society
Consumer Federation of America
Consumer Information Network of Kenya
Consumer Unity and Trust Society
Consumers Union of U.S.

Consumers Association of Bangladesh
Consumers Association of Penang
Służba o obroty spożebiehlbi Eeake republiky
Consumer NZ
Consumers Korea

Organizacija na potroševatelja na Makedonija
Consumidores Argentinos
Cyprus Consumers Association
EKTOZIO
Federation of Consumer Organisations - Tamil Nadu and Pondichery
Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations
Foundation for Consumers
Fundashi pa Konsument
Ghaeda Tal-Konsunnari
Guyana Consumers Association
Instituto Brasileiro de Defesa do Consumidor
Israel Consumer Council
Interrepublikan Confederation of Consumer Societies
Association des Consommateurs de l'île Maurice

National Society for Consumer Protection
Neytidsamstikin
Organisation de Défense du Consommateur
Organización de Consumidores y Usuarios
China Consumers' Association
Hong Kong Consumer Council
Föderalegä Konsumentöv
Selangor and Federal Territory Consumers Association

National Consumers' Forum
National Consumers' League
Shodaren
National Society for Consumer Protection
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Selangor and Federal Territory Consumers Association



Federation des Associations de Consommateurs de Côte d'Ivoire
Forum National Concerns Trust
Forum Nacional das Entidades Cuis de Defesa do Consumidor
Fundación Antonio Núñez Jiménez de la Naturaleza y el Hombre
Fundación del Consumidor y del Usuario
IBON Foundation
Instituto Panameño de Derecho de Consumidores y Usuarios
Kerito Prostatas Kariainaloto
Sveriges Konsumenter / Samvetkan
Korean National Council of Consumer Organisations
Lembaga Perlindungan Dan Perindungan Konsumen
Liga por la Defensa del Consumidor de Nicaragua
Liga Uruguaya de Defensa del Consumidor
Ligue pour la Défense du Consommateur au Bénin
MAG Estudios de Consumo
National Federation of Mongolian Consumers' Association
National Consumer Forum
Option Consommateurs
Organización de Consumidores y Usuarios de Chile
Pro-Consumers
National League of Consumers of Kazakhstan
Public Interest Advocate Centre
Regroupement pour la défense des consommateurs du Mali
Asociata pentru Protecția Consumatorilor din Romania
Servicio de Educación y Defensa de los Consumidores
Soco Economic Welfare Action for Women and Children
stiftung Warentest

Suomen Kultitalaitto
Uganda Consumers Protection Association
Unión de Usuarios y Consumidores
Svaarneri Iiravuniperi pashiphanitiun
Union National de Consumidores y Usuarios de la República de Panama
Unione Nazionale Consumatori
Hoi Tieu thuan va Bao ve Ngoin tieu dung Viet Nam
Yemen Society for Consumer Protection
Youth Education Network
Hankok-sodija-yurimang
Knowledge Ecology International
Bulgarian National Consumer Association
Ethiopian Consumer Protection Associatio
Tikiterici Haklary Dernegi
Fundacion AWBIO-ALERTA
Consumers' Union of Tajikistan
Nippon Consumer Voice for Better Standards
Consumers' Association New INCA
Federation of Consumers in Bulgaria
Ornan Association for Consumer Protection
El Poder del Consumidor
Associação para Defesa do Consumidor
Colectivo Ecológico Jalisco
Aruba Consumer Solidarity Group
Instituto de Estudios de Derecho del Consumo
Unión de Consumidores de Argentina
Consumer Protection Association of the Gambia
Centar za zastitu potrošaca
Cuddalore District Consumer Protection Organisation
Fogyasztovédelelni Egyesületek Országos Szövetsége
Croatian Union of Consumer Protection Organisations
CONSENT
The Union '21 Century'

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CONSENT
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CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL - OUR VISION

'Our vision is a world where people have access to safe and sustainable goods and services, exercising their individual rights as consumers and using the force of their collective power for the good of consumers everywhere.'

Consumers International

THE STORY OF A TRULY GLOBAL MOVEMENT



Consumers International (CI), formerly known as the International Organisation of Consumers Unions (IOCU), was started in 1960 on a wing and a prayer by a group of five consumer organisations from the US, Western Europe and Australia.

Originally established as a global information exchange between the increasing number of consumer product-testing organisations that had sprung up in the post-war boom years, CI quickly established a formidable reputation as an agent for change on the consumer issues of the day.

In 10 short years, we had attracted 50 member organisations. Another decade later, we had achieved General Consultative Status at the United Nations (UN) – having helped wage and win major campaigns against transnational companies over issues relating to baby food and pesticides.

Our history has taken us from the US and Europe to Asia and Latin America, through Eastern Europe and across Africa. Today, we have more than 225 member organisations in 115 countries, and we continue to grow.

CI's priorities and programmes have evolved to reflect greater involvement in issues ranging from public utilities and food and drug safety, to the environment and credit and debt that affect consumers everywhere.

What has not changed is CI's commitment to building a powerful international movement to protect and empower all consumers.

As CI celebrates its 50th year, we have an organisation of which we can be justly proud. I'd like to invite you to share in some of our successes and our ambitions for the future.

Samuel Ochieng, President, Consumers International

The history of Consumers International

CONSUMER RIGHTS TAKE HOLD



IOCU initially acted to unite those consumer groups wanting to help ordinary people make informed buying decisions as post-war consumerism took hold, but it soon developed its role as an international backer, giving consumer groups the collective power that they lacked individually, particularly in tackling laws weighted in favour of industry.

IOCU was intent upon growing its membership and in assisting newly formed groups across the world, while taking care to ensure the members' independence from business interests. This principle still holds true today – member organisations must operate exclusively in the consumer interest, and be free from political parties or cash subsidies. They must be non-profit-making and non-commercial.

Soon IOCU began communicating via member newsletters and biennial conferences, and it spoke of a wider consumer agenda that included the need to address issues such as poverty, access to basic goods and services, and the challenges faced by consumers in developing countries.

Although membership continued to increase, resources remained extremely tight. However, in 1968, IOCU adopted a new constitution – passing power from the founding organisations to a voting membership, and increasing the fees. This made more money available and it created the opportunity for participation by organisations that did not fit the model of the founders, in particular, those beginning to emerge in developing countries where consumer education and advocacy about basic access were the main concern.

March 1960 represents a landmark in the development of the world consumer movement. Meeting in The Hague, delegates representing consumer groups from different parts of the world completed the organisation of the International Organisation of Consumers Unions (IOCU), later to become Consumers International (CI).

The five non-profit consumer organisations that initiated this effort – and whose ongoing support continues to be crucial to CI's success today – were: Consumers Union, US; Consumers' Association (Which?), UK; Nederlandse Consumentenbond, Netherlands; Union Belge des Consommateurs (Tests Achats), Belgium; and the Australian Consumers' Association (Choice).

1960 | 16 members

International Organisation of Consumers Unions (IOCU) founded at the Kurhaus Hotel, The Hague, March 1960

Timeline

1962

US President John F Kennedy sends a message to US Congress asserting the basic rights of consumers



With an entirely new approach, Anwar sought to target transnational corporations with specific campaigns, engaging organisations in both developed and developing countries. He took IOCU into new ways of campaigning and advocacy by playing a leading role in setting up issue-based networks – such as the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), Pesticide Action Network (PAN) and Health Action International (HAI) – which included partners from outside the consumer movement.

'A new social institution, the consumer testing movement, now makes its bow on the international scene. Organised consumers have joined in a mutual effort... to bring truth to the marketplace and a better balance to the economy.'

Colston Warne, IOCU president, 1960-1970

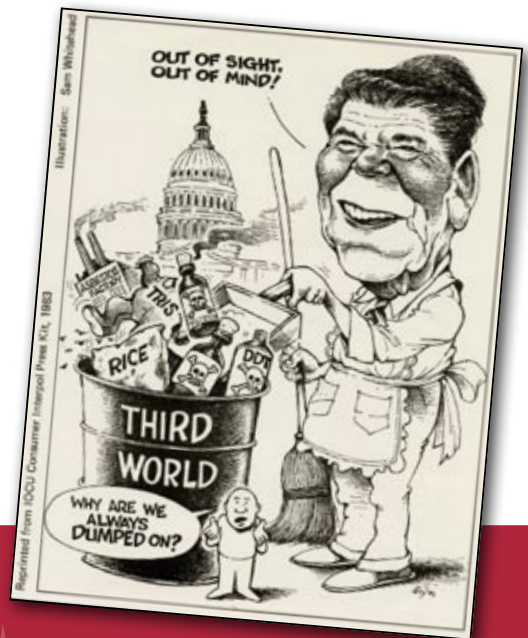
In the early 1970s, a regional office was created in Malaysia, serving Asia and the Pacific. Its advisory committee came from India, Singapore, Malaysia, Fiji and the Philippines – a very different stakeholder group from the founders of IOCU itself. This decision was to prove critical in the history of the international consumer movement.

A Bold Move Comes Good

The model for the new Asia Pacific office was to promote consumer organisations through technical assistance, training and information sharing.

But the man appointed to head it seized the moment to create something very different. Anwar Fazal was an energetic and persuasive leader, full of ideas. Over the next decade, he made the Asia Pacific office the epicentre of IOCU.

The Asia Pacific office also established Consumer Interpol, through which members exchanged information on products banned in one country but shipped to unsuspecting consumers elsewhere. This project led to lobbying at the UN for a global list of banned products, and it succeeded in 1983 when the UN began publishing the *Consolidated List of Products Banned, Withdrawn, Severely Restricted or Not Approved by Governments*.



1963

IOCU attains observer status with the United Nations



1968 | 37 members

IOCU constitution amended to allow voting rights for all full members and introduces a second, more flexible membership category



At the same time, IOCU created a global management structure, with the low-key executive secretary role being replaced by that of director general, in 1983.

By then, the Soviet Union had collapsed, and Central and Eastern Europe were converting to market economies, increasing the need for strong consumer organisations.

As the 1990s progressed, IOCU was managing extensive capacity-building programmes across the world, training in methods such as institutional management, research and fundraising as well as in specific issues. By 2000, membership numbers increased to more than 225 from 115 countries. The consumer movement had indeed become global.

Meanwhile, the consumer movement continued to grow and the membership of IOCU doubled to 150, in more than 50 countries, by the mid-1980s.

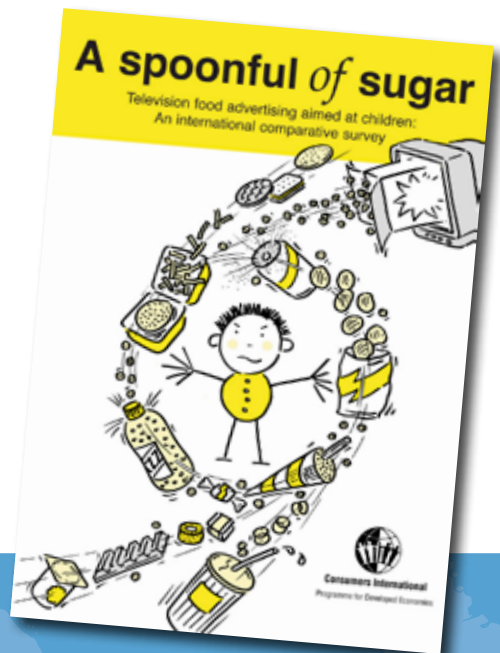
This was partly the result of IOCU's own capacity-building efforts but it was also due to significant global developments, such as economic growth in some countries and new opportunities for civil society organisations in others.

By the end of the 1990s, IOCU had issued more than 100 publications since its founding, including *Starting a Consumer Organization: Why? How?* (1964), *Consumer Testing and Research* (1976), *Problem Pesticides*, *Pesticide Problems* (1987) and *A Spoonful of Sugar* (1996).

The Need for a Global Consumer Voice

IOCU began tentative work in Latin America and the Caribbean in the early 1980s, publishing a Latin American newsletter through its member organisation in Mexico from 1981 and eventually opening a regional office in Uruguay in 1986.

Advocacy began to focus on international trade negotiations, particularly those of the newly formed World Trade Organization (WTO).



1972 | 54 members

1974 | 66 members

First IOCU regional office opens in Singapore. Moves to Penang, Malaysia, the following year



CI staff campaigning against unethical drug promotion in Sydney, Australia

IOCU also increased its work at the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (food standards), as international standards became the reference point for disputes about artificial barriers to trade.

These developments in global governance made it increasingly difficult for individual countries to adopt national standards that were different from those agreed internationally, thus increasing the need for global consumer views to be heard.

'We need to create a new paradigm of development and happiness that can generate a three-dimensional peace – peace with ourselves, peace with other people and peace with mother earth. Little people doing little things in little places everywhere can change the world.'

Anwar Fazal, IOCU president, 1978-1984

Other issues also emerged from the trade agenda, including the impact of patent and copyright protection on consumer access to Aids drugs and other essential medicines. It was clear that a powerful international consumer movement, as demonstrated by IOCU, was needed more than ever.

IOCU becomes Consumers International

By the late 1990s, a much-altered organisation was in place, and this was marked by a change of name from IOCU to Consumers International (CI), in 1995.

Campaigning and member development were now a particular priority in Central and Eastern Europe and in Africa. In the former, CI helped create a sustainable consumer presence, almost from scratch, in countries struggling with democracy, the transition to market economies and the demands of preparation for joining the EU. CI now has 32 members in countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

1975 | 95 members

1977

CI gains General Consultative Status at the UN, the highest level of engagement available to NGOs

1978 | 105 members

1979

IOCU coordinates the creation of the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN)



As CI's work on these issues continued through the 2000s, its range of campaign targets and techniques developed. Critical engagement with transnational corporations increased, but so did demands for corporate accountability and responsibility. Campaigning took on deceptive marketing of pharmaceuticals and the promotion of junk food to children. New communication techniques, such as email discussion groups, project-specific websites and campaign films were used to raise awareness and engage with members.

Today, the founding principles of the movement still energise and inspire people and organisations throughout the CI membership. The focus has broadened to address poverty reduction, corporate responsibility, services, sustainable consumption and climate change as well as providing advice on consumer products. As we look towards the next 50 years, our commitment to campaigning, advocacy and engagement continues to grow.

Global engagement was reflected in various ways as CI grew. Many publications (including annual reports) appeared in three languages – English, French and Spanish. World Congresses, which now take place every three to four years, were held for the first time in Latin America (Chile, 1997) and Africa (South Africa, 2000). And CI's presidents, beginning in 1991, came successively from Indonesia, Hong Kong, Australia, Brazil and Kenya.

Member participation in CI's work was carried forward by the range of programmes and by a greater level of engagement in policy formulation.

Other consumer issues were also made a priority – for example, access to, and the management of, utilities services, the regulation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and protecting consumer rights and privacy in the digital age.



CI World Congress 2007

1981

IOCU coordinates the formation of the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) » World Health Organization adopts the breast milk substitutes marketing code

1983

IOCU launches Consumer Interpol, an international hazardous product warning network and starts campaigning for better information on banned products » **Membership in 50 countries**

1983

The first World Consumer Rights Day held on 15 March » IOCU coordinates the setup of Health Action International (HAI) » UN publishes the first consolidated list of banned and dangerous products

World Consumer Rights Day

World Consumer Rights Day has been held annually on 15 March since 1983. The day was proposed to honour former US President John F Kennedy's historic speech to the US Congress 20 years earlier. President Kennedy became the first world leader to formally address the issue of consumer rights, giving an address that continues to inspire the work of CI today.



To the Congress of the United States:

Consumers, by definition, include us all. They are the largest economic group in the economy, affecting and affected by almost every public and private economic decision. Two-thirds of all spending in the economy is by consumers. But they are the only important group in the economy who are not effectively organized, whose views are often not heard.

President Kennedy went on to outline four consumer rights:

1 The right to safety – to be protected against products, production processes and services, which are hazardous to health or life

2 The right to be informed – to be given the facts needed to make an informed choice, and to be protected against dishonest or misleading advertising and labelling

3 The right to choose – to be able to select from a range of products and services, offered at competitive prices, with an assurance of satisfactory quality

4 The right to be heard – to have consumer interests represented in the making and execution of government policy, and in the development of products and services.

To these, CI later added another four rights:

5 The right to satisfaction of basic needs – to have access to basic, essential goods and services; adequate food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, education, public utilities, water and sanitation

6 The right to redress – to receive a fair settlement of just claims, including compensation for misrepresentation, shoddy goods or unsatisfactory services

7 The right to consumer education – to acquire knowledge and skills needed to make informed, confident choices about goods and services, while being aware of basic consumer rights and responsibilities and how to act on them

8 The right to a healthy environment – to live and work in an environment that is non-threatening to the well being of present and future generations.

This set of eight consumer rights now guide the campaign and policy work of CI and consumer organisations the world over.

1985 | 135 members

United Nations guidelines on consumer protection – a model for national consumer protection measures – are adopted, following 10 years of IOCU campaigning » UN Food & Agriculture Organization adopts first international pesticides code

1986

IOCU's Latin America Office opens in Uruguay; moves to Chile five years later

1987 | 151 members



1988

IOCU publishes consumer protection model law in Latin America and consumer protection reference laws in Asia

1989 | 171 members

HOW CI HAS LED THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT

1 Campaigning

CI has been a pioneer of a new method of campaigning for NGOs, using high-profile techniques to mobilise disparate groups on a particular issue for a particular purpose – targeting influential figures within governments and at the heart of industry, to bring about much-needed change. As a result of these tactics, CI is recognised as one of the leading campaigners in the international NGO community.

These methods have brought results. Among them, the seminal international document of the consumer movement – the *United Nations Guidelines on Consumer Protection* – was adopted by the UN, in 1985, after 10 years of CI campaigning. This gave important legitimacy to the principles of consumer rights and practical support for developing national consumer protection legislation. Numerous countries have adopted laws based on this model.

The three global networks IBFAN, HAI and PAN were CI's first long-term partnerships with groups outside its own membership, and prime examples of this pioneering campaigning activity. They helped to combine the expertise and energy of many groups into a single, vigorous and knowledgeable voice in the fight to set minimum acceptable norms for the protection of consumers globally.

IBFAN

'Bottles, not bullets, are causing the deaths of one million babies each year.'

In 1979, IOCU and other citizens' groups formed the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) to eradicate the death and disease affecting millions of Developing World babies as a result of consuming bottle-fed formula milk.

After intense campaigning by IBFAN, including organising consumer boycotts against the likes of Nestlé, whose subtle yet effective campaigns were undermining breast feeding, the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization, adopted the International Code of Marketing on Breast Milk Substitutes – the first such code designed to control widespread marketing abuses by baby food companies.

1992 | 177 members



1993
IOCU head office moves
from The Hague to London

1994
IOCU Africa office
opens in Zimbabwe

PAN

The unchecked spread and misuse of deadly pesticides led to IOCU's co-founding of the Pesticide Action Network (Pan), in 1982. Uniting more than 300 organisations in some 50 countries, PAN campaigned against toxic pesticides and unethical marketing practices, whilst promoting effective controls and, wherever possible, safe alternatives.

Despite strong opposition from pesticide-exporting companies, Pan succeeded in preventing the export of banned or restricted pesticides without the knowledge and consent of governments in importing countries.

HAI

CI co-founded Health Action International (HAI), in 1981. An informal network of some 120 consumer and public interest groups, HAI engaged in worldwide campaigns for the safe, rational and economic use of pharmaceuticals. At the 41st World Health Assembly in 1987, HAI organised a large lobby of delegates to urge stronger controls on advertising by the drugs industry.

Drug exports by European Economic Community (EEC) member states were studied by HAI Europe, as many drugs were being shipped to developing countries after being banned for sale in Europe. HAI participants built a campaign against this potentially hazardous double standard and received broad support from virtually all major political groups in the European Parliament.



1995 | 208 members

IOCU changes name to Consumers International (CI) » CI publishes consumer protection model law for Africa

1998

CI coordinates the formation of the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD), a forum for providing input to the EU and US governments on trade, product safety, financial services, internet, and intellectual property issues

1997

United Nations guidelines on consumer protection are extended to include sustainable consumption following the CI lobbying » Membership in 100 countries

2 Representation

An essential part of IOCU's, and then CI's, work has been representing the consumer interest at the United Nations and elsewhere. Formal representation gave the organisation an influential voice on issues and decisions of global importance.

For example, in the early 2000s, some GM foods were found to contain unexpected toxins and allergens and they differed nutritionally from unmodified versions. CI representation at standard-setting meetings (of the Codex Alimentarius Commission) resulted in the adoption of a strong global standard for assessing GM safety, which is now the gold standard for national food safety agencies.

CI representatives are currently seeking a WHO code on the marketing of junk food to children, to offer a benchmark for evaluating how manufacturers promote unhealthy food to children.

And since 1999, CI's London Office has provided a home to the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD), a forum for all the major consumer organisations in the European Union and the United States to provide advice to top officials of their governments on product safety standards, financial regulation and other key consumer issues.

3 Building the consumer movement

From its earliest days, CI has been a bedrock of the consumer movement, helping organisations launch from scratch and giving them the tools to flourish on their own.

CI helps with everything from capacity building and lobbying support, to networking and training. To that end, one of its hallmark programmes is the Rhoda Karpatkin Advocate Programme.

The Rhoda Karpatkin Advocate Programme was established after its namesake retired in 2001, with the purpose of developing the skills and experience of the next generation of campaigning advocates from CI member organisations in developing countries.

Rhoda, who served as president of Consumers Union from 1974 to 2001, and as President of CI from 1984 to 1991, was committed to building consumer organisations in developing countries and to mobilising consumer groups to fight for consumer rights and social justice. The programme, funded by CU, is designed to support CI's strategic objective of 'building strong consumer organisations around the world that can campaign effectively for consumers nationally and through CI globally'.

'...Consumers International and ISO, the International Organization of Standardization, have collaborated increasingly to identify areas where International Standards could assist and to raise the involvement of consumer interests in their development... The global relevance of ISO standards, and their usefulness for consumers, can only gain from this collaboration with CI and its network of national consumer associations.'

Alan Bryden, ISO secretary general, 2003-2008

2000 | 225 members

2004

CI successfully campaigns for work to begin on a corporate social responsibility standard at the International Organization of Standardisation (ISO). CI succeeds in getting ISO to agree that consumers should be a distinct stakeholder group within ISO decision-making for the first time ► **Membership in 115 countries**

A special relationship with the UN

On 10 April 1963, the United Nations Economic and Social Council granted consultative status to CI (known as IOCU at the time). This meant that CI became the main group representing the practical problems faced by consumers around the world.

This relationship also made it possible for CI to make contributions to the main UN agencies dealing with our health, the food that we eat and human and labour rights.

At the annual WHO Assembly and at Codex Alimentarius (the UN food standards agency), CI gained the right to speak alongside member nations in debates – often as the only voice for consumer rights.

CI pressure at the UN during the 1980s helped bring about a number of important measures.

Among others, these were the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, the WHO/UNICEF International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, the UN Consolidated List of Banned or Restricted Products, and the WHO's Ethical Criteria for Medicinal Drug Promotion.

Today, lobbying continues for the WHO to adopt an international code on the marketing of food to children.

2007

CI charter on sustainable access to energy published

2009

CI appointed as official NGO partner to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)

2008

CI appointed to the UN Advisory Board on sustainable consumption to represent the global NGO community
» CI publishes its recommendations for an international code on the marketing of food to children

Leaders

who have shaped
Consumers International

Peter Goldman

The director of the UK's Consumers' Association (now Which?) from 1964 until 1987. Played a leading role in IOCU until his death in 1987. A principal architect of the transformation of IOCU, from a club of specialist publishers to an international membership organisation. Elected president of IOCU in 1970 and served until 1975. The Asia Pacific Office was set up during his period of office, helped by additional support from Which? (as well as Consumers Union). Was appointed director general of IOCU in 1987 after retirement from CA, but he died as he was taking up this new role.

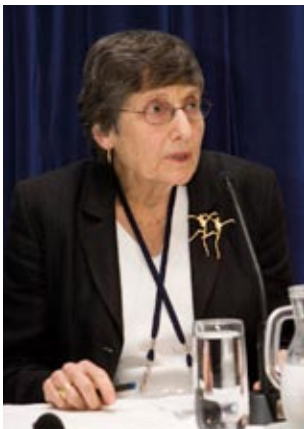
Colston Warne

A visionary of the consumer movement for more than 50 years, spanning much of the 20th century. Economics professor at Amherst College in the US, a founder of Consumer Union (CU) in 1936 and its board chair from then until he retired in 1980. Starting in the 1950s, he was an energetic supporter of the development of consumer organisations in other countries. One of the founding signatories of IOCU in 1960, and its president for the first 10 years. As well as his own vision, drive and enthusiasm, he provided substantial financial and technical support from CU that was critical to IOCU's early work.



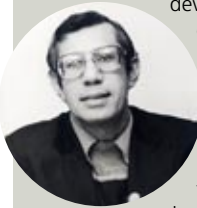
Rhoda Karpatkin

Became president of Consumers Union in 1974, having previously been the organisation's legal counsel. Led CU until her retirement in 2001. Member of IOCU's executive throughout this period and was president from 1984 to 1991. A passionate supporter of expanding the consumer movement in developing countries – the establishment of the Latin America Office, initial work towards the Africa Office and early exploration in Central and Eastern Europe took place during her presidency of IOCU. A founder and strong supporter of the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue, in which she is still involved. Highly influential in maintaining the intellectual framework and practical expansion of the international consumer movement for more than three decades.



Anwar Fazal

One of the principal founders of Consumers Association of Penang, Malaysia, in 1969, before becoming the director of IOCU's first regional office, for Asia and the Pacific, in 1974. Created programmes that addressed significant problems for consumers in



developing countries for the first time; raised IOCU's profile through his broad vision,

his gifts for lobbying and as a speaker; gave IOCU a prominent role in the international NGO community by creating networks to work collectively on specific campaign issues; raised grant funds for the first time to support the networks and the expansion of IOCU's work. Elected IOCU president from 1978 to 1984 and dominated the organisation in this period. Perhaps the most influential figure in the history of IOCU, creating an organisation that was vibrant and innovative at the time and laying the groundwork for working with a global membership in the 1990s.



Marilena Lazzarini

The first president from Latin America in CI's history, elected in 2003. A tireless advocate in Brazil's courts for enforcement of laws related to the growing and labelling of GM crops. Her campaign was critical to subsequent efforts all over the world to permit informed consumer choice and safe management of biotechnology. She was a founding member of Brazil's first major consumer group, the Institute for Consumer Defense, in 1987, and was its executive coordinator from 1996-2003. From 2003 to 2007, she served as CI's president and, during her tenure, she led a transition to a more dynamic and high-profile campaigning organisation.

THE FUTURE

Persistence. Perseverance. Courage. Endurance.

These words, which are often used to describe dedicated marathon runners, sum up both the Consumers International (CI) heritage and our pledge for the future.

For anyone who has ever worked tirelessly on consumer issues, it is almost always a test of endurance. Victories are not won overnight, nor are they won in only one arena.

For 50 years, CI has waged battles in the corridors of parliaments and corporations, in the halls of international bodies and on the streets of our communities.

CI has brought to these battles the combined force of what is now more than 225 organisations in more than 115 countries – and the wisdom of decades of collective experience in lobbying, campaigning, and mobilising for change.

As a result, CI has been able to reduce consumers' exposure to dangerous risks such as hazardous drugs, unsafe and unsuitable products, deceptive marketplace practices and much more.

And what about the next 50 years? As members of CI, we are committed to fighting as hard and as long as it takes to secure basic consumer rights for individuals and families, wherever they may live.

We are also committed to ensuring that consumers have a lasting voice as well as an impact in their local marketplaces and in the global marketplace.

There are still quality-of-life risks from the stark fact that too many people around the world lack access to necessities such as water, electricity, healthcare and other essential needs. They lack access to safe food, basic financial services and a fair and safe marketplace.

In developed countries, as well, too many consumers are victims of marketplace abuses, a lack of information to make informed choices, barriers to effectively exercising their consumer rights, and indifference, or worse, on the part of some corporate and governmental powerbrokers.

For people everywhere, there is the significant risk to the health of our planet if we fail to achieve sustainable consumption. We consume not only products and services, but valuable resources. With rights and responsibilities as citizens and consumers, we recognise the crucial balance of consumers being treated fairly and treating our planet fairly.

Finally, millions of consumers around the world, in developing and developed countries alike, still lack the power to seek – and receive – justice in the marketplace. We owe them our support.

While the international consumer movement lacks the money of profit-driven special interests, we make up for that difference with person power. And we gain strength from the diversity of our members.

CI, in the years ahead, will be the catalyst for building an ever more powerful global consumer movement that unites often disparate voices into one formidable force for change.

All of us who are part of CI today, and those who came before us, have helped member organisations stand up for the rights – and responsibilities – of consumers in their own countries and on the international stage.

We carry forward, with steadfast determination, the torch that has been handed to us from earlier leaders. With persistence, perseverance, endurance, and the courage to do what's right, we will continue to advance the welfare of the world's consumers.

James Guest, Vice President, Consumers International



IOCU/CI PRESIDENTS

1960 – 1970 **Colston Warne** | Consumers Union, US

1970 – 1975 **Peter Goldman** | Consumers' Association, UK

1975 – 1978 **Wily van Rijckeghem** | Association des Consommateurs, Belgium

1978 – 1984 **Anwar Fazal** | Consumers Association of Penang, Malaysia

1984 – 1991 **Rhoda Karparkin** | Consumers Union, US

1991 – 1997 **Erna Witoelar** | Yayasan Lembaga Konsumen Indonesia

1997 – 2000 **Pamela Chan** | Hong Kong Consumer Council

2000 – 2003 **Louise Sylvan** | Australian Consumers' Association

2003 – 2007 **Marilena Lazzarini** | Instituto Brasileiro de Defesa do Consumidor

2007 – present **Samuel Ochieng** | Consumer Information Network, Kenya

Acknowledgements

Together with the many figures mentioned in this booklet, hundreds, if not thousands, of people have given their time, support and invaluable energy to Consumers International over the past 50 years. Our thanks and gratitude go out to all those who have had a hand in helping CI reach its 50th birthday.

Our thanks also go to Julian Edwards, former director general of CI, for his help in producing this booklet.

About Consumers International

Consumers International (CI) is the only independent global campaigning voice for consumers. With over 225 member organisations in more than 115 countries, we are building a powerful international consumer movement to help protect and empower consumers everywhere.

Consumers International is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee in the UK (company number 4337856) and a registered charity (number 1122155).

For more information, visit
www.consumersinternational.org

©Consumers International
24 Highbury Crescent, London N5 1RX, UK
email: consint@consint.org
www.consumersinternational.org

