



International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)

UN Asia Pacific Representatives

Written Statement for the Committee on Social Development, Seventh Session

August 2022

I. Information about the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the IFSW UN Commission

The IFSW is a non-governmental organization that has been granted Special Consultative Status by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

As the global professional body for social work the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) acts as an inclusive and democratic facilitator of global standards, policies and along with the International Association of Schools of Social Work the profession's ethical principles. Each of the Federation's 143 country members both contribute to the formulation of these standards and are also bound by them, resulting globally shared values, and standards that bind the profession together. Consequently, today there are over 3 million social work practitioners that share the values of human rights, self-determination and social justice.

The IFSW's United Nations Commission supports IFSW representatives and IFSW members to act as facilitators and bridging the gaps between community's aspirations and UN agendas. In 2019, the IFSW established a regional commissioner and representatives for the Asia Pacific to work with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in relation to regional and global issues to strengthen the partnership between IFSW and ESCAP.

Please find more detailed information on the [IFSW website](#).

II. Introduction

We welcome the opportunity to make a written statement to the Committee on Social Development, 7th Session 2022. Our submission will focus on Agenda Item **(1) the importance of renewing the social contract and building a resilient workforce to better respond to ongoing and emerging global trends** and based on the IFSW's 2022 position



statement “The Role of Social Workers In Advancing A New Eco-Social World” and The People’s Charter for an Eco-Social World from the recent global People’s Global Summit.

III. Call for considerations

Our submission will focus on two parts: first the need for a **renewed eco-social contract**, and the role of **social workers as a vital workforce** in achieving the UN’s objectives.

Renewing the social contract: IFSW Position

We commend the UN ESCAP for its commitment to renewing the social contract and building a resilient workforce to better respond to the current issues we face. The world needs new policies, social contracts, and practices that foster relationships and partnerships that build security and confidence for all people and the sustainability of the planet. The social work profession is an important stakeholder and partner for global action, including the Sustainable Development Goals and other local, regional and global development strategies.

The region is facing unparalleled levels of social and environmental crises; climate change, pandemics, persistent inequality, lack of consensus internationally at the geo-political level, and increased conflict. These crises are intertwined and have profound effects on people and their communities through the dramatic increase in the economic, social, emotional, and ecological challenges.

These interconnected crises serve as a call for transformative action towards a new world with new eco-social contracts, beyond traditional understandings of social contracts. This vision to restore balance in our world is driven by collaboration, sustainability, leaving no one behind, based on the dignity and respect of every person and the planet. The recognition of the interconnectedness of all life in our ecosystem is integral in the guiding ethics of social workers. Only through co-building a new eco-social world can we ensure a sustainable and fairer world for all of us and future generations.

An eco-social approach to a social contract requires key actions and commitments from Member States in relation to the 5 (equally considered) dimensions of sustainability: **people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership**.

- **People:** In line with the central premise of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, “leaving no one behind” must be at the core of all governments



decisions that ensure human rights for all. IFSW recognizes that in order for rights to be realized, it takes all of us to ensure dignity and respect.

- **Planet:** An eco-social approach recognizes that humans are part of the ecosystem, and that human and environmental wellbeing are interrelated. Climate action must prioritize listening to and working with First Nations peoples all over the world and recognize the equal foundation knowledge from indigenous wisdom as central to achieving an eco-social world.
- **Prosperity** An eco-social understanding of prosperity must critically examine societal and economic structures, practices, and ways of life. The IFSW promotes transforming global economies towards a sustainable, inclusive and fair approach, driven by a change in understanding of prosperity from purely economic growth towards sustainable social and environmental wellbeing. National social protection systems in line with ILO recommendation 202 are fundamentally important for the people we work with.
- **Peace:** An eco-social approach requires new bottom-up approaches that recognize that national and individual interests are secondary to global fairness, peace and sustainability. IFSW views an eco-social world that respects cultural diversity and identity in the context of global citizenship and reciprocal respect, creating a foundation for sustainable peace.
- **Partnership:** The SDGs call for “a spirit of strengthened global solidarity”. For social workers, partnership starts with respecting difference and diversity, centered in equity, and by listening and understanding each other. As stated in the [The People’s Charter for an Eco-Social World](#), this can only be achieved through co-developing reciprocity and joint ownership of positive change, co-building peace, co-living with nature, co-creating social justice and co-realising equality.

Recommendation: A renewed social contract from Member States must be grounded in an eco-social approach and recognise the interconnected dimensions of sustainability.

The role of the social workers in responding to ongoing and emerging global trends

Social workers are key partners in addressing the most pressing global issues, including the COVID-19 pandemic, inequality and climate crisis. Social work is a practice-based profession



and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people—with principles of respect for human beings' inherent worth and dignity, doing no harm, respect for diversity, and upholding human rights and social justice.

Advocating and upholding human rights and social justice is the motivation and justification for social work. The social work profession recognizes that human rights need to coexist alongside collective responsibility. According to the IFSW's Social Work Global Agenda, social workers have created their own approach in a participatory manner from the bottom-up or community and people-driven, including the knowledge and needs of people (leave no one behind). IFSW understand that the 5P's contain values that the people and communities and people we work with mostly want. The majority of the world suffers from the richness of a few people.

Social workers across the Asia Pacific region are actively working with their communities to support and be part of the development process at micro, mezzo, and macro levels toward achieving SDGs and an eco-social world.

Recommendation: The UN and Member States system shall increase collaboration with social workers as through applying the profession's principles and approaches we can collectively achieve climate action and social justice.

IV. Conclusion

IFSW's Asia Pacific Representatives to the United Nations welcome the opportunity to make this submission and look forward to working collaboratively with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Committee on Social Development towards improving the wellbeing of all peoples.

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Topics: World Social Work Day, Disabilities

Dr. Sebastian Cordoba (Australia)

Topic SDGs, Climate Action

Judith Douglas (New Zealand)

Topic: Social Justice, Family and Child Protection

Hamed Omalee (Iran)

Topic Refugee/ Migration, Children

Dr. Suresh Pathare (India)

Topic: Rural Development, Climate Change

Mr Kim Sug Pyo (South Korea)

Topic: Ageing