

Draft Minutes of IFSW General Meeting – 11-13 July 2020

All formal reports and videos can be found through this [Link](#) to the IFSW General Meeting site.

1 WELCOME AND PRESIDENT’S/SECRETARY-GENERAL’S REPORT

The General Meeting opened at 07.00 UTC on 11 July with a welcome video from the President and Secretary General.

2 OVERVIEW OF GENERAL MEETING

Prior to the General Meeting a **Motion allowing for the constitutional procedures to be carried out electronically** was initiated by the IFSW Global Executive to ensure that the procedures for the 2020 online General Meeting were correct and in-line with the constitution and bylaws. The motion was proposed by Zambia and seconded by seconded by Canada. This motion was submitted as an electronic vote to all IFSW members with voting rights (in good standing).

“Motion to hold the IFSW 2020 General Meeting online (11th, 12th, 13th July 2020), allowing for the constitutional procedures to be carried out electronically. Including:

1. That discussion and voting will be carried out electronically,
2. That the IFSW President, Silvana Martinez, Chairs the General Meeting and delegates her authority to session moderators,
3. That the current Parliamentarian, Nicolai Paulsen, acts during the meeting as the Main Parliamentarian and delegates his authority to session parliamentarians,
4. That the current Elections Officer, David Jones acts during the meeting as the Elections Officer and oversees the legitimacy of voting procedures,
5. That the IFSW Asia Pacific Regional President, Rose Henderson, acts as the main Minute taker and delegates her authority to session minute takers,
6. That the meeting agenda ([link](#)) is approved,
7. That the General Meeting will be held on the 11th, 12th, 13th July 2020 and will be run in three sessions: Discussion, First round of voting and Second round of voting,
8. That the 2018 General Meeting minutes are approved as presented ([link](#)).”

Note from the Parliamentarian, Nicolai Paulsen on this motion: “For this motion to pass, at least 1/3 of IFSW members in good standing must participate in the vote and the majority of votes must affirm (vote ‘yes’) to the motion.” (Referring to the Constitution of IFSW, Art. 11 d) about the legitimacy of the General Meeting, defining a Quorum being one-third of the Members with voting rights and in good standing).

The motion was passed by electronic recording of votes

Yes	36	No	0	Abstain	0
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The process for the General Meeting was then confirmed to run in three blocks of time over the above days. These blocks were called ‘sessions’.

- Session 1: Discussion. July 11th (07h00 UTC) – July 12th (05h00 UTC)
- Session 2: First Round of Voting. July 12th (13h00 UTC) – July 13th (01h00 UTC)
- Session 3: Second Round of Voting – July 13th (08h00 UTC) – (18h00 UTC)
- Conclusions and Results.

The timing of the sessions was organised to maximise convenience for all time zones. The timing was listed with the agenda items at UTC time (Coordinated Universal Time).

IFSW President, Silvana Martínez presided as the Chairperson for all sessions. She delegated her authority to people that the executive endorsed to support her role. Nicolai Paulsen (confirmed by the General Meeting) acted as Parliamentarian in all sessions. He delegated his authority to people that the executive endorsed to support his role.

Each IFSW member organization was entitled to have 1 Main Representative who cast their votes and 2 Delegates who also participated in the General Meeting. During session 1 (discussion), the 3 Representatives of each member organization had the opportunity to discuss, make comments, raise questions and motions. It was expected the representatives worked together as a team. With regards to coordinating bodies, the number of delegates was able to be extended by written request to the President and Secretary-General, but only one person in a coordinating body casted the votes on behalf of the body.

SESSION 1 – Discussion Agenda Items. July 11th (07h00 UTC) – July 12th (05h00 UTC)

The discussions of all agenda items were open simultaneously and lasted 22 hours. There was no voting in that session. Voting was only possible in sessions 2 and 3 to ensure all the discussion had taken place before votes were cast. Discussion took place on the ‘General Meeting’ site of the IFSW Website.

2.1 Nominations Committee Report

This report was presented on behalf of the Nominations Committee, which is chaired by the Elections Officer.

MEMBERSHIP

The Nominations Committee is a constitutional requirement consisting of an Elections Officer as Chair of the Committee and one representative from each of the regions of IFSW. The role of the Committee is to organise and direct the election process. The members in 2018-2020 are: David N Jones (Elections Officer, Chair), Daniel Asiedu (Africa), Teoh Ai Huah (Asia Pacific), Nicolai Paulsen (Europe), Kenia Batista (Latin America Caribbean), Morel Caissie (North America).

LATE NOMINATIONS

No late nominations will be accepted after 07.00 UTC on Saturday 11 July 2020. It is usual practice to stop accepting late nominations early in the General Meeting. I am therefore giving notice of the deadline in this report. Any late nomination MUST have full documentation as specified on the IFSW website including a formal resolution of support from the Board of the nominating organisation.

NOMINATIONS

The Committee reviewed all nominations received for elections during the two years. In all cases nominees were required to present the documents specified on the website before being accepted; in some cases the correct documents were not submitted at the beginning and the missing documents were requested and provided. Additional material from candidates was also accepted. All the papers are on the General Meeting website. Member organisations nominating candidates must be ‘in good standing’ (i.e. must have paid their fees) at the start of the General Meeting.

For the 2020 elections at the General Meeting, all the nominations are placed on the website with the relevant documents. Four nominees did not send their documents before the constitutional deadline. These late nominations are identified on the website. The General Meeting will be asked to vote on whether to accept the late nominations; a 75 % majority is required.

There is a proposal for a constitutional change regarding the position of the Honorary Treasurer. If that constitutional proposal is agreed by the General Meeting, there will not be an election for Treasurer.

CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE

The constitution (Article 14) specifies the number of terms that people can serve in all positions, which is two terms (8 years). However the Chair and Treasurer can have served for two terms in another position before being elected Chair or Treasurer (i.e. maximum of term 3 terms).

The constitution does not refer at all to the status of an Executive Committee member (usually a Regional Vice President) who is required to step up into a higher position because of a resignation or because of a new election. In other words the individual serves part of a term in the lower role and a full term in the new higher role.

The Elections Officer and Parliamentarian considered the clear spirit of the constitution which is to encourage stability (i.e. members serve overlapping terms with half the Executive being elected at each General Meeting). It is also recognised that it takes time to learn the role and to be able to make a constructive contribution at global level.

The Elections Officer and Parliamentarian also noted custom and practice and took note of practice in other organisations.

It was concluded that serving part of a term (i.e. less than the full term of four years) did NOT count towards the total period for serving on the Executive. In other words, a candidate who serves for a shorter period than a full term in a lower role is still eligible to serve for two full four year terms in the new role.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Nominations Committee recommends that the Executive Committee reviews the constitution and brings proposals to the next General Meeting to clarify the constitution on this matter.

The Nominations Committee will review the administration of elections before the next General Meeting to ensure that the Federation is following best practice.

David N Jones, Elections Officer, 8 July 2020

2.2. Affirmation of Nominations Committee

The IFSW Executive have re-nominated the members of the IFSW Nominations Committee. The nomination is for a further two years. The Nominations Committee members are:

David Jones, Elections Officer
Daniel Asiedu, African representative
Teoh Al Hua, Asia-Pacific representative
Kenia Batista, LAC representative
Nicolai Paulsen, European representative
Morel Caissie, North America
Moved by United Kingdom, seconded Austria

Yes 65 No 0 Abstain 0

3.0 MINUTES FROM THE 2018 IFSW GENERAL MEETING IN DUBLIN

The minutes of were approved in the pre-conference vote as above in Section 2.

4.0 REGIONAL REPORTS.

4.1 That the African regional report be accepted

Moved Zimbabwe, seconded Sierra Leone

Yes	57	No	0	Abstain	6
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4.2 That the Asia Pacific regional report be accepted

Moved Sweden, seconded Netherlands

Yes	57	No	0	Abstain	5
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4.3 That the Europe regional report be accepted

Moved Italy, seconded Norway

Yes	62	No	0	Abstain	2
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4.4 That the Latin America & Caribbean regional report be accepted

Moved Germany, seconded El Salvador

Yes	59	No	0	Abstain	5
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4.5 That the North America regional report be accepted

Moved Denmark, seconded Sweden.

Yes	58	No	0	Abstain	3
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5.0 Commissions

5.1 That the Report from the IFSW Human Rights Commission be accepted

Moved Ireland, seconded Germany

Yes	62	No	0	Abstain	1
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5.2 That the Report from the Ethics Commission be accepted

Moved Netherlands, seconded Tanzania

Yes	61	No	0	Abstain	2
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5.3 That the Report from the IFSW UN Commission be accepted

Moved Denmark, seconded Finland

Yes	62	No	0	Abstain	1
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5.4 That the Report from the Interim Education Commission be accepted

Moved United Kingdom, seconded Greece

Yes	60	No	0	Abstain	1
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5.5 Motion to formalize an IFSW Education Commission

Moved by Austria, seconded by Norway

Yes 59 No 1 Abstain 2

The Executive will set rules and procedures for the work and responsibilities of the IFSW Education commission.

5.6 Report from Indigenous Committee Representatives

That this report be accepted Moved Paraguay, seconded Panama

Yes 57 No 1 Abstain 4

5.7 Motion from Aotearoa New Zealand to formalize an IFSW Indigenous Commission

That the IFSW General Meeting affirms the establishment of an Indigenous Commission within the structure of IFSW. The Indigenous Commission will utilise and instil Indigenous knowledge, values, beliefs, social work models of practice and theories throughout all aspects of the work of IFSW. The Indigenous Commission will work collaboratively with the Committees and Commissions of IFSW and assist with policy, statements and strategies of IFSW.

Moved by Aotearoa New Zealand, seconded by Malta

Yes 56 No 2 Abstain 5

6 LATE NOMINATIONS

All members have a vote to accept late nominations. This first voting round is on whether to accept late nominations. Late nominations which are approved will proceed to the next round (Session 3). The agenda numbers for voting below refer only to late nominations. Agenda items 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.7, 6.8 are not late nominations so no vote is required in this round.

6.1 To accept the late nomination of Victor Garcia for the position of Treasurer

Yes 60 No 2 Abstain 2

6.2 Nomination of Abu Mansaray (George) for African Regional President

6.3 Nomination of Noel Muridzo for African Regional President

6.4 Nomination of Irene Leung for Asia Pacific Regional Vice-president

6.5 To accept the late nomination of Liu Jing for the position of Asia Pacific Regional Vice-President

Yes 53 No 2 Abstain 7

6.6 To accept the late nomination of Sriganesh M.V. for the position of Asia Pacific Regional Vice-President

Yes 54 No 1 Abstain 6

6.7 Nomination of Ana Radulescu for Europe Regional President

6.8 Nomination of Tania Maria Ramos for Latin America and Caribbean Regional Vice-president

6.9 To accept the late nomination of Mildred Joyner for the position of North America Regional President

Yes 55 No 0 Abstain 5

6.10 To accept the late nomination of Joan Davis-Whelan for the position of North America Regional Vice-President

Yes	56	No	0	Abstain	6
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7 NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

7.1 Membership Application from the Republic of the Congo

That the Republic of Congo be accepted into the membership of IFSW.

Moved Zambia, seconded Uganda.

Yes	62	No	0	Abstain	1
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7.2 Membership Application from Jordan

That Jordan be accepted into the membership of IFSW.

Moved Palestine, seconded Panama

Yes	63	No	0	Abstain	1
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7.3 Membership Application from Mexico

That Mexico be accepted into the membership of IFSW.

Moved Puerto Rico, seconded Panama

Yes	63	No	0	Abstain	1
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8. REVISED GLOBAL EDUCATION STANDARDS

Moved the adoption of the Revised Education Global Standards

United States of America, seconded by Sierra Leone.

Yes	59	No	1	Abstain	3
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9. EXECUTIVE CENSURE OF THE ISRAELI UNION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Updated Preliminary Report on the Executive Censure of The Israeli Union of Social Workers Background:

On the 26th March 2018 the IFSW Executive issued a censure to its member The Israeli Union of Social Workers. The censure was time-limited until the General Meeting which was held the following July. In the July General Meeting, a motion was passed for the continuation of the Executive Censure (agenda item number 10, 2018 General Meeting minutes). The Israeli Union of Social Workers voiced their disagreement on the censure and disputed the reasons it had been issued. A further motion was passed for IFSW executive to establish a process on how IFSW handle the censure process.

The Executive established a sub-group comprising the President, Secretary-General, Human Rights Commissioner, the Secretary of the Ethics Commission, Regional President of Europe and Vice President of Europe to work with the Israeli Union to try to find solutions that would address the concerns identified in the Executive Censure.

Current situation:

The above Executive sub-group and the Israeli Union of Social Workers were able to engage in discussion in 2019 and this is still continuing. Both parties recognize the significant complexity to this issue and hope that a resolution for all parties can be found that is in accordance with the IFSW Statement of Ethical Principles. The IFSW Executive (including the sub-group) and the Israeli Union jointly agree that a full report will be advanced to all IFSW members at a point that discussions have produced a substantive outcome.

In the meantime, we ask for the IFSW member’s patience as we work toward a solution to a longstanding and complex situation and note that the executive censure remains in place at this point in time and that joint discussions are currently underway. The executive including the subgroup and the Israeli Union of Social Workers have requested that there will be no discussion or motions related to this matter during the 2020 General Meeting as this sensitive topic is still in process.

Silvana Martinez, IFSW President and Rory Truell, IFSW Secretary-General

10. FINANCE

10.1 That the Finance Report 2018 and 2019 be accepted

Moved United Kingdom, seconded Panama

Yes	56	No	1	Abstain	5
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10.2 That BDO Switzerland be reappointed as IFSW auditor.

Moved the United States of America and seconded by Romania.

Yes	56	No	0	Abstain	4
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11 MOTIONS TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION:

11.1 Article 10. Global Treasurer

The Executive Committee shall appoint a person with demonstrated financial expertise, experience and skills to the position of Global Treasurer. The term of appointment shall be the same as for elected positions. Moved Aotearoa New Zealand, no seconder so motion did not proceed

11.2 Article 14 f. Steering Committee

The Executive may from time to time establish subcommittees or working groups to assist the Executive Committee further the aims of IFSW. All sub-committees and working groups are accountable to the Executive Committee who will make final decisions. Sub-committees and working groups shall have representation from no less than two regions and must represent the perspectives of both practitioners and educators. Moved Aotearoa New Zealand, no seconder so motion did not proceed.

11.3 To amend Article 11a to read:

The General Meeting shall meet in person or via digital technology not less than once every two years. A preceding General Meeting shall normally decide the date and venue of the General Meeting or as shall otherwise be determined by the Executive Committee.

Moved Aotearoa New Zealand, seconded Hong Kong

Yes	49	No	13	Abstain	1
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12 REPORT ON THE GLOBAL AGENDA

That the Global Agenda Report be accepted

Moved Romania, seconded Norway.

Yes 62 No 0 Abstain 1

13. NEW POLICIES

13.1 Social work and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals

Considerable discussion regarding this paper resulted in various proposals for amendments to the policy and a call for clarification on the procedure to manage multiple proposed amendments.

It was agreed that the voting would therefore be divided into three stages if required.

Stage 1 The procedural motion below (13.1) will be voted in the first round. If this procedural motion is passed, there will be no more votes.

Stage 2 If this motion is not passed, then the amendment to the policy paper on the agenda will be voted in the second round (Session 3).

Stage 3 If the amendment is passed, the amended motion will be voted by postal ballot. If the amendment is NOT passed, the original policy paper presented by the IFSW UN Commission on the agenda will be voted on by postal ballot.

Stage 1 Procedural Motion 13.1 Given that the debate has resulted in several proposed amendments, the Policy Paper is referred to the Executive to consolidate this important policy.

Proposed by Kenya seconded by Greece

Yes 47 No 14 Abstain 2

As stage 1 motion was passed, it was not necessary to progress the other stages.

14. AWARDS

14.1 Award in Memory of Andrew Mouravieff-Apostol

The International Federation of Social Workers is pleased to announce the award of the highest honour of the Federation – the Andrew Mouravieff-Apostol Medal – to Margaret Humpreys CBE, AO. The presentation was made at the IFSW virtual General Meeting on Saturday 11 July 2020. She was nominated for the award by the social work associations in the UK (BASW), Australia (AASW) and Canada (CASW-ACTS). The award recognises Margaret's outstanding professional career as a proud social worker and in particular her work exposing the child migrant scandal.

IFSW President, Silvana Martinez, said 'Margaret has made an outstanding contribution to international social work and she deserves our thanks'.

IFSW Secretary-General, Rory Truell, commented: 'Margaret has always spoken proudly of her social work identity. She has constantly upheld social work values in her practice and her global campaigning. She has facilitated people to tell their own stories & supported them to shape a global campaign. She has challenged large agencies & governments to face up to past bad practices. She is determined to put right the wrongs of past poor practice. She lives social work values and deserves our thanks'

BASW Chair, Gerry Nosowska, said: 'BASW is proud to have nominated Margaret for her inspirational work. She has made an international impact through her commitment to the principles of social work'.

Chair of the BASW International Committee and former IFSW President, David N Jones, drew attention to the citation submitted by BASW with support from AASW and CASW-ACTS. He referred to 'Margaret's absolute determination to achieve fairness and justice for the child migrants and their families and her outstanding use of social work skills in contact not only with the child migrants but also governments, embassies, agencies and Prime Ministers. Her professional work embodies the true characteristics of a social worker and she is a worthy recipient of this global award.'

In reply, Margaret Humphreys thanked the three associations for the nomination and IFSW. She said: It is an honour and I accept this award on behalf of all the child migrants and their families that have been the focus of my work since 1987..."

15. ANY FURTHER MOTIONS

15.1 Amendment to By-law 9

To amend By-law 9a to read - Before the opening of the General Meeting, which may be in person or via digital technology, representatives of Members shall make available credentials from their respective organizations. These shall be letters or other documentary evidence of individuals being nominated as delegates. Each shall be examined by two Members of the Executive Committee assigned to this task by the President. In any case of doubt, the matter shall be referred for decision on acceptance to the President, who shall consult with the Secretary General.

Moved by Aotearoa New Zealand, seconded by United States of America

Yes	44	No	11	Abstain	7
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16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

16.1 IFSW Archives Project

Meeting received report

16.2 Confirmation of Resignation of Ana Lima, Regional President, Europe from 5 October 2018.

Moved Italy, seconded Denmark

Yes	56	No	0	Abstain	7
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16.3 Ambassador's Report.

Meeting received report

16.4 Logo

Can IFSW make a logo for the social work profession? General discussion in support of the concept. Clarification by secretary General that IFSW already has a logo for the profession.

16.5 – Crowd funding for Covid -19 affected social work interventions

That the Executive be asked to look at options for creating a special short-term fund to support the social work response to Covid-19. The fund would need new resources from outside IFSW. It is NOT proposing that current IFSW funds should be used for that purpose. It could attract funds from member organisations and individual social workers using a crowd funding platform.

Moved United Kingdom, seconded Netherlands.

Further explanation: 'Recognising the disparities in risk and impact of Covid 19 across the world, BASW proposes an emergency motion that the IFSW executive urgently explores options for crowdfunding an IFSW Covid 19 specific fund to support social workers and their associations in their response to the pandemic.'

Yes 55 No 4 Abstain 4

16.6 Motion to update and adapt the Bylaws

Put forward by Switzerland at the General Assembly 2020, Switzerland proposes that the Executive Committee updates and adapts the Bylaws before the General Assembly in 2022, and if an amendment to the Constitution is deemed necessary, to submit it to the GA 2022.

The following point should be added, clarified or updated:

Minutes: the minutes should be approved shortly after the General Assembly by the participant at the GA and not two years later at the next GA where many participants did not attend the last GA.

Ruling of proxy: The text of the Constitution and the Bylaws are open to controversial interpretation, whereas the ruling in the Form used for the last years except in 2018 is clear and unambiguous.

Report of President and Secretary General

The reports should at least include:

- information about: Executive Committee meetings held,
- Main topics discussed and decided in Executive Committee,
- Statements issued,
- Travels and meetings of the Secretary General
- Process of updating policies (policies should be updated all 6 years according to the IFSW Guidelines for the preparation of Policy Statements)
- Implementation, fulfilment and realisation of the decisions of the General Assembly.

Response:

The IFSW President, Silvana Martinez has agreed that the IFSW executive will consider all of the issues raised by the Swiss Association and table them in an upcoming executive meeting. Therefore there is no need for a vote on this motion. President Martinez thanks the Swiss Association for bringing these issues forward.

CLOSING:

RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS

The position of IFSW Asia Pacific Regional Vice-President: Sriganesh M.V.

The position of IFSW Africa Regional President: Noel Muridzo

Silvana Martinez welcomed the following people onto The IFSW Global Executive:

Sriganesh M V, Vice-President Asia-Pacific; Mildred Joyner, Regional President North America; Joan Davis-Whelan, Regional Vice President North America; Victor Ivan Garcia-Toro, Treasurer (Re-elected); Noel Muridzo, Regional President Africa (Re-elected); Tania Maria Ramos, Regional Vice President Latin American and the Caribbean (Re-elected) and Ana Radulescu, Regional President Europe (Re-elected).

They join the existing members of the Executive who continue to serve for a further two years until the next General Meeting:

Joachim Mumba, Regional Vice President, Africa Region; Rose Henderson, Regional President Asia-Pacific; John Brennan, Regional Vice President Europe and Larry Emil Alicea Rodríguez, Regional President Latin American and the Caribbean.

Silvana Martinez thanked the outgoing executive members:

Kathy Wehrmann, Regional Vice President, North America; Jan Christianson-Wood, Regional President North America and Irene Leung, Vice President, Asia-Pacific

President Martinez further thanked all the nominees who stood in this election for their contribution to the democratic process and their commitment to IFSW: Abu Mansaray (George), Irene Leung and Liu Jing.

At the conclusion of this successful and historic online Meeting, Silvana Martinez and Rory Truell thanked all participants and commented: "The profession has achieved big leaps forward in this General Meeting. The online environment enabling all our members to participate has shown that we have the ability to overcome time-zone and language challenges as well as building a more inclusive democratic decision making process".

NEXT MEETING: To be confirmed and notified to members in due course.