



UNITED NATIONS  
**HUMAN RIGHTS**  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Course for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Professional Social Workers

## Connecting Social Work Practitioner with The UN Human Rights Mechanisms and the OHCHR Concept Note

### Background

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) is led by a global board, representing the five regions Asia Pacific, Africa, Europe, North America and Latin America and the Caribbean. Additionally, IFSW has four thematic Commissions who work with a global team on their respective topics, striving to enrich the IFSW with documentation, information and learning opportunities for our around 5 million professional social work colleagues. Although the circumstances and cultural situation vary largely, all those social workers share one global definition on Social Work with ethical principles and policy papers. The initiative for this CPD arose from a meeting with OHCHR in June 2023. The [IFSW UN Commission's vision](#) is, that *"IFSW members work jointly with UN agencies locally, nationally, regionally and globally (...). The strategic positioning of social workers within communities and the UN can lead to community discussion and action advancing self-led sustainable social development"*. This CPD strives to provide specific guiding information for colleagues to work with the various human rights instruments of the United Nations. To integrate the knowledge of the four Commission, for each session one IFSW Commission is involved. Social Workers wishing to participate in the discussion are invited to contact the below-mentioned contact.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is the leading UN entity dedicated to the promotion and protection of the full range of human rights and freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. OHCHR speaks out objectively in the face of HR violations and help elaborate the standards that are used to evaluate HR progress worldwide. OHCHR helps empower people. It contributes to the increased awareness and engagement by the international community and the public on human rights issues. Consequently, people everywhere in the world are empowered to claim their rights. OHCHR assists Governments. Through field presences, OHCHR monitors and analyses the human rights situations, which helps prevent abuses and conflicts and supports sensitive decision-making and development programming. It also provides capacity-building and legal advice, supporting the development and enactment of laws and policies around the world. OHCHR injects a human rights perspective into all UN programs to ensure that peace and security, development, and human rights - the three pillars of the UN - are interlinked and mutually reinforced.

### Purpose of the Course

The course aims to

- a) Enable participants to clearly understand the human rights framework and its relevance to social work.



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- b) Provide participants with an overview of the UN human rights mechanisms.
- c) Facilitate the strategizing and planning by participants how to use the human rights framework and the UN human rights mechanisms to support their work and to improve the human rights situation of people they support.

### Outline of the course

An online course of three sessions held in 24 April – 15 May 2024.

- Time: Every Wednesday, 11:00-12:30 (GVA/CET time)
- Fees: free of charge

### Program

Date	Topic
24 April	<p><b>Opening of the Course</b> (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening remarks (Rory Truell, IFSW)</li> <li>• Welcoming remarks (Pradeep Wagle, OHCHR)</li> <li>• Introduction of the course and participants (Jung Rin Kim, OHCHR)</li> </ul> <p><b>Session 1 – The human rights framework and its relevance to social work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Presentation on the human rights framework and its relevance to social work</b> Jung Rin Kim, OHCHR, 20 minutes</li> <li>• <b>Research about Social Workers as Human Rights Defenders.</b> Vasilios Ioakimidis IFSW Education Global Commissioner and Kontantinos Roussos University of Essex (20 minutes)</li> <li>• <b>Interactive dialogue</b> (20 minutes)</li> </ul> <p><i>House-keeping announcement and closing (5 minutes)</i></p>
1 May	<p><b>Session 2 – Understanding the UN human rights mechanisms and using them for the benefit of people we support</b></p> <p>Moderation – Jung Rin Kim (OHCHR) and Priska Fleischlin, IFSW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Recap of the previous sessions (10 minutes)</i></li> <li>• <b>Presentation on the UN human rights mechanisms</b> Wan-Hea Lee, Chief of civil, political, economic, social and cultural Rights Section, Human Rights Treaties Branch/CTMD, OHCHR (30 minutes)</li> <li>• <b>Social Workers facing human rights and ethical issues</b> by Jane Shears, IFSW Global Ethics Commissioner (20 minutes)</li> <li>• <b>Interactive dialogue on lessons learned from social workers who have engaged with the UN HR mechanisms</b> (20 minutes)</li> </ul> <p><i>House-keeping announcement and closing (5 minutes)</i></p>
8 May	<p><b>Session 3 – Putting our knowledge and expertise in practice</b></p> <p><b>Moderation:</b> Jung Rin Kim (OHCHR) and Priska Fleischlin, IFSW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Recap of the previous sessions (10 minutes)</i></li> <li>• <b>The way to a New Commission for Social Worker’s Rights</b> Rose Henderson, IFSW (20 minutes)</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Group discussion (30 minutes).</b> <i>Speakers from OHCHR and IFSW</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Sharing one's action points and picking up 1-2 concrete action point(s) for the group</i></li></ul></li><li>• <b>Plenary discussion (30 minutes)</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Reports from group discussion</i></li><li>○ <i>Picking up 3 concrete action points for 2024 cohort for the IFSW Commissions and OHCHR</i></li></ul></li><li>• <b>Highlights and learnings (20 minutes)</b> <i>House-keeping announcement and closing (5 minutes)</i></li></ul>
15 May	<p><b>Session 4 - Understanding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP): It's Implications and Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Moderation:</b> Priska Fleischlin, IFSW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Recap of the previous sessions (10 minutes)</i></li><li>• <b>Presentation on the UN human rights instruments and mechanisms relating to the rights of indigenous peoples</b> <i>Indigenous Peoples Rights Team, OHCHR, (30 minutes) – TBC</i></li><li>• <b>Examples for the UNDRIP from multiple contexts.</b> <i>Hilary Weaver and Margaretha Karlberg Uttjek IFSW (30 minutes)</i></li><li>• <b>Interactive dialogue (15min)</b> <i>House-keeping announcement and closing (5 minutes)</i></li></ul>

### [Registration](#)

#### **Technical issues**

The IFSW Secretariat is hosting these virtual sessions. All sessions will be recorded and will be available online.

#### **Contact**

Priska Fleischlin, IFSW UN Commissioner [priska.fleischlin@ifsw.org](mailto:priska.fleischlin@ifsw.org)