

**Post-Event Report on the Celebration of World Social Work Day 2025  
and the 16<sup>th</sup> National Conference and the 8<sup>th</sup> Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference  
on Social Welfare and Social Work**

**Theme:** "Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing "

**Date:** Monday, 24 March 2025

**Time:** 09:00 - 16:30

**Venue:** United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Bangkok and via Zoom Cloud Meeting and Facebook Live

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On Monday, 24 March 2025, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, through the Department of Social Development and Welfare, along with social work network agencies in Thailand and the Asia-Pacific region, organised the celebration of World Social Work Day 2025. The event was held in conjunction with the 16<sup>th</sup> National Conference and the 8<sup>th</sup> Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference on Social Welfare and Social Work under the theme ***"Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing. "***

The event was attended by executives from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and the Department of Social Development and Welfare, honourable guest speakers, social workers, social development workers, social work practitioners from both public and private sectors, academics, lecturers, students from social work institutions, and interested members of the public. A total of 441 participants joined the event at the United Nations Conference Centre and online via Zoom Cloud Meeting and Facebook Live.

**Morning Session Highlights:**

**1. Opening Ceremony (the Celebration of World Social Work Day 2025):**

- **Mr Warawut Silpa-archa**, Minister of Social Development and Human Security, presided over the opening ceremony.
- **Ms Michaela Friberg-Storey**, UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand, delivered a keynote speech on ***"Advancements in Social Development and Current and Future Social Challenges: Driving Action for Achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda."***
- **Prof Machiko Ohara**, President of the International Federation of Social Workers – Asia-Pacific Region (IFSW Asia-Pacific), **Prof Antoinette Lombard**, President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW),

and **Dr Sergei Zelenev**, President of the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) delivered welcome remarks.

The speakers emphasised the importance and value of social work in fostering intergenerational solidarity for enduring well-being. They highlighted the role of social workers in bridging the needs and benefits of all age groups, supporting intergenerational relationships, and empowering all groups to participate in sustainable social development.

**Key Messages:**

- **Mr Warawut Silpa-archa** expressed gratitude to social workers for their dedication to fostering social cohesion, which is fundamental to a sustainable future. He emphasised the importance of solidarity across all ages in sustainable development. Social workers and social work practitioners must be the social welders between generations, recognising the particular needs and interests of both older and younger generations. They should encourage mutually responsive relationships between age groups, value the wisdom of the elderly, and empower children and youth. By integrating diverse experiences and perspectives from all ages, they can build a strong foundation to address current challenges and create a better future.
- **Dr Sergei Zelenev** emphasised that the global community is facing demographic changes and prioritised sustainable development. Promoting intergenerational solidarity is, therefore, essential. Effective responses to social changes require key principles, including ***intergenerational equity*** in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and outcomes among different age groups, and ***intergenerational solidarity***, which involves cooperation, mutual support, and respect between generations. Emphasising the roles and participation of both younger and older generations in society will form the foundation of future-oriented social policies.
- **Prof Antoinette Lombard** emphasised that the core of intergenerational solidarity is recognising that every age group is important and plays a role in creating a peaceful, just, and sustainable society. Social work has a crucial role as a voice and promoter of participation in decision-making processes and actions to address social issues. This includes advocating for policies and programmes that reduce isolation and promote interaction between age groups at both community and family levels.
- **Prof Machiko OHARA** pointed out that this theme emphasises empathy and mutual respect between generations. The goal is to build a strong society,

protect the environment, and share knowledge for a better future, which serves as the foundation for enduring well-being for all. Moreover, the theme reflects the commitment of the social work profession to honour the wisdom of older generations while fostering connections that empower the younger generation to face present-day challenges and shape a better vision for the future.

- **Ms Michaela Friberg-Storey** praised the Thai government for its commitment to developing the social work profession. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, in collaboration with UNICEF and UN agencies, has played a significant role in strengthening social work networks and driving this important change. However, there remains a challenge regarding the high demand for social workers, which far exceeds the current supply. The distribution of social workers across different regions and sectors has resulted in gaps in access to quality, comprehensive, and equitable social services. Thailand still needs to consider investing in social service workforce, including increasing budgets and opportunities for capacity development, workforce planning based on data, and expanding support systems for social workers and related professions. She also stressed that the concept of intergenerational solidarity will help make Thai society more inclusive and stronger, contributing to the growth and well-being of individuals, families, and communities, ensuring that no one is left behind.

## **2. Panel Discussion (the 16<sup>th</sup> National Conference and the 8<sup>th</sup> Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference on Social Welfare and Social Work):**

- **Topic:** “Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing: The Roles of the Profession, Educational Sector, and Civil Society in Social Work”
- **Panelists:**
  - Dr Sebastian Cordoba, Regional Representative of the United Nations Commission of the International Federation of Social Workers, Asia-Pacific Region - IFSW-AP UN Commissioner
  - Prof Dr Tan Ngoh Tiong, Representative of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) United Nations team in Bangkok
  - Dr Teoh Ai Hua, Regional President of the South East Asia and Pacific region of the International Council of Social Welfare - ICSW-SEAP

- Dr Mary Angeline Santhosam, Principal of Nazareth College of Arts and Science in Chennai, India
- Ms Christina Torsein, Regional Child Protection Specialist, United Nations Children's Fund East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF EAPRO)
- Ms Gladys Quindoza-Bunao, Chairperson Asean Social Work Consortium Philippines (ASWC-PH) and Executive Director of Kaisahang Buhay Foundation, Inc.
- **Moderator:** Asst Prof Dr Prapaporn Tivayanond Mongkhonvanit, Dean of the School of Global Studies, Thammasat University

The discussion highlighted that building relationships across all ages involves accumulating and transmitting wisdom, fostering relationships among people of all ages and the environment for a sustainable society. This concept is related to driving the "Pact for the Future," which is linked to sustainable development goals and addressing future challenges. This requires cooperation between governments, social workers, civil society, and various sectors at both local and global levels to ensure systematic and effective collaboration. Social work is a crucial instrument in empowering individuals, families, and communities to recover and adapt to changing circumstances. Social workers play a role as social welders, promoting cooperation between civil society and families for tangible participation in society. Given this importance, developing the capacity of social workers is a matter that countries should prioritise, including systematic development of the social service workforce to support personnel, enhance systems, and provide tools and resources for effective and sustainable operation. This aims to create sustainability in society based on shared responsibility, understanding the social ecosystem, and being open to diversity inclusively and fairly for everyone.

### **Afternoon Session Highlights:**

#### **3. Panel Discussion:**

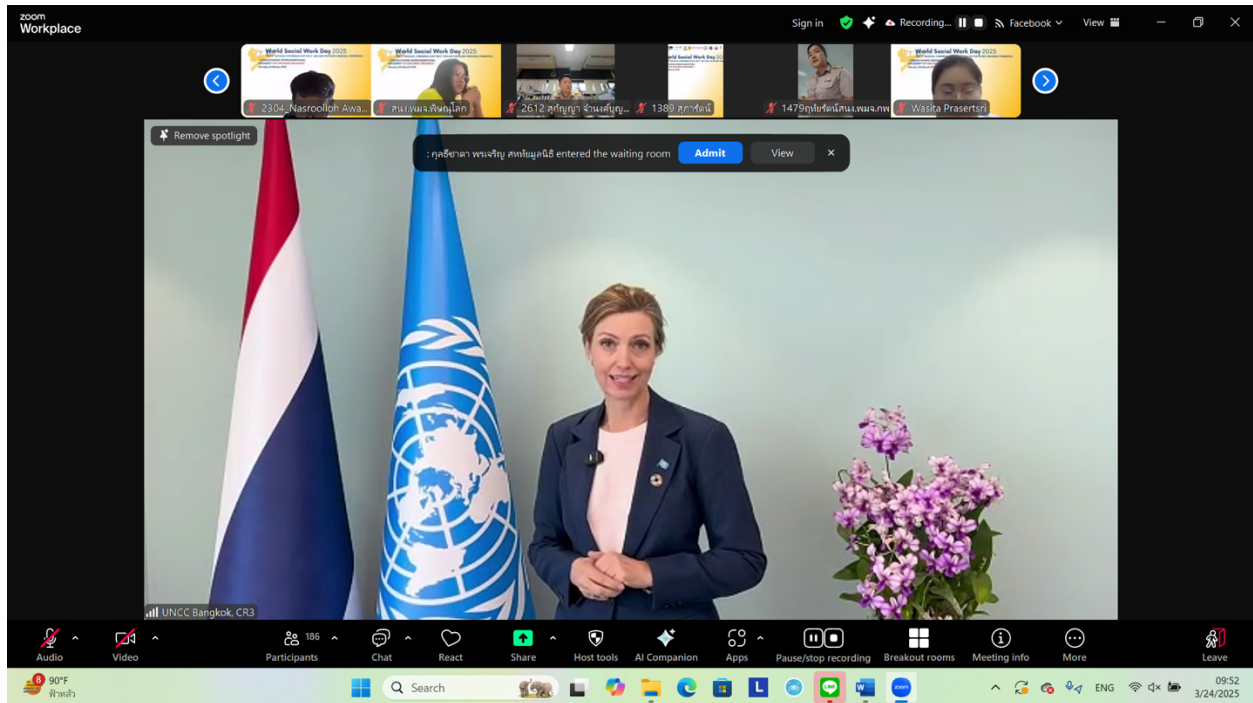
- **Topic:** “Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing amid Thailand’s Social Changes”
- **Panelists:**
  - Prof Rapeepan Kumhom, President of Social Work Professions Council of Thailand



- Assoc Prof Dr Auschala Chalayonnavin, Dean of Faculty of Social Administration, Thammasat University, President of Thai Association of Social Work and Social Welfare Education (TASWE) and Member-at-Large on the Board of Directors of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)
- Assoc Prof Dr Wilaiporn Kotbungkair, President of Thailand Association of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work research committee member (IASSW research committee member) and International Federation of Social Workers - Asia Pacific United Nations Representatives (IFSW-AP UN Representatives)
- Mr Chinchai Cheechooen, Vice President of the International Relations Committee, the National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand under the Royal Patronage
- **Moderator:** Ms Thidaporn Sauvana, Director of the Office of the National Commission on Social Welfare Promotion, Department of Social Development and Welfare

The discussion reflected the current social changes, including demographic shifts, differences in values among different age groups within organisations and society, and the evolving dynamics of families and communities. There is an increasing demand for social services and social work that respond to current and future challenges, necessitating a shift in perspectives on social welfare provision. Particularly, social work that engages with target groups and operates at the organisational level must consider the impacts of these changes. This includes elevating the profession and developing the capabilities of Thai social workers, from social work education, practical training, research development, to social and community services. The professional development process requires establishing supervision systems and adapting work models by integrating technology into social service delivery, considering the diverse needs of clients. Promoting solidarity among people involves social workers and social welfare organisations acting as mechanisms to connect people across different age groups, aiming for a strong and sustainable society.

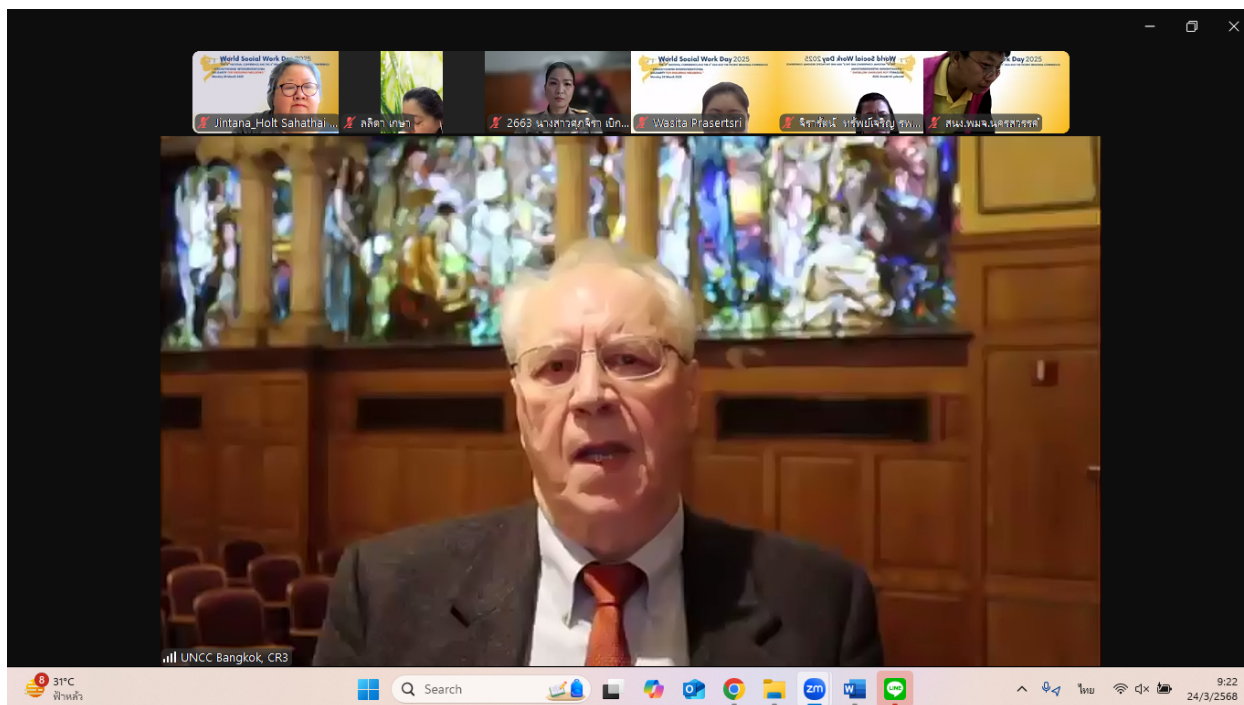
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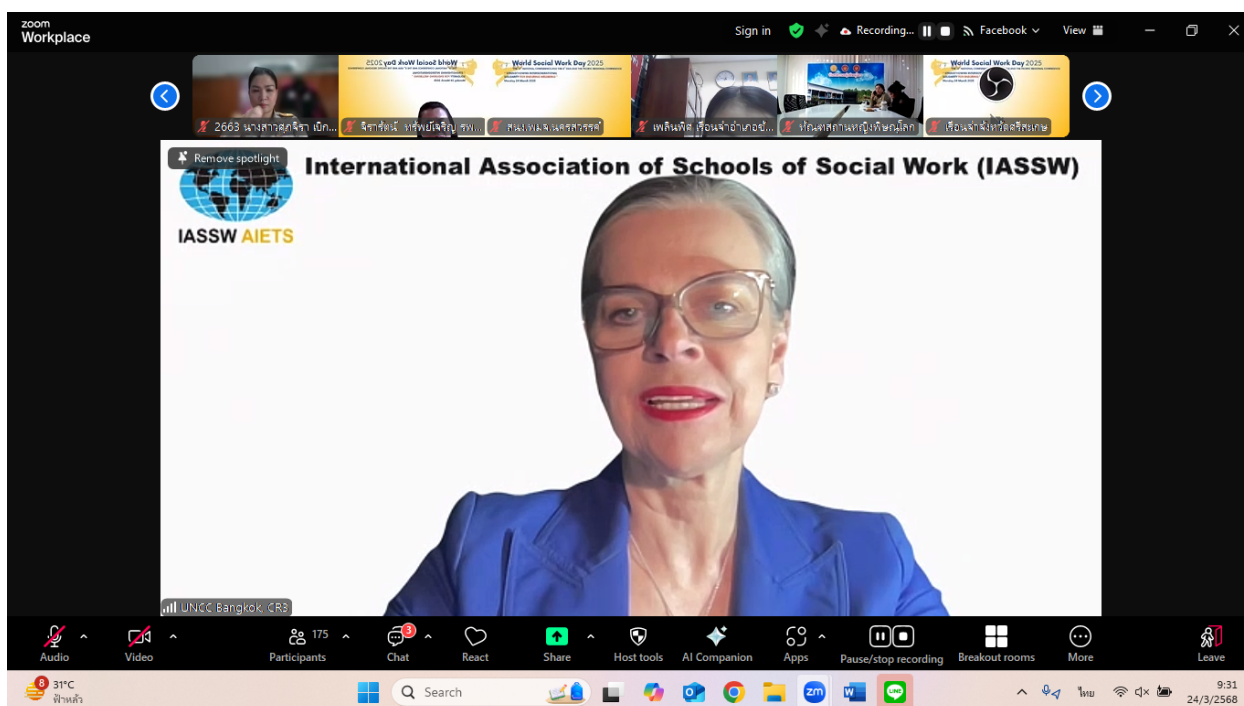
**Ms. Michaela Friberg-Storey, UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand**



**Mr. Warawut Silpa-archa, Minister of Social Development and Human Security**

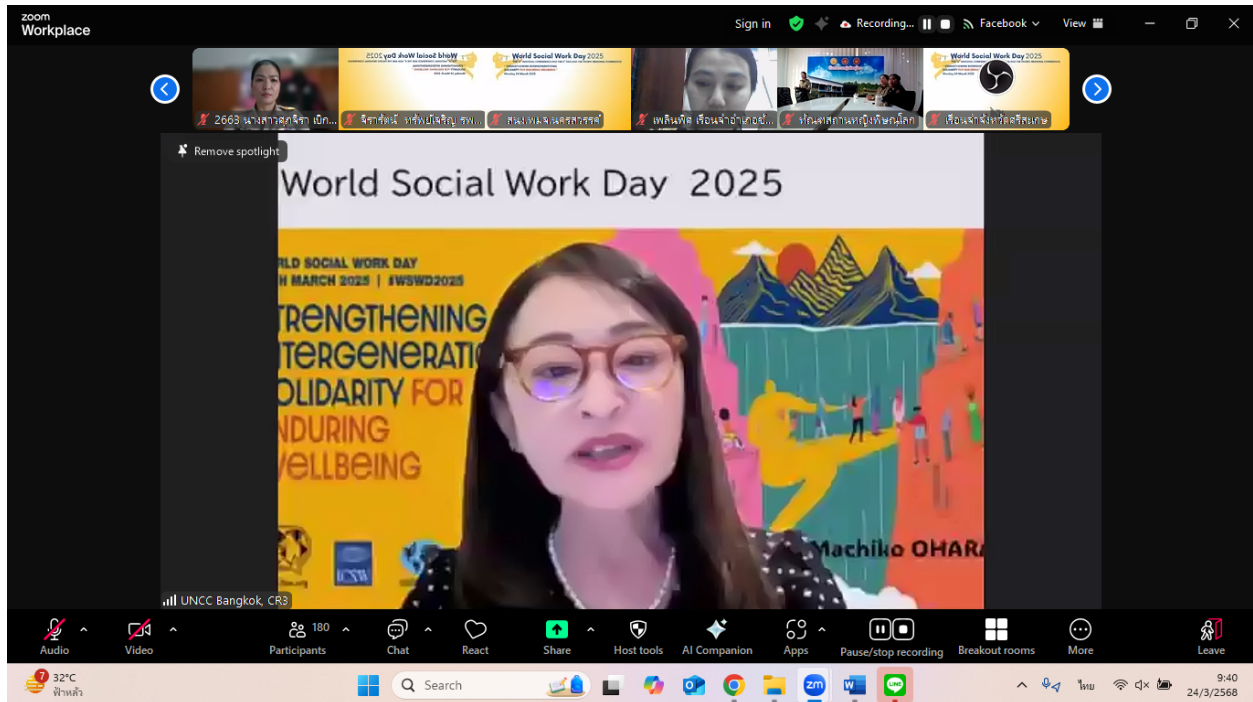


**Dr. Sergei Zelenev, President of the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW)**



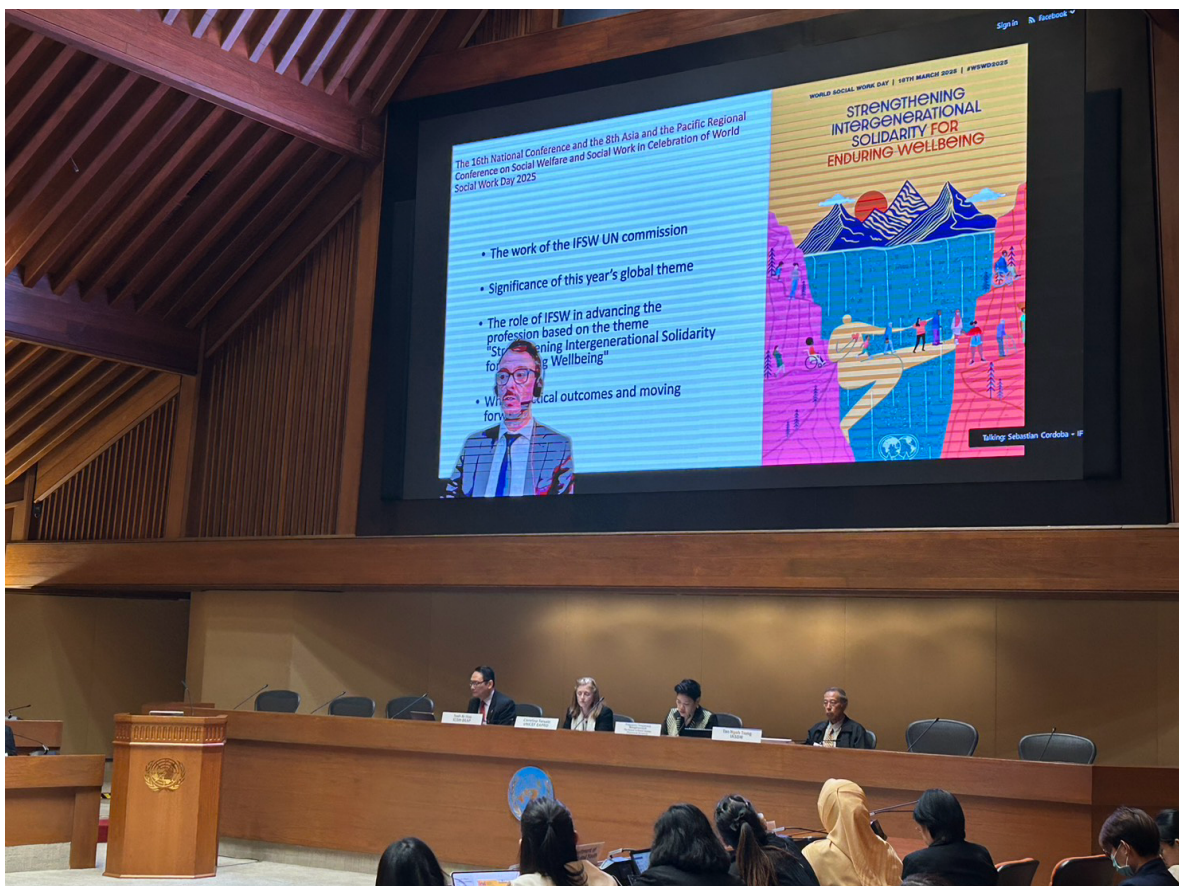
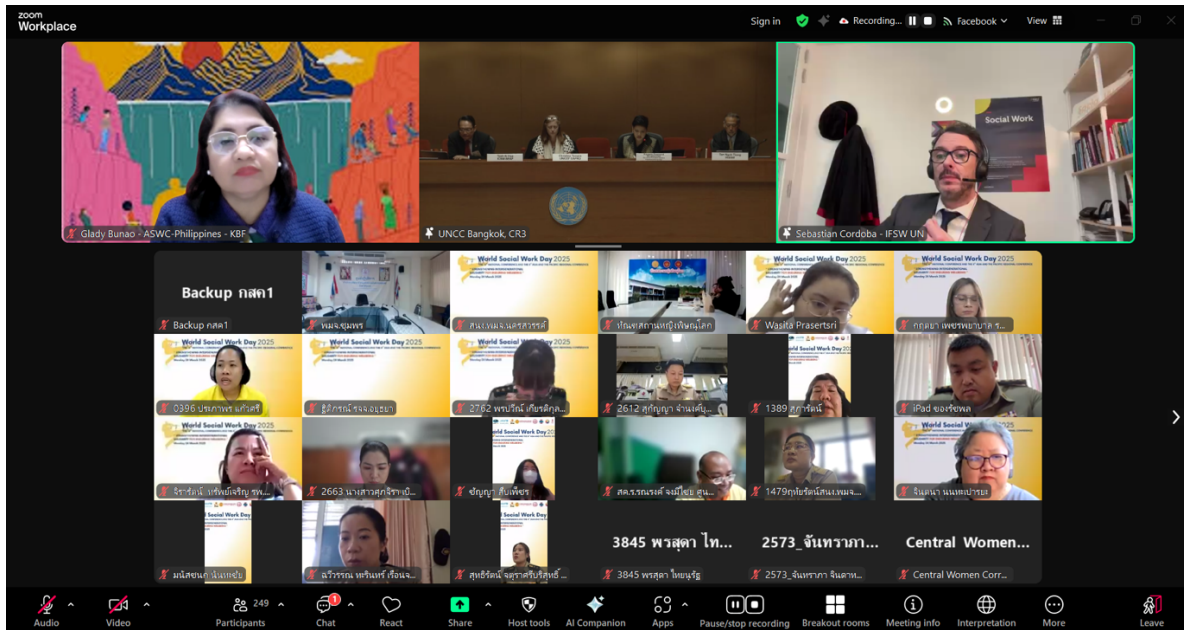
**Prof. Antoinette Lombard, President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW),**

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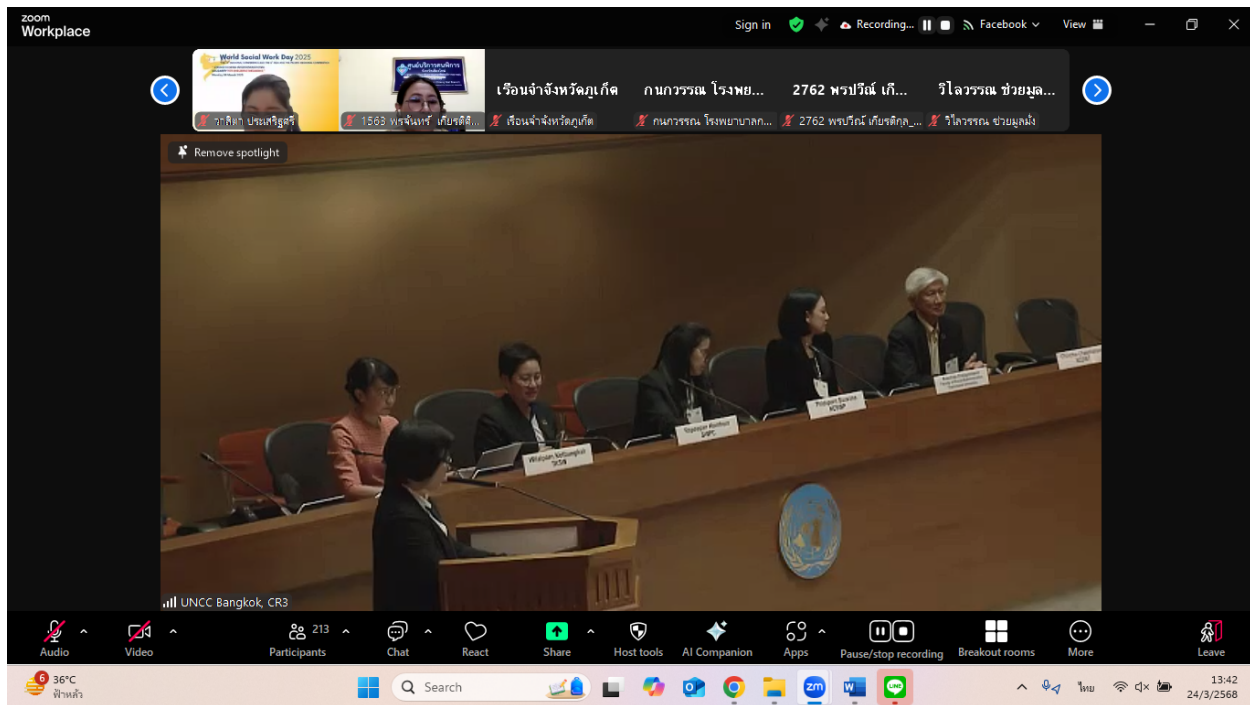


Prof. Machiko Ohara, President of the International Federation of Social Workers – Asia-Pacific Region (IFSW Asia-Pacific)





**Panel Discussion on The Topic: “Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing: The Roles of the Profession, Educational Sector, and Civil Society in Social Work”**



**Panel Discussion on the Topic: “Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing amid Thailand’s Social Changes”**



**Representatives from national and international partners**





**The Main Event at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Bangkok, Thailand**