

Commissions

Indigenous Commission

The aim of the Indigenous Commission is to create a structure for utilization of the indigenous knowledge and skills in service delivery locally and globally...

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[IFSW Statement on World Indigenous Peoples Day 2023](#)

Commissioners

Global



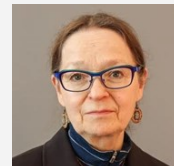
Hilary Weaver
Global Commissioner

Africa Region



Charles Rutikanga
Regional Commissioner

Europe Region

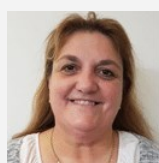


Margaretha Uttjek
Regional Commissioner

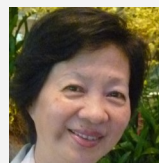
Asia and Pacific Region



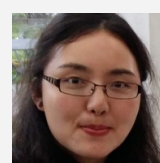
Caroline Tana-Tepania
Regional Commissioner



Linda Ford
Representative

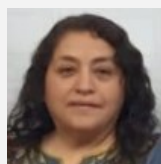


Dr Ling How Kee
Representative



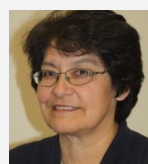
Yang Jian (Yvonne)
Representative

Latin America and the Caribbean Region



Jenny Linares
Regional Commissioner

North American Region



Hazel Berg
Regional Commissioner

Indigenous Commission

General Activities and Achievements

The Indigenous Commission has developed a schedule of meetings that take place every other month. At the beginning of 2023 we adopted a workplan for the year. The plan was drafted with input from all members of the Indigenous Commission then submitted to Rory Truell and Bernard Mayaka for their feedback prior to final approval by the commission. The annual workplan identifies tasks, timeframes, and members of the commission who will take the lead on each project. This workplan has provided a focus and structure for our work. Although we are taking on various projects throughout the year, we have adopted the theme *Integrating Indigenous Knowledge in social work practice and education* as a priority for 2023.



In 2023 the Indigenous Commission accomplished the following activities:

- Global Commissioners from the Indigenous Commission and Education Commission collaborated to develop a concept paper to guide joint work on the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledges and approaches in social work education and practice. The intention to convene a joint meeting of these commissions to develop action steps for moving this plan forward was put on hold as discussions occurred about commission structures that could have affected how we move forward. We hope to move these collaborative efforts forward in 2024.
- The Global Indigenous Commissioner provided welcoming remarks for the on-line celebration of World Social Work Day at the United Nations, Geneva.
- How Kee Ling, one of the commission representatives from the Asia Pacific region, along with the executive committee of the Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW), organized a webinar with the theme, *Incorporating Indigenous Knowledges and Approaches in Social Work Education and Practice*, to mark World Social Work Day. Hilary Weaver, the Global Indigenous Commissioner provided a keynote address, "If we live by our roots, we will be protected by our branches: Indigenous Knowledges and Social Work". Carole Tana-Tepania (Regional

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Commissioner, Asia Pacific) and Miriama Scott, shared their experiences in Aotearoa New Zealand in a plenary presentation, "Raising the Indigenous voices to action in social work". This was followed by a panel of three Malaysian social workers: Dr Ling How Kee (Life member, MASW, Regional Representative, Indigenous Commission, Asia Pacific), Ms Hwa Hui-En (Manager, Policy, Advocacy and Research, Malaysian Care) and Ms Ryna Veltricia Madau (social worker, Caring for the Future Malaysia, Papar, Sabah). The panel explored what incorporating Indigenous Knowledges and approaches means for Malaysian social work. Panelists provided case examples of incorporating Indigenous Knowledge and approaches and described issues and challenges of working with children and families from Indigenous communities. The webinar had 175 participants including 135 from various NGOs, government departments, universities, and colleges in Malaysia, and 40 from countries outside Malaysia including Philippines, Morocco, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Indonesia, Romania, Pakistan, Canada, Lebanon, and Nepal. The webinar received very positive feedback and requests for more discussion on the topics of Indigenous Knowledge in social work and working with cultural diversity.



Webinar flyer

- Three members of the Indigenous Commission, Hilary Weaver (Global Commissioner), Margaretha Karlberg Uttjek (European region), and Jenny Linares (Latin American and Caribbean region) participated in an on-line side event at the 2023 United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (April 17-28, 2023, in New York City). The presentation was offered in English and Spanish with interpretation provided by Lucia Gandolfi. The panel was recorded and is being used as an educational resource for social work students in Australia. Participation in the UNPFII was facilitated by support from our New York City colleagues affiliated with the IFSW UN commission who assisted with registration at the United Nations and publicizing and managing the technology for the side event.
- Webinar on *Advancing equitable access to health care for Indigenous Peoples -Examples from Sábmie, Latin America & Caribbean, and North America*, Wednesday April 19, 2023.

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- The Indigenous Commission submitted a [statement highlighting the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women](#) that was published by IFSW. Informally we have heard that this has been used as a resource at the University of British Columbia in Canada.
- The Indigenous Commission submitted a [statement for World Indigenous Peoples Day](#) that was published by IFSW. <https://www.ifsw.org/?s=world+indigenous+peoples+day+statement+2023>
- The Indigenous Commission submitted a [statement for Orange Shirt Day](#) on the impact of residential schools on Indigenous people that was published by IFSW.
- The Indigenous Commission is currently identifying meeting dates and developing a workplan for 2024.



Key Planned Activities and Events for next year

- Participate in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to be held in New York City, April 15-26. Forum theme: Enhancing Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination while emphasizing the voices of the youth.
- Explore collaborative opportunities with the Education Commission around incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge and approaches, including ethics, in social work education
- Explore the feasibility of offering a webinar for World Social Workers Day, March 23
- Issue a statement for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Day, May 5
- Issue a statement for World Indigenous People's Day, August 9
- Issue a statement for Orange Shirt Day, September 30
- Explore the possibility of collaborating with the UN commission on a series of on-line webinars providing content focused on Indigenous Peoples such as UNDRIP and the importance of free, prior, and informed consent

Submitted by **Hilary Weaver**, IFSW Global Indigenous Commissioner