



international federation of social workers

Newsletter

Secretariat: 33, Rue de l'Athénée, 1206 Geneva, Switzerland, Tel. (22) 47 12 36, Fax: (22) 46 86 57

July 1991

NEWS FROM IFSW OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The President, Prof. Gayle Gilchrist James' declaration for peace issued and circulated to all Member Associations at the outbreak of the Gulf war.

The following message was received by the President and the Secretary General, Andrew Mouravieff-Apostol from Elena Pelaez, outgoing Vice President of the Spanish Association of Social Workers:

«This is to congratulate and thank you for the IFSW declaration in favour of peace. We have used it on every possible opportunity and published it in our journal, the «Revista de Servicios Sociales y Política Social»».

IFSW attends the inauguration of the China Social Workers' Association

Executive Committee member Paul K.Y. Lee represented IFSW at the inauguration of the China Social Workers' Association in Beijing on July 5, 1991. The Association which is at present drafting its Constitution, has provisionally requested membership in the International Federation of Social Workers pending an authorization from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the completion of its basic documents. IFSW hopes to be in a position to welcome China into the IFSW fold at its next biennial General Meeting in Washington, July 1992.

(Paul K.Y. Lee's new mailing address is:

Head, Student Affairs Office
Hong Kong Polytechnic
Hung Hom
Hong Kong

and his FAX (852) 7643374. Please note that the number «3» between 852 and 7643374 as shown in the brochure is no longer necessary.)

Paul Dolan, Vice President for Europe chairs the first meeting of the European Regional Executive Committee, Lisbon, 18-19 May, 1991.

Paul Dolan reports:

«Which Region of IFSW elected 4 people whose names begin with E to its 6-person Executive Committee? They were Eila, Eilis, Elena and Eli.

Who received an early morning wake-up call from the hotel when she had not asked for one? Eila instead of Eilis.

Who found a small baby lying on his bed when he returned to his hotel room? (We think the baby did resemble him a little).

All of this was during the first formal meeting of the European Regional Executive Committee held in Lisbon in May. The Executive is a test project, endorsed by the IFSW General Meeting, and was established to support the Vice-President. This first meeting was starting to prepare the ground for a Regional Development Plan to strengthen IFSW in Europe. Specific proposals will be put to the European Regional Delegates' Meeting in September, including the idea of more frequent European mini-conferences in addition to Seminars every two years.

The meeting in Lisbon was the first IFSW meeting in Portugal since the Portuguese Association joined the Federation few years ago. It provided the welcome opportunity to meet many of the leading figures of Portuguese social work, both formally and informally. Also, a Statement of support for the Association was issued in conjunction with the President of the Association, Maria Teresa Abrantes.»

(Please note that Paul Dolan's FAX No. was incorrectly printed in the IFSW brochure. It is: 44 (21) 235 2769.)

IFSW MEETINGS

IFSW Executive Committee in Harare, Zimbabwe, 29-31 July 1991

All arrangements are now completed and the necessary visas secured. The meeting will take place, as expected, at the Cresta Oasis Hotel in Harare and will be opened by the Zimbabwe Minister of Social Welfare.

Joint APASWE/IFSW Asia & Pacific Seminar in Hong Kong, 21-24 August 1991

This is the 11th Asia/Pacific Regional Seminar which will meet in Hong Kong to consider the theme «Ecology and Deprivation - Implications for Social Work».

For information and registration, contact:

Hong Kong Social Workers Association
15 Hennessy Road
Wanchai, Hong Kong
FAX (852) 3110175

10th IFSW European Seminar in Glasgow, Scotland, 3-5 September 1991

Over 270 European social workers, and among them a significant number (appr. 40) of social workers from Eastern and Central Europe already registered for this Seminar on «Love, Law and the Child» which will take place at the Hospitality Inn, Glasgow.

For information and registration, contact:

British Association of Social Workers
Scottish Office
28 North Bridge
Edinburgh EH1 1QG
Tel. 031/225 4549

IFSW World Assembly 1992 and XII International Symposium on «Improving the Human Condition»

Venue: Washington, D.C., USA

Date: 18-22 July 1992

«World Assembly '92: Improving the Human Condition» is tapping all of the Association's (NASW) resources. Major parts of the programme have been developed, and the Association continues to reach out to other IFSW members to solicit ideas and recommendations. Since decisions and content and other activities are being made rapidly in order to reach promotions deadlines, it is essential that all IFSW members contact NASW **immediately** if they wish to make an input. Communications should be directed to Eileen Kelly, Director, Peace and International Affairs (Fax: 301-589-9340). Promotion brochures are available as well as camera-ready advertisements for publications in newsletters and journals.

For further information, contact:

Eileen Kelly, Director, Peace and International Affairs

National Association of Social Workers
7981 Eastern Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910, USA
FAX 301-589-9340

or

International Federation of Social Workers
33, rue de l'Athénée
1206 Geneva
FAX 41-22-46 86 57

NEWS FROM MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

ARUBA

ATSA, The Asociacion di Trahadornan pa Bienestar di Aruba, is promoting and slowly building a communication channel among social workers' associations in the Caribbean Region. ATSA had enthusiastic reactions from several associations in reply to mailings and information, especially concerning the successful celebration in Aruba of the International Day of the Rights of the Child in 1990.

ATSA's representative on the Board of the International Community Educators Association for the Caribbean Region and Bermuda, Mr. Kevin Augustin, is also the Representative for the Caribbean Sub-Region of the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW).

AUSTRIA

Austrian schools of social work and the Austrian Association of Social Workers (ODBS) are working together on a new eight-semester social work curriculum in lieu of the present six-semester course.

CANADA

The celebration of the first national social work week in March 1991 already mentioned in the last issue of the Newsletter, brought together, in Ottawa, a distinguished group of professional social workers including the Canadian Association's (CASW) Board of Directors, presidents of provincial associations as well as national and provincial executive directors.

CASW activities in respect to this «first» were manifold and included:

- * suggesting and designating a social work week in Canada;
- * having it recognized in the House of Commons;
- * achieving Federal Government recognition of social workers by the Governor General, the Prime Minister, the Health & Welfare Minister, and by leaders of the political parties;

- * encouraging CASW affiliates to attempt to obtain recognition from provincial and municipal governments;
- * organizing button contests and producing and circulating the buttons;
- * circulating press releases;
- * holding a coordinated meeting of presidents of member associations with the CASW president and Board;
- * organizing social events where CASW Board members, representatives of social work and welfare organizations and government officials were special guests;
- * instituting provincial social awards.

COLOMBIA

La Federación Colombiana de Trabajadores Sociales (FECTS) trabaja conjuntamente con la Organización Nacional de Escuelas de Trabajo Social y el Consejo Nacional de la Ley en los siguientes proyectos:

- Expedición de un nuevo Manual Nacional de Funciones para los Trabajadores Sociales que laboran en el Sistema Nacional de Salud. Se ha encontrado una respuesta bastante favorable en el gobierno nacional.
- Impulso a programas de capacitación continuada en temas referentes a: familia y trabajo con menores; salud ocupacional; Trabajo Social Laboral; planeación y evaluación participativas, este ultimo tema con el auspicio del auxilio económico otorgado por la FITS.
- Negociación con las autoridades educativas del país buscando fortalecer las áreas de formación académica postgraduada y modificar sustancialmente los currículos académicos, elevando la carrera a cinco (5) años de formación básica obligatoria.
- Montaje organizativo del VII Congreso Nacional de Trabajo Social que será realizado en la ciudad de Cali entre el 17 y el 20 de Julio de 1991.

A nivel de las distintas regiones del país, la FECTS se está vinculando a acciones concretas de lucha contra el SIDA/VIH, campañas por los Derechos del Niño y proyectos relativos a la recuperación y protección del ambiente.

The Colombian Federation of Social Workers (FECTS) is working with the national association of schools of social work and the National Law Council on the following projects:

- A new manual on functions and grades for social workers in the national health system for which support has been forthcoming from the government.
- Ongoing training for social workers in the following fields: family and minors; occupational health; social work and labour; participatory planning and evaluation. Training in the latter field was made possible by a grant from the IFSW Jane Hoey Development Fund.

—Negotiations with education authorities to strengthen post-graduate and basic training. As far as basic training is concerned, the aim is a 5-year training course for the profession.

—Preparations for the VII National Social Work Congress in Cali, 17-20 July 1991.

FECTS is participating in various parts of the country in action against AIDS/HIV, campaigns for the rights of the child, and projects related to the protection of the environment.

DENMARK

The worst fears of social workers in Denmark have come true.

On May 17, 1991, a social worker was killed in her office by a client.

This is the first incident of its kind in Denmark, and the killing has affected all social workers throughout the country. The questions that all ask themselves are: «Could it have happened to us», but mainly, «could it have been prevented».

Violent incidents have been on the increase in recent years, and they occur when clients' needs and expectations with regard to advice and support are not matched by the human and economic resources of our social welfare and security offices. The solution, therefore, lies not in turning these offices into fortresses, but rather in creating sound conditions for social workers and clients alike.

The Danish Association will review the situation and consider ways in which it can take up the fight for improved working conditions for social workers in the country.

In Denmark, the long-term consequences of membership in the European Community on the Scandinavian welfare model are being debated. While in European countries further south, economic benefits are strongly linked to the role of the individual in the labour market, in Denmark those benefits are viewed from a more communal point of view which takes into account their effect on all citizens. Such views and principles are worth preserving since they include the weakest groups of Danish society.

EGYPT

After a four-year interval, the Union of Social Professions of Egypt paid it back fees and requested reinstatement as a full member of IFSW. Since some time in 1990, the Union has been working on a definitive draft of its Code of Ethics.

FINLAND

The theme of the 1991 Yearbook of the Finnish Association of Social Workers is supervision. The book contains six articles on professionalism and

supervision; on social work methods; on the theoretical framework of supervision; on supervision as an organizational tool; and on ways and means to develop supervision in the future.

For the first time, the publication and printing of the Yearbook has been entrusted to a commercial publisher who will also be responsible for its promotion and advertising.

«Does Social Work Pay for Itself?» is the theme of the Seminar of the Nordic Social Workers Associations Co-operating Body to be held in Finland on 9-13 November 1991. The focus of the seminar will be the situation of social work in a rapidly changing society. How is it viewed by political decision makers; what is the impact of economic deprivation on the conditions under which social work is performed; should deprivation lead to the adoption of new social work goals and methods; what are the financial but also spiritual resources of social work at municipal level? There are some of the many questions that some 50 social work participants will be asking themselves at the seminar in November.

FRANCE

- Le dossier de l'homologation du diplôme d'assistant de service social au niveau licence est toujours en suspens. La mobilisation des professionnels en France reste grande et des actions sont à prévoir dans les mois qui viennent.
- La session sur le Revenu Minimum d'Insertion aura lieu les 26 et 27 septembre 1991 à Paris avec un apport sur ce qui se pratique dans les autres pays.
- Le Congrès national de l'Association nationale des assistants de service social aura lieu du 18 au 20 novembre 1991 à Paris sur le thème: «Implication des assistants de service social dans la mise en œuvre des nouvelles lois».
- Le dernier numéro de la Revue Française de Service Social (No. 160-161, 2ème trimestre 1991) sera consacré aux «Aspects du travail social dans le monde».
- **The matter of the recognition of the social work diploma at university level remains in abeyance, and further public and other action on the part of social workers is to be foreseen in the near future.**
- **The Association's meetings on the minimum income will be held on 26-27 September 1991 in Paris. Experiences in other countries will be considered.**
- **The next National Congress of the French Association (ANAS) will be held on the theme of «The Involvement of Social Workers in the Implementation of New Laws».**
- **The latest issue of ANAS' journal «La Revue Française de Service Social» deals with «aspects of social work throughout the world».**

GHANA

The Annual General Meeting of the Ghana Association of Social Workers (GASW) will take place at the School of Social Work, Osu, Accra, from 9-11

August 1991. The meeting will discuss and approve the certification, accreditation and licensing of social workers in Ghana, and will update and adopt a new code of ethics.

Prior to the 1991 GASOW Annual Meeting, the Ghana Education Service Social Workers' GASOW Chapter will hold a Congress on the theme: «School Welfare Service for a Better Tomorrow».



Patricia Kühni with officials of the Ghana Association on a visit to a detention centre for women.

GASOW had the privilege and honour of a visit from Mrs. Patricia Kühni Bissiger (see photo), an active member of the Swiss Association's Commission of International Affairs, on 17 April 1991. An exchange of information and ideas on social problems in Ghana and Switzerland, as well as on international problems, took place at a meeting with some of GASOW's National Executive Committee members. The visitor was given an account of the history of social work in Ghana by Mr. David Acquah, First Vice-president of GASOW. She was also given information which would assist IFSW to review its grant from the Jane Hoey Development Fund to GASOW. Mrs. Kühni was accorded the warm traditional Ghanaian hospitality. Her two-week visit to Ghana was purely on family matters, but she was seen off at the airport by the two GASOW Secretaries and Ghana's Acting Director of Social Welfare.

Mr. David Acquah will assist the IFSW African Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Nigel Hall, at the latter's request, to co-ordinate human rights issues in Africa.

ISRAEL

With the end of the Gulf War, Israel has returned to normal. The homes and buildings which were destroyed or damaged are being rebuilt or repaired. The constant stream of new immigrants from the USSR (about 15,000 per month) continues. The building programme is slow, and social workers are concerned about the possibilities of temporary abodes for these new immigrants, though the conti-

ning recession and increasing unemployment (11% at the moment) still constitute their main preoccupation.

«Operation Solomon» during which over 14,000 Ethiopian Jews were air-lifted from Addis Ababa to Tel-Aviv in thirty hours, focussed renewed attention on the absorption of Ethiopian Jews. Ethiopian Jewish social workers and social work students were included in the operation, accompanying immigrants on the flights. Together with other Israeli social workers they are helping the newly arrived to become reunited with their families in Israel, to find homes and employment, to learn a new language and to become accustomed to a new culture.

In May 1991, over 1,700 social workers met at a two-day national conference of the Israeli Association of Social Workers in Jerusalem. Apart from the presentation of 125 papers, there were workshops, an exhibition, plenary sessions and social as well as cultural events. The theme was «Social Work as seen by Clients», and the latter were involved in most sessions and presentations. This Twelfth National Conference was deemed to have been truly participatory and the best held to date.

PORTUGAL

The first meeting of the European Regional Executive Committee took place in Lisbon, 18-19 May 1991 under the leadership of Vice President of Europe, Paul Dolan.

The President of the Portuguese Association (APSS) participated, and organised a meeting with Portuguese social workers and representatives of various professional groups such as trade unions, the Portuguese Committee on Social Welfare, the School of Social Work and working groups connected with APSS.

The Fifth Portuguese-Spanish Congress of Social Workers is scheduled to take place in Funchal, Island of Madeira, on 19-23 October 1991. Two hundred social workers from both countries will discuss the theme «What Social Work in the 90s?» in plenary sessions and workshops where topics such as «Local Power», «Social Dynamics», «Cultures and Social Identities», and «Institutional Responses» will be addressed. Concrete projects will illustrate these topics which, in the over-all synthesis, will attempt to define the role of the social worker; the methodologies applied; the ethical aspects; the most important and desirable training methods; and will also formulate proposals for more effective social policies.

SPAIN

Following elections in April, the new Board of the Consejo General de Colegios Oficiales de Diplomados en Trabajo Social y Asistentes Sociales 1991, headed by President Maria Jesus Utrilla, took office in Madrid on June 1, 1991.

Our apologies go to the Consejo General de Colegios Oficiales de Diplomados en Trabajo Social y Asistentes Sociales, the Spanish Association, for the printing mistake in the pink IFSW brochure where the association's postal code in Madrid was shown once more as 38013 instead of the correct 28013 Madrid.

SRI LANKA

The Journal of Social Work, the periodical publication of the Sri Lanka Association of Professional Social Workers which had been suspended for lack of funds for a considerable time, has been revived with the recent publication of a first issue. Acknowledgement of financial support from two sources, including IFSW's Jane Hoey Development Fund, appeared in this issue.

The journal will be published quarterly in three languages: Sinhala, Tamil and English, and is expected to be self-supporting.

SWEDEN

There has been a change in the SKTF delegation within the Swedish Coordinating Body for IFSW. **Kristina Malmberg** has taken over from Thure Morin, and all correspondence should in future be addressed to her at SKTF, Box 7825, 103 97 Stockholm, Sweden, and to **Elis Envall** who remains as SSR Representative at Mariedalsvägen 4, 112 51 Stockholm, Sweden.

SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Confederation celebrates its 700th anniversary this summer.

«Development Requires Debt Release» is the title of a petition of six Swiss Development and Welfare Organisations asking for the cancellation of developing countries' debts. The appeal bearing 250,000 signatures was presented to the Swiss government in June 1990. Last March the Swiss Parliament approved a grant of 700 million Swiss francs for debt relief (400 million) and environmental measures (300 million) for the world's poorest countries.

At the same time, Parliament decided to face emerging poverty — the so-called «new poverty» — in its own country. Increasing numbers of pensioners, single heads of families raising children as well as sick and disabled persons are in need of supplementary benefits to face increasing living and housing costs. During the celebration year, 700 Swiss francs will be paid to all such beneficiaries of supplementary allocations.

Swiss social workers, though recognizing the worthiness of such gestures, consider them nevertheless a drop in the water, since the rich become richer on the backs of the poor, in the Third World as well as at home.

It is more than understandable that in view of the suffering and catastrophes in the world and of national strife in Eastern Europe, no real enthusiasm for their festivities should be felt by the Swiss population. It is nevertheless laudable that a rich country like Switzerland should show at least some solidarity with the poorer members of the family of nations.

UNITED STATES

March was National Social Work Month in the United States, and a number of activities were conducted to raise the public's awareness of social work by generating publicity about social workers and their achievements. Editorials by social workers were published in several newspapers, and, in Tennessee, editorials commending social workers were printed. Governors in many states signed proclamations officially recognizing Social Work Month. Chapters participated in activities such as the presentation of Social Worker of the Year awards, TV appearances, publications, and T-shirts that say, «A Social Worker is one who knows you as you are, understands where you have been, accepts who you have become, and still invites you to grow».

The Office of Peace and International Affairs received a two-year grant of over \$130,000 in May from the Agency for International Development (AID) to educate the general U.S. public about the interrelatedness of family issues in the United States and the developing world. The Global Family Ties Communication Initiative, will train Chapter development education specialists in using the media to disseminate information. It will also help to support a nationwide public education initiative on global family ties.

At the end of June, NASW President Richard L. Edwards will hand over the gavel to President-Elect Barbara White who will begin her two-year term. Looking back on his presidency, Edwards considered two achievements as his most significant: (1) recent legislative and political action such as the national health care proposal, and (2) the organizational strategic planning initiative currently under way, which will guide Association policy into the next century. President-Elect Barbara White will also continue to serve as a member of the IFSW Executive Committee.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

HUMAN RIGHTS

All IFSW Member Association who collaborated in the appeal campaign for South African social worker **Shirley Gunn** will be pleased to hear of her release from all charges on 30 May 1991 through the granting of an «Indemnity from Prosecution».

Member Associations are requested by the Secretary to the IFSW Human Rights Commission, Terry

Bamford, to appeal on behalf of the Burmese social worker **Ma Tar**, 30, who was arrested in Prome, Myanmar (Burma), on 19 July 1990, following a demonstration against the military regime. There is much anxiety about her safety in view of lack of information and persistent reports about the plight of women political prisoners in Myanmar said to have been subjected to torture and rape.

Renewed efforts in the form of letter writing campaigns as well as high-level diplomatic interventions and submissions to the United Nations Centre for Human Rights are required to hasten the liberation of social work student **Fermin Montes Garcia** who remains in detention after 12 years imprisonment in spite of favourable legislation instituted by the democratically elected Alwyn government.

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A joint project of the International Federation of Social Workers with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and the International Association of Schools of Social Work for the drafting of **Human Rights Curriculum for Schools of Social Work** has been in preparation for over one year. A draft curriculum in English, French and Spanish has been circulated, and valuable comments and suggestions for additional content have been received from specialists in various continents.

A meeting of the Working Party on the Curriculum has been called for September 14-17, 1991 at the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva. Its brief will be the refinement and collation of the existing and proposed texts with a view to finalizing the curriculum for publication in early 1992. A grant from the U.N. Centre for Human Rights' Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights made it possible to hold the meeting, and IFSW is beholden to the Brazilian government for its generous sponsorship of the project.

The Working Party comprising a promising blend of social work practitioners and educators as well as a United Nations human rights specialist, consists of the following persons: Ms. Yolande Diallo (Centre of Human Rights); Prof. Gayle Gilchrist James (President, IFSW); Ms. Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol (IFSW); Dr. Vera D. Mehta (IASSW); Mr. Nigel Hall (Zimbabwe); Ms. Evelyn Balais-Serrano (Philippines); Mr. Terry Bamford (U.K.); Mr. Paul Dolan (U.K.); Mr. Elis Envall (Sweden); Ms. Harriet Jakobsson (Sweden); Ms. Ma. Lorena Molina M. (Costa Rica); Ms. Dorothy Van Soust (USA).

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A **World Conference of Human Rights** has been called for 1993, and U.N. General Assembly resolution 45/155 set forth guidelines for its agenda and established a Preparatory Committee whose first meeting will be held in Geneva from 9 to 13 September 1991.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY (IYF)

In her report on the **NGO Committee on the Family**, Vienna, IFSW Representative Monika Vyslouzil reported on the presence of 40 organisations at the Committee's meeting on June 3, 1991. The Committee noted with satisfaction the intent of Costa Rica's First Lady to invite all First Ladies of the World to a meeting to promote IYF, and the fact that 40 countries had so far named focal points for IYF-related activities.

The Committee plans a 4th seminar for 1992 on the topic: **Family and Environment: A Partnership**.

As its work expands, the Committee plans to increase its Board to 7 members (from the present 4) at the elections scheduled for November 1991.

Monika Vyslouzil would be happy to receive ideas of ways and means to approach non-Christian and secular groups for participation in the work of the Committee on the Family in Vienna whose present membership is overwhelmingly Christian and Roman Catholic. As the topics «Family» and «IYF» gain increasing acceptance, it is imperative that the Vienna-based Committee reflect the situation and the aspirations of families world-wide.

CHILDREN

The International Campaign to End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT), started by a group of social workers in Chiangmai, Thailand in May 1990, has gathered momentum and has become a people's movement. It will organise events in the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand on November 20, 1991 (second anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) in which children as well as adults will participate, including delegates from national ECPAT organisations in tourist-sending countries. For further information contact ECPAT, P.O. Box 178, Kong-chan, Bangkok 10240, Thailand.

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RESULTS, an organisation which grew out of the Candlelight Vigils held in preparation for the September 1990 World Summit for Children, is represented in Germany by Janith Loewen Wieler of Darmstadt. Janith asks which of our member associations would like to be associated with RESULTS and its endeavour to find out what and how much has materialised, in national legislations as well as actual projects and programmes, of the Plan of Action for implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990's adopted by the Summit.

Those interested in collaborating with RESULTS and its endeavours, as well as with the celebration of a World Day for Children on the first anniversary

of the Summit on 20 September 1991, should contact Janith Wieler at Parkstr. 82, 6100 Darmstadt, Germany, or Sam Harris, 236 Massachusetts Ave., N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002.

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An NGO/UNICEF Coordinating Committee on Activities for Children in Eastern and Central Europe (ECE) was set up at a meeting in Geneva on 28 June 1991. It will be dedicated to the sharing of information as well as cooperation and coordination among the Committee's NGO's in regard to their ECE children's programmes.

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A joint report on the adoption of Romanian children by foreigners by Defense for Children International and International Social Service, issued in April 1991, should be of interest to social workers in child welfare and is obtainable from either organisation (DCI, 1, rue de Varembe, P.O. Box 88, 1211 Geneva 20 or ISS, 32, quai du Seujet, 1201 Geneva).

A timely and revealing UNICEF study on «**Children and the Transition to the Market Economy — Safety Nets and Social Policies in Central and Eastern Europe**» has just been published. It comprises eleven articles contributed by distinguished academic and political figures and edited by Giovanni Andrea Cornia and Sándor Sipos. Its paperback edition can be ordered from UNICEF, International Child Development Centre, Piazza S.S. Annunziata, 12, 50122 Florence, Italy, Tel. 3955-2345287, FAX 3955-244817.

The **Day of the African Child** was celebrated throughout the continent on 16 June 1991. The day, to be observed annually, was set by the Organization of African Unity in commemoration of the Soweto uprising which occurred 15 years ago.

REPORT ON THE EIGHTH ANNUAL SOCIAL WORK DAY AT THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

Over 120 social workers and students gathered in March 1991 to listen, learn and discuss. The topic of the Day was: «Global Upheavals: Social Consequences for the Family».

Following an introduction by Dr. Celia Weisman, Senior representative of IFSW and greetings from the IFSW President, Prof. Gayle Gilchrist James read by David Roth, the keynote speaker, Mrs. Sarojini Vittachi, Chief of the Middle East and North Africa Section of UNICEF, spoke of the Gulf crisis and its impact on families, particularly women and children. Other speakers discussed the changing family in industrialised as well as developing countries. The continual feminisation of poverty was highlighted.

In the lively discussion which followed the presentations, social workers were encouraged to work in local development projects, to push for the signature and ratification (by the United States) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to improve collaboration between governments and voluntary organisations.

The conference ended with summary remarks by Dr. Stephen E. Torkelsen, who spoke of the need for social workers to understand global issues affecting families, and to balance that understanding with action effecting positive changes for families at local and community levels.

ELECTIVE POSTS FOR IFSW PERSONNEL AND REPRESENTATIVES

At the Annual General Meeting of the NGO Committee on UNICEF in New York on 18 April 1991, IFSW Associate Secretary General Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol was elected Deputy President of the Committee for a two-year period starting June 1, 1991. IFSW was a Committee Board member from 1989 to 1991.

Among the IFSW team in New York, G. Winifred Kagwa was elected to the NGO/DPI Executive Committee in May 1991; Willeen Smith was elected to the Board of the NGO Committee on Disarmament; Bert Weinert is serving on the Steering Committee of the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development.

Though this is not an elective post, and Gweneth Gowanlock, MSW, RSW, former Executive Director of the Canadian Association and one of the very efficient organisers of IFSW's successful Eighth International Symposium in Montreal in 1984 is no longer connected with IFSW, it will interest her many friends and colleagues that she has recently been appointed Director of the Mental Health Services Division, National Health and Welfare, Canada.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The Second Continental meeting of Indigenous and Popular Organisations will be held in Guatemala, 7-12 October 1991. IFSW's interest in the rights of the indigenous peoples was exemplified by its submission of Rigoberta Menchu's (successful) candidature for the 1990 UNESCO Peace Education Prize. For further information, contact Campana Continental, Secretaría Operativa, Apartado Postal 7-B, Sucursal El Trebol, 01903 Guatemala, Ciudad, Guatemala.

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After breaking new ground last year by ranking countries by a Human Development Index, which

rated national success in terms of life expectancy, adult literacy and purchasing power, the Human Development Report 1991 ranks countries according to 40 measures of liberty, such as press freedom, multi-party elections and right to travel and assembly. This UNDP Report also voices some criticism of donor countries for allocating a mere .03 per cent of their gross national product for foreign aid — well below the .7 percent targeted by the international community.

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The International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies is holding a World Conference in Amsterdam, Netherlands, June 21-16, 1992 on the theme: «Trauma and Tragedy: the Origins, Management and Prevention of Traumatic Stress in Today's World». For information, contact: ICODO, P.O. Box 13362, 3507 LJ Utrecht, The Netherlands.

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Two draft decisions were formulated at the Symposium on «Women and Children First», held in Geneva May 27-30, 1991, which dealt with the impact of environmental degradation and poverty on women children. Both pertinent and timely texts will be submitted to the third meeting of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom 3) for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1-12 June, 1992.

Both decisions are important for the social work profession inasmuch as they pinpoint some of the origins of environmental degradation and inappropriate development (e.g. the World Economic Order, lack of women in the world power structures, lack of legal structures to deal with inequality and problems of land, water and air pollution, amongst others).

Participants at the Symposium voiced their concern about the pollution of the environment which affects even the unborn child, with the result that «there are no safe wombs any more». They called for «measures to ensure universal education which promotes the consciousness of the «oneness of humanity»; the spirit of co-operation rather than that of competition and the integral connection between the humankind and the world of nature». They also called for «a change in perception and attitude of both developing and industrialized countries of each other so as to promote exchange of ideas and support on an equal basis» (not unlike the twinning concept of the International Federation of Social Workers). Justice and appropriate measures for indigenous, pastoral and nomadic people and a full partnership among men and women as well as «the development of a new paradigm that takes into account the rights of the people, especially women and children», are part of Draft Decision I. The text of both decisions is available on request from the IFSW Secretariat in Geneva.