



international federation of social workers

# Newsletter

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March 1990

**In this first issue of the new decade, we wish to start by extending a warm and public welcome to our three new member associations from Aruba, Hungary and Mauritius. Following their unanimous election by postal vote and the suspension of the Korean Association, the Federation's total membership now stands at 50 as of January 1, 1990.**

## IFSW MEETINGS

IFSW Regional Coordinators of the joint WHO/IFSW programme will convene on March 30, 1990 in Geneva to compare findings on social workers' action in the field of AIDS prevention and lay the groundwork for a comprehensive report to the World Health Organization. A meeting of the European Region on the subject took place in Oslo in December 1989.

The impending free circulation of persons and professionals within the European Community as of 1992 reinforced and accelerated the Federation's consideration of one of its long-time concerns - the mutual recognition of social work diplomas. As one of the steps to ensure recognition at least in the 12 EC member states, an IFSW European Region Expert Meeting on «Social Work Training in the Europe of the 1990's» has been called for April 24-25, 1990 in Brussels. A report on the results of the Meeting will be issued rapidly to help the profession and schools of social work to follow common guidelines.

It is important to note that in December 1989, the EC Council of Ministers adopted a «Directive on a General System for the Recognition of Higher-Education Diplomas Awarded on Completion of Professional Education and Training of at Least Three Years' Duration».

The European Region's Delegates Meeting and the meeting of the Liaison Committee, which includes a meeting with the EC Commission, will precede the Expert Meeting.

A meeting hosted by the National Association of Social Workers (USA) took place in Washington in January in preparation for the joint 1992 Conferences of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work in Washington. It was attended by the Presidents and high officials of both organisations.

## New status for IFSW at the International Labour Office

IFSW was admitted in December to the International Labour Office's extremely restricted Special List of Non-Governmental Organisations. Trade unions and social security issues will be IFSW's main areas of interest.

## IFSW Representational and other Activities

Maryann Mahaffey (USA), Lim Chin Chin (Malaysia), D.O. Fasetire (Nigeria) and Annie Israel (Philippines) were jointly responsible for a workshop on «Coalition Building» at the 22-23 February NGO Consultation preceding the Extended Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in Vienna. Grants were obtained through IFSW for the three social workers from developing countries whose accommodation in Vienna was generously arranged by Monika Vyslouzil. Two of them stayed on to join Monika as IFSW Representatives at the extended session.

Anthony Tan, IFSW Vice President for Asia & Pacific, represented IFSW at the Global Conference on Education for All sponsored by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank, held 5-9 March 1990 at Jomtien, Thailand.

The Seventh Annual Social Work Day at the United Nations on «Empowerment through Literacy and Education : International Opportunities» will be held on March 21, 1990 at U.N. Headquarters. It is organised by the IFSW team at the UN/New York headed by Celia B. Weisman, and jointly sponsored by IFSW, the NASW New York Chapter, Social Workers for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament and other NASW bodies.

Marie-Françoise Charrier represented IFSW at the Council of Europe NGO General Assembly at Strasbourg (31.1.90 — 1.2.90). Co-operation between the Council and NGO's was intensified in 1989 through a mixed Parliamentary/NGO Committee. Opening up to Governments and NGO's in central and Eastern Europe, and legal status for NGO's were priority issues.



## **International Year of the Family**

Since the U.N. General Assembly proclaimed the year 1994 International Year of the Family at its 44th session in December 1989, it is time for IFSW and its member associations to start planning their activities for a long awaited Year, hopefully with the same enthusiasm and expertise that went into social workers' contributions to the International Year of Peace 1986.

IYF will be on the agenda of the General Meeting in Buenos Aires — please think and prepare !

### **NEWS FROM MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS**

#### **ARUBA**

The Aruban Government has been informed by the Association di Trahadornan pa Bienestar Social di Aruba (A.T.S.A.) of the latter's acceptance as a member of the International Federation of Social Workers.

ATSA has been contacted by other associations in the Caribbean expressing interest in greater coherence and collaboration in the area. It also informed the Secretariat in Geneva about a projected Conference on Social Work to be organised by the Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales de Puerto Rico. For further information, contact the Geneva Secretariat.

#### **AUSTRALIA**

Currently the resources and energy of the Australian Association of Social Workers at the national level have been focused on educational and industrial issues. Considerable work has been undertaken in 1989 on the revision of the Association's policy and procedures document on educational programmes. This document is used by the AASW to review all Australian social work courses on a five year basis, to determine graduates eligibility for membership of the Association.

The AASW initiated and funded a meeting between the Heads of Schools of Social Work from across the nation with the Executive of AASW, to review the interim document and to explore ways in which the educators and the AASW can work in partnership to maintain and enhance standards of social work education. This is seen as particularly important now, when the funding and other resources of tertiary institutions are under attack by changes in government policy and direction, which can lead to pressure to lower standards; and in the current climate of continued confusion regarding the

boundaries of welfare workers, social workers and other welfare and health professions leading to a blurring of roles.

The AASW was encouraged by the success of the meeting and supports the suggestion from the heads of schools to share costs to enable future meetings of this nature to occur.

There is already widespread interest in Australia regarding the International Social Work Conference in Argentina. The AASW has encouraged initiatives by Branches to raise social workers' awareness of international issues. There is great interest in study tours organised by the AASW International Relations Standing Committee held in conjunction with international conferences, including the 1990 Conference. Such tours are seen as a good way of increasing international understanding and developing international networks.

#### **CANADA**

At a time when the date on the abortion issue is fiercely revived throughout Canada and the United States, it is useful to recall the Canadian Association of Social Workers' stand on the subject.

Early in 1989, this was reaffirmed by the CASW Board of Directors within its comprehensive policy of family planning. In conformity with the CASW Code of Ethics adopted in 1983, the association upholds social work clients' right to self-determination in the use of family planning according to personal beliefs and convictions.

CASW believes that social workers, by virtue of their training and experience, can contribute to their clients' knowledge about contraceptive methods. They can also provide guidance and personal assistance to foster an accepting environment for an initially unwanted child, point out alternatives to women seeking an abortion, and offer post-intervention services to women and their families. Whenever a client's final choice is that of abortion, Canadian social workers will endeavour to ensure that the woman's free choice is respected, that she receives appropriate professional care and will not be forced to resort to clandestine methods.

Canadian social workers' concern over the proposed Federal Goods and Services Tax was expressed in a CASW submission to the Minister of Finance in which the detrimental impact of the tax on low-income Canadians and diminished accessibility to social support services were shown as perverse effects of the proposed legislation. At the same time, CASW reaffirmed its opposition to all forms of regressive taxation. Several of CASW's provincial associations likewise sent briefs to the Federal Government on the subject, and individual social workers have been urged to write to the Government in their personal capacity.



## CHILE

Más una vez, el Colegio de la Orden celebró, en el mes de noviembre 1989, el Día del Asistente Social, ese año con un acto solemne en la Pontificia Universidad Católica en Santiago, en la cual se rindió homenaje a los colegiados de la jurisdicción que habían cumplido 25 y 50 años de ejercicio profesional.

La Comisión de Presos Políticos del Departamento de Derechos Humanos de la Federación de Colegios Profesionales, llama a todos los profesionales a adherirse a la Campana Nacional de Apadrinamiento de Presos Políticos, y en particular, a los profesionales presos políticos. El Consejo General seguirá apoyando al Asistente Social Fermín Montes García.

*The main celebration of the 1989 Social Worker's Day in Chile took place at the Catholic University in Santiago where social workers who completed 25 and 50 years of professional activity were honoured.*

*The Human Rights Department of the Federation of Professional Associations calls on all professionals to join the National Campaign for the Support of Political Prisoners. The Consejo General will continue to support its colleague Fermin Montes Garcia.*

## DENMARK

At the December 1989 anual delegates meeting of the Danish social workers the slogan was : «break up, break down, break through ?». This was felt to describe accurately the trend in Danish social policy and social work at the end of the eighties.

All over the country, efforts are being made to devise new ways in social work which would simplify the system and give citizens more influence. The result will be a diminished role for the state and enhanced one for the community. A social work development foundation, financed by the state, will carry out country-wide social experiments over the next three years. Due care will have to be taken to ensure that the most successful of these experiments will become an integral part of social work and not merely an interesting phase.

Further cuts in Denmark's social budget have to be foreseen. Therefore, high on the Danish social policy agenda are the pauperization and forced inactivity of one-third of the country's increasingly divided society. Solidarity with the weakest and helping to ensure that they are offered work and a measure of influence on their own terms, are seen by Danish social workers as their most crucial task ahead.

## FINLAND

Eila Malström was elected in autumn 1989 as the new President of the Finnish Association of Social Workers. She presides over a growing association (last annual growth rate 11%) which counted 6,129 members (635 men) as of 31 December 1989. Of the members, 1,018 have a higher academic degree; 2,277 hold a bachelor's degree, and the others have diplomas delivered after three to four years' training.

With regard to areas of work, 450 work as directors of social services; 1,485 are employed by municipalities; 982 work in hospitals; 221 work in child and family guidance and 829 in child day-care centres; 130 work in services for alcohol and drug abusers; 180 work in schools. Over 1,000 members are students.

On 19-20 April, 1990, the Finnish Association will hold one of its biannual seminars, this time on «leadership in Social Work and Measuring Results of Social Work». A Yearbook on Social Work will be published by the Association with «supervision» as its main theme.

Trade union news : a new agreement on pay and working conditions was adopted by employers and workers' unions on 15.1.1990. Most of FASW's salary goals were reached. Decision-making is being shifted to municipal level causing FASW to put greater emphasis on grassroots activities.

One of the novelties of the agreement concerns achievement — related pay involving bonuses for workers or working groups who saved money or achieved exceptional results. FASW set up a working group to draft guidelines on measuring results of social work.

In January 1990, FASW hosted a meeting on improving social welfare services to overcome the perennial shortage of qualified social workers. One of the suggestions was to shift some of the social workers' less demanding responsibilities to less qualified personnel. A clear definition of social work will be worked out by FASW.

## FRANCE

Ce début d'année 1990 a été marqué, pour l'Association Française, par une action auprès des Ministères : Travail, Action Sociale, ainsi que par une mobilisation importante de la profession à la suite de la parution d'un texte législatif.

Ce texte législatif :

1) Homologue le diplôme d'Etat à un niveau correspondant à deux années d'études, alors qu'il est préparé en trois ans.



2) donne une définition particulièrement restrictive de la profession qui n'est point acceptable.

Pour soutenir son action auprès des Ministères, l'ANAS a appelé les professionnels à la signature d'une motion, ainsi qu'à une manifestation nationale.

Concernant les activités de formation, une session de perfectionnement a été organisée sur le thème du «DOSSIER SOCIAL» et les problèmes de déontologie qu'il soulève : tenue, communication, signalements, secret professionnel.

*ANAS intervened at the Ministries of Labour and Social Welfare to protest against new restrictive legislation on social work as a profession. Disagreement concerns the recognition of the State Diploma at a level corresponding to two years training, when actual training involves three years, and a particularly restrictive definition of the profession. Member of ANAS were asked to sign a motion and to participate in a national protest meeting.*

## IRELAND

Work continues on the development of the new Association office and on the structure of the Association. The groundwork for a special interest group in the area of Probation is being laid.

The Women's Issues Group is working on a project on the gender composition of social work in Ireland. It recently organised a Seminar on Women and AIDS. The Child Care Committee is working on the issue of foreign adoptions — children from abroad being adopted in Ireland. The Public Relations Officer has been particularly active recently in lobbying for places for teenagers who are out of home. A Bill of Children's Rights was published in December 1989. The work of the Association in respect of the establishment of a Recognition Body for social work continues.

Member Cioran Foley from the Social Workers in Mental Handicap Group has been asked to sit on the Law Reform Commission as a social work representative during deliberations on the final draft of the Bill on sexual offences. The Occupational Social Workers Group is about to be launched.

A new group to set up a Register of Natural Parents and Adoptees is being initiated under the auspices of the Irish Adoptive Parent's Association.

The Association plans to hold a Seminar in March on working with families where AIDS and HIV are issues.

Preparations are well in hand for the Annual Conference and General meeting to be held in May in Ronville in Connemara. The theme is «Taking Ourselves into the 1990's — our history, our hopes, our focus».

## ISRAEL

The Israel Association of Social Workers (IASW) and its newly elected Secretary General Eli Ben-Gera find themselves involved in protests against government measures to curtail universalist welfare policies. Demonstrations, sit-ins, lobbying in Parliament, conferences and use of the media, were strategies adopted to raise consciousness about the danger of a return to means testing. Serious cuts in universalist and other social and welfare services are nonetheless expected in the new budget at the beginning of the next financial year in April.

Medical social workers have set up their own committee to discuss their case loads and held a widely attended conference in February 1990.

A Council of Social Workers was appointed by the Minister of Social Welfare one year ago to recommend the enactment of standards in social work. Guidelines and recommendations for entering the profession are being drafted. Among the suggestions put forward are a compulsory period of training after the completion of the academic degree, the introduction of advanced levels of social work, and specialisation according to areas, methods and target groups.

The Association/union's central committee will set up a working group to discuss interaction between social workers and volunteers. Suitable and unsuitable activities for volunteers, optimum use of volunteers, and social workers in voluntary agencies are some of the issues under consideration. IASW would be grateful for material on the subject from other countries.

A prize, in memory of Amy Givoli-Lewin, a young social worker murdered when she tried to intervene in a husband's knife assault on his wife, will be awarded annually to young social workers with up to five years professional experience for outstanding contributions to social work and to their clients. The award will be made at the Association's annual convention together with other awards for more experienced professionals.

## LIBYA

The Libyan Association of Social Workers (LASW) established a specialist committee to evaluate the applicability of important social research and studies.

LASW itself carry out a study on crime and its causes, and set up a working group of professionals, academics and specialists who will, for the time being, limit the study to the confines of the municipality of Benghazi. The study is conducted under an agreement with the Ministry of the Interior.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Libyan Revolution, Mr. Ismail M. Ben Sharada was honoured for his contribution to social work and his leadership at the Libyan Association of Social Workers.



LASW participated in the 4th Conference on the Family held by the Libyan Social Security Fund in the town in Bieda. The Association also participated in the preparation of a study on the role of social security in family care in Libya.

## *NIGERIA*

The Nigeria Association of Social Workers sent IFSW a copy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's recently published «Social Development Policy for Nigeria». Development rather than welfare is the policy's obvious key word, and its definition of social development, a «process of continuous improvement of the social structure, institutions and programmes in order to create a societal condition in which the rights of citizens are advanced and protected; their welfare, enhanced; and their effective functioning and self-actualisation ensured».

## *NORWAY*

At a meeting in Lillehammer at the end of November, the Norwegian Association of Social Workers (NOSO) elected a new President, Arne Gronningsaeter, replacing the outgoing President, Gerd Reinsvollsvveen, who did not stand for re-election. It also determined some of its focal points for action in the coming years which include defense of the welfare state, promotion of equal wages for men and women, and higher starting salaries for entrants in the social work profession.

NOSO sued the city of Oslo on behalf of users of welfare services over difficulties in trying to contact officials dealing with emergency assistance and the administration of welfare funds. Too often the requisite offices are either shut or open only for a very limited time, and this is considered by NOSO an infringement of the law.

A backlog of 2500 cases at the child welfare offices constitute another reason for concern. Such cases of suspected maltreatment of children cannot be investigated for lack of resources. Following exposure of the problem in the press, government action may at last be forthcoming.

## *PORTUGAL*

The Portuguese Association of Social Workers (APSS) will host the V Portuguese-Spanish Meeting of Social in 1991 where professionals from other countries may be invited as special guests. This is deemed important as one of the event's main themes concerns the training and free movement of social workers in Europe.

Ten years of combined efforts of social workers, social work students and schools of social work finally resulted in official academic status for social

work training in Portugal. The schools of Lisbon and Oporto were the first to be granted such status in September 1989. Continued support from APSS and the trade unions during the years of struggle were of paramount importance. Portuguese social workers who already occupy positions of leadership will benefit from the new status which will allow them better access to and more say in the formulation and implementation of social policies.

## *UGANDA*

A progress report from the Irish agency TROCAIRE on the Women's Development Programme in Uganda for which funds were made available through IFSW and the National Association of Social Workers in Uganda in 1988, is available on request from the IFSW Secretariat in Geneva. Women's benefits derived from classes in literacy, handicrafts, nutrition, mother and child care as well as from agricultural and fishery projects are described.

## *UNITED KINGDOM*

BASW continues to grow in numbers and influence. Major changes in child care legislation, the criminal justice system and community care services (for elderly people and people with disabilities and their carers), linked with Government incentives for local authorities to buy services from voluntary, charitable or private organisations instead of providing services themselves means that social work in the United Kingdom faces massive upheavals.

BASW is advising Government and Parliament on child care and community care services, preparing guidelines on care management in community care, preparing proposals on new laws to protect adults at risk in the community, calling for a Social Work Council to regulate social work in the UK, publishing guidance on work with alcohol and drug abusers, campaigning for a fairer social security system.

UK education and training is also changing and growing. A new Diploma in Social Work is being phased in, a new Advanced Award will be launched soon, new qualifications for other social services staff are being planned. BASW is making a major contribution to all of these.

The Annual Study Course and Annual General Meeting is in Northern Ireland in April, planned jointly with the Irish Association. In a beautiful, peaceful hotel, where the mountains sweep down to the sea, we will consider «Meeting Common Human Needs» and discuss the changes in store for social work in the UK.



BASW was pleased to contribute to the IFSW European meetings in Basel in September 1989. The evidence on the reunification of Europe and participation of colleagues from Eastern Europe is welcome and exciting. How refreshing to be reminded that, wherever social workers are working, we share the same ethics and values, and dream the same dreams!

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

March is National Professional Social Work Month and the theme is «Family Ties», incorporating nine subject areas ranging from child development to social justice. For the first time, the theme is being promoted for two years instead of one. Anyone who would like further information should contact the NASW European chapter. Fact sheets, posters, and a publicity booklets are available to help get out the message that family ties are good for the nation and for the world.

As a result of intensive lobbying by NASW and other key organisations, the U.S. Congress in 1989 increased Title XX Social Services Block Grant funds by \$100 million to \$2.8 billion, the first substantial increase since 1983. Title XX is a major source of federal funds for a wide range of social services.

### ZIMBABWE

A report on the National Workshop held by the National Association of Social Workers last August 1989 has now been published. A grant from IFSW's Jane Hoey Development Fund had made the event possible.

In his letter of thanks to IFSW, the Secretary of the Zimbabwe NASW, Nigal Hall said that the Workshop had increased interest in the Association and helped develop its organisational level. Substantial problems remained but the Association was now more «on the road».

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### NEWS FROM USSR

A high-level mission from the USSR visited Sweden March 4-11, 1990 to gather information on social work training. Consultations also concerned an agreement on social work and labour relations and a Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

At the end of February, Mr. Arkadii Nekrassov of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited the IFSW Secretariat in Geneva with a view to USSR's future membership in the Federation.

Mr. Nekrassov requested the Secretary General to help devise a programme for the professional training of USSR social workers inside the country and in existing social work education centres abroad, and founding a national federation of social workers representing the entire Union.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The «World Summit for Children» — a summit meeting of world leaders from East, West, North and South will be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, 29-30 September 1990, to address the urgent needs of children in the 1990s. This will be the first top-level meeting of its kind to ensure the promotion and protection of children's interests in national economic and social policies all over the world.

In 1989, the UNICEF Board authorized efforts to identify children and their families bypassed by basic development services and activities and why, as a first step towards devising ways to reach them. The Board will pursue these efforts at its meeting in April 1990, and will be able to draw inspiration from the UNICEF/NGO Forum to be held at UN Headquarters in New York, 19-20 April 1990, on «Reaching the Unreached : Challenges and Failures».

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Another country abolished the death penalty : New Zealand, in November 1989. it is the 37th country to take this step.

\* \* \*

A Conference of all Peace Messengers will probably be held in the Soviet Union in 1991. Such a conference is seen as providing impetus to the Peace Messenger network and to the efforts of the 370 organizations, cities and countries designated as Peace Messengers by the Secretary General of the United Nations since 1987.

### REGISTER NOW :

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11th symposium

Buenos Aires, 8-12 August 1990

Theme : Social Policy and Social Work :  
Their Impact in Times of Change and Crisis

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