

August 28, 1973

REPORT TO INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

As of February, 1973, my appointment as the IFSW Non-Governmental Organization Representative at the United Nations was confirmed by the Secretariat. The IFSW has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. I have, unfortunately, been restricted in the time I could give to this responsibility. I have, however, attended the following:

A number of sessions of the Commission on
Social Development

Weekly Briefing Sessions, conducted by the UN
office of public information on a range of
subjects under current consideration by
various units of the Economic and Social Council

Meetings of the Population Commission

The Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations
in Consultative Status with the United Nations.

Issues at the United Nations which appear to be of special
concern to the International Federation of Social Workers
are outlined on the attached together with suggestions
for action by the IFSW member associations.

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to United Nations
Economic and Social Council

ISSUES AT THE UNITED NATIONS:

Suggestions for Action by IFSW Member Associations

Introduction. The International Federation of Social Workers has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council as a non-governmental organization. Through its member associations, the IFSW has an opportunity to influence the important work of the United Nations in the economic and social field.

There are four major ways in which professional social work organizations can be effective:

1. Work directly with their own governments to:

- Urge support for UN social and economic programs
- recommend social work leaders and experts for appointment as their country's representatives to UN bodies (e.g., Commissions on Human Rights, Social Development, Population; ad hoc expert groups organized from time to time by the UN to work on specific problems)
- recommend national positions on various issues under consideration at the UN.

2. Work directly with their national delegations to the UN:

- meet with individual representatives to such UN bodies as the Economic and Social Council, Commissions, expert groups, and interpret the social work association's competence and position on specific issues
- communicate with their country's permanent mission to the UN. (Many nations lack the resources to send individuals especially qualified to serve on particular commissions at the UN and are represented by staff of the permanent mission based in New York. These representatives are well informed but cannot be expected to have special competence in the many different fields in which the UN is active. It is therefore important that social work associations get acquainted with the head of their UN mission or other mission staff when they are on home leave to build receptiveness for written communications on specific issues.)

Developing countries are encouraged to make use of technical assistance in development planning from the UN and its regional Economic Councils.

Developed countries are urged to share their expertise and increase their financial support for UN development programs.

Resources

Social Development Newsletter issued by the Social Development Division, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UN Secretariat.

A Commitment to Action: The International Development Strategy, Centre for Economic and Social Information, UN Secretariat.

International Adoptions

"Children who are deprived of parental care through the loss of one or more parents and for whom substitute arrangements must be found in foster care or adoption constitute a group for whom safeguards must be erected" --- statement of ICSW presented to Commission for Social Development, Twenty-third session.

The Commission on Social Development called for collecting current information from governments and getting their views on the question of an international conference on adoption law.

Urge your government to provide necessary information and request analysis of the questionnaire before supporting the ideas of the Conference.

Social Welfare Training and Research

A proposed European Centre for Social Welfare Training and Research to deal with a broad range of social welfare issues including social security, health, employment and education is under consideration at the UN. The Secretary General asked for the views of European Member States by June 1, 1973.

Find out if your government has responded and encourage its support.

Human Rights

Declaration of Human Rights: The member associations whose governments have not yet ratified this important covenant should make every effort to influence them to do so.

Racism, Racial and Religious Discrimination and Apartheid -

The international convention on racial discrimination has been ratified by 71 states. Those who have not yet done so should be encouraged to take positive action by December 10, 1973 the twenty-fifth anniversary of adoption of the Declaration of Human Rights. IFSW member associations may wish to recognize this anniversary in their publications or programs.

The UN Committee for Elimination of Apartheid

needs support in influencing governments to prohibit corporations (of their own nationals, or multi-national) from exploiting workers where apartheid is national policy. Governments should also be pressed to support liberation movements and anti-apartheid organizations.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

The establishment of such an office has been proposed and would enhance the UN efforts to implement the Declaration of Human Rights.

World Population Year - 1974

The UN Fund for Population Activities, with the endorsement of ECOSOC is stressing a "country" approach to population programs. This demands effective national institutions to coordinate country population programs.

IFSW member associations may be in a position to offer their competence in family life education and family planning to their governments.

World Population Conference August 1974 - the first international meeting committed to tackle the many different problems concerning population and establish means of cooperating to resolve them.

A World Population Conference leaflet in English is available, with French and Spanish editions in preparation, from the Centre for Economic and Social Information, United Nations, N.Y.

IFSW member associations are urged to report their activities and views on these and other issues at the United Nations to their IFSW UN representative.

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