



ifsw news

2-3/2002

SOCIAL JUSTICE

SOCIAL WORK

PEACE

Social Workers Advocate for Peaceful Solutions

Twelve months ago I was reflecting on the impact of September 11 and other world events. Sadly this issue comes at a time of ever increasing global instability, tension, ongoing armed conflict, further acts of terrorism and the threat of war with Iraq. It is only appropriate therefore that a significant section of this edition is devoted to the question of Peace.

In every region of the world we are confronted with the consequences of poverty, discrimination, conflict, economic disadvantage and political instability. In each region social workers are engaged in complex, demanding work requiring innovative ethical solutions in environments that are still driven by economic and political imperatives over social impacts.

Social work has always had a role to play in advocating for peace and non-violent conflict resolution at every level of society. In this edition the NASW, through the message to their members, reminds us of our continuing role in advocating for peaceful solutions. Our Israeli colleagues vividly record the impact of ongoing conflict on their nation and community. This plight is repeated wherever conflict and terrorism exists.

We urge all of our members to continue to tell governments and communities that while we will never support acts of terrorism, we understand the links between chronic poverty, prejudice, disadvantage and the likelihood that terrorists will find support where it may otherwise have not existed. However armed solutions are no solutions at all.

Elsewhere AIDS has killed more than 3.8 million children and orphaned another 13 million. In the last five years, HIV/AIDS has become the greatest threat to children and adults. The Barcelona conference suggests that it is the biggest killer, not just of our time but of history. In the worst affected countries, as many as half of today's 15-year olds will die from the disease. It will claim lives across all ages,

genders, and economic and occupational groups, including our own colleagues. It is now over 10 years since we launched our policy on HIV/AIDS. Therefore it is essential that we revisit this policy and double our advocacy for appropriate strategies to address this pandemic.

Children remain the most vulnerable members of our communities and they will continue to be a focus of IFSW's work, not only through the promotion of the training manual Social Work and the Rights of the Child, but also in the development of specific policies and action strategies in this area.

Later in this edition you will read the outcomes of the General Meeting held in Geneva. The agenda and discussion exposed the breadth of our concerns, moving from important structural and constitutional matters through to critical issues of human rights, policy and ethics. We will continue to work hard to find new ways to engage with member organisations and their members in a way that better supports the work of social work at all levels, local, national and global. The issues we face are very important and with significant ramifications.

There is so much work to be done, seemingly so little time. However the IFSW is strong in its membership and very fortunate indeed to have so many willing and talented volunteers to support its work. The IFSW, like almost every other organisation of its type, must work with precious human and financial resources. The challenge for the newly elected Executive Committee and Secretariat is to make the new system effective and I am very privileged to be working with such a talented team of people and I look forward to working with them and you as we continue to pursue peace and the goals of IFSW.

Sydney, November 2002

Imelda Dodds, IFSW President

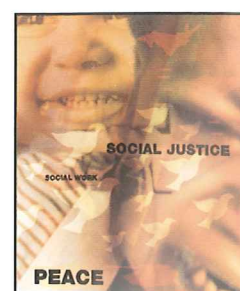


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Countering the negative effects of globalisation

The IFSW General Meeting in Geneva 10–12 July, 2002 approved an Interim Policy Statement on Globalisation, while the Policy and Action Committee is continuing to work on a broader Policy Statement to be presented at the General Meeting 2004 for approval.

While there are many possible definitions of globalisation, the interim statement uses the following: *"Globalisation is the process by which all people and communities around the world come to experience an increasingly common economic, social and cultural environment."*

The interim statement is rather short and we bring it to you as full text:

IFSW

- * recognises that globalisation is a continuing process which, whilst advancing global technological development and communications, also has a negative impact on the balance of economic, political and cultural power between individuals and communities. Social workers see and work with the consequences of these processes.

- * recognises that pain and disruption in social, health and education services associated with structural adjustment policies has resulted in negative consequences for social programmes and the practice of the social work profession in many parts of the world.

- * endorses the recommendations on social and economic development from recent international conferences, as summarised by the United Nations and stated below, and calls on international organisations and nation states to implement these immediately.
- * considers that social development programmes, whether linked to structural adjustment or other emergency economic recovery programmes, must have the following elements:

1. Education and lifelong learning programmes
2. Supportive work programmes for those whose physical, mental or emotional problems or caring responsibilities prevent them from taking standard jobs.
3. Social protection to sustain those unable to raise income through work, with annual targets to reduce poverty.
4. Respect for the UN Human Rights Instruments including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and arrangements to promote the education and welfare of children.
5. Consultation with local communities and civil society organisations and the active involvement of "excluded" individuals and communities in decisions which affect them.

New UN approaches to development

As an appendix to the interim statement, a summary of action from UN Conferences is further informing the matter. The summary (here in excerpts) focuses new approaches to development, which should be centred on human beings. Because an individual's well being is multifaceted, a multidimensional approach to development is essential.

Central goals of development include the eradication of poverty, the fulfilment of the basic needs of all people and the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Development requires that governments apply active social and environmental policies.

Investments in health, education and training are critical to the development of human resources. Social development is best pursued if governments actively promote empowerment and participation in a democratic and pluralistic system respectful of all human rights.

The improvement of the status of women, including their empowerment, is central to all efforts to achieve sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Diversion of resources away from social priorities should be avoided and, where it has occurred, be corrected.

Enhanced co-operation in the management of a globalised world economy and in the formulation and implementation of macro-economic policies, are critical for the promotion of sustained economic growth.

IFSW General Meeting 2002

The General Meeting of the IFSW was held in Geneva, Switzerland 10-12 July at the office of the International Labour Organization (ILO). More than 100 delegates and others from 36 member organisations were present or represented by proxy.

Organisational changes approved

After an intense debate the General Meeting approved most of the proposed changes to the IFSW Constitution and By-laws, including establishment of new membership categories and a reduction of the size of the Executive Committee from 17 to 12. The term of office for executives was prolonged, as the regions strengthened.

The new Executive Committee

consists of Imelda Dodds, Australia, President, Five regional Vice Presidents: Kishore C. Ramgoolam, Mauritius, Justina Leung, Hong Kong, David Jones, United Kingdom, Juan Manuel Latorre Carvajal, Colombia, and Gary Bailey, USA. Fiona Robertson, New Zealand is Treasurer and Charles N. Mbugua, Kenya, John Ang, Singapore, Monica Egan, Ireland, Joaquina Barata Teixeira, Brazil, and John Mould, Canada will serve as Members-at-Large.

Two new members approved

The Association of Social Workers in Turkey and the Croatia Association of Social Workers were both approved as new members.

Social Work Around the World II

The second volume of the IFSW Book Series "Social Work Around the World" was launched at the General Meeting. The book is presenting 14 articles on international social work in three main chapters: Social Work Practice: Focus and Issues; Contextualizing Social Work Practice; and Globalisation, Social Development and Social Work Education. To order the book, please contact the IFSW Secretariat

Human Rights Commission now joint with IASSW

The General Meeting approved that the IFSW Human Rights Commission, first established in 1988, is to be merged with the Human Rights Commission of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW). The leadership of the new commission is to be rotated, with IASSW taking the lead for the first four-year period.

Policy

The General Meeting agreed on a statement on HIV/AIDS, calling governments, world and regional bodies to fund prevention and treatment. An interim policy statement on Globalisation was approved, as was a new Policy Statement on Displaced Persons. The General Meeting further agreed to work on policy statements on children, and on occupational social work, and accepted a British proposal to join the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children.

Adelaide 2004, Munich 2006 and competition for 2008

The next General Meeting is set for Adelaide, Australia in 2004, immediately ahead of the joint IFSW-IASSW World Conference Global Social Work 2004: Reclaiming Civil Society. The General Meeting formally approved Germany's bid to arrange the World Conference 2006 in Munich, celebrating IFSW's 50-year jubilee. Three member organisations expressed interest in arranging the World Conference 2008: Brazil, Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. A final decision is due in 2004. For 2010 and onwards, a joint bid and decision process is to be set up with IASSW.

Preparing New Document on Ethics

The IFSW Permanent Committee on Ethical Issues has developed a Draft Statement of Principles to be circulated as an important step towards a final version of a new Ethical document to be presented at the General Meeting 2004, replacing the present 1994 document. The draft points out that ethical awareness is a necessary part of the professional practice of every social worker. It also underlines that the role of IFSW is not to prescribe detailed rules of conduct, but rather to seek agreement on principles that can be used as reference for national organisations.

After a preface, a reference to the Definition of Social Work and the relevant international conventions, the principles are listed in three sections: 1) Human Rights

and Human Dignity; 2) Social Justice; and 3) Professional Conduct

Section 1 is listing Respecting the right to self-determination; Promoting the right to participation; and Treating each person as a whole. Section 2 contains Challenging negative discrimination; Recognising diversity; Distributing resources equitably; and Challenging unjust policies and practices. Section 3 is listing 10 general guidelines on professional conduct covering among others Skills and competence; Integrity; Relation to users; Confidentiality; Relations to colleagues, employers, the professional association and the law; and Ethical awareness. www.ifsw.org/GM-2002/GM-Ethics-draft.html

IFSW Policy on Displaced Persons:

An increasing phenomenon of huge concern

The IFSW General Meeting in Geneva adopted a new Policy Statement on Displaced Persons, prepared by the Vice President for Latin America and Caribbean Juan Manuel Latorre Carvajal and others. The complete text is available at the IFSW web-site www.ifsw.org

The displacement or forced migration of people within their own countries is a common and increasing international phenomenon. Such migration may be caused by internal armed conflicts, situations of general violence, ethnic fights, mass violation of human rights, violations of international humanitarian law or natural disasters. According to the UN Commission on Human Rights "in more than 50 countries and practically in every world region, more than 25 million people are considered as displaced people as a result of violent conflicts and human rights violations". This number increases by several millions with those who have been uprooted by natural or manmade disasters.

Displaced people are highly vulnerable, suffering from discrimination, experiencing significant deprivation and frequently impoverished. Marginalised within their own society and facing the trauma of their uprooting experience, displaced people turn into excluded people suffering loss of economic opportunities, breakdown of cultural identity, loosening of social structures, interruption of schooling, increased poverty levels, and grief relating to dead or missing family members.

The IFSW is concerned about the conditions of displaced individuals, the very existence of displacement and the policies that have caused it. We deem the conditions harmful to the fulfilment of human rights and contrary to the principles of the social work profession.

The Policy Statement is divided in three parts: Considerations, Advice to member organisations and the Role of social workers:

Considerations

IFSW considers that 1) internal displacement generally stems from structural causes and must be addressed within the context of each country's general problems; 2) displacement caused by political, religious or ethnic conflicts requires special consideration of the phenomenon of social exclusion; 3) it is essential to identify the cause of displacement to ensure the adequate action; 4) since displacement is frequently the result of a weak state confronted by general violence, preventive policies promoting peaceful coexistence and respect for Human Rights need to be included in national and local policies; 5) every effort should be made to ensure the protection and welfare of displaced persons and, ultimately, their repatriation or resettlement; 6) work with displaced populations should aim at sustainability, overcoming dependence on humanitarian assistance, regaining productive capacity, rebuilding socio-cultural structures as well as personal and collective ability to contribute proactively to national and regional development; 7) it is important to address the emotional needs of displaced people; 8) psychosocial

services and development assistance must give precedence to the most vulnerable, especially women and children; 9) services for displaced populations should be collective and autonomous rather than individual and fragmented; and 10) any programme should be aware of the effects that displacement has on receiving communities.

Advice to Member Organisations

Member organisations should 1) instigate pressure mechanisms and action in their countries to address displacement situations within a concept of preventive, holistic and sustainable development; 2) contribute to the dissemination of the United Nations' "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement"; 3) link up with NGO networks that further dialogue with governments; 4) contribute to the widening of protection and assistance services for displaced populations; 5) participate in awareness, preparedness or mobilisation of populations at risk of displacement as well as in mitigation of the impact of displacement; 6) be involved in networks and databases set up to facilitate recording, information systems, day-to-day development and evaluation of programmes for displaced people; 7) facilitate the mobilisation of resources from possible funders; 8) promote research projects; 9) promote mechanisms that enable displaced populations to participate in the planning of their own future; 10) advise governments on best practices; and 11) work with schools of social work to ensure training in the area of internal displacement.

The Role of Social Workers

There is a variety of tasks for social work when it comes to displaced persons, of which some are as *investigators* into the political and socio-cultural causes leading to displacement, *participants* in the design and formulation of preventive, remedial and developmental policies and programmes for displaced populations, *social managers* with administrative functions in projects and programmes, *analysts* of a wide range of social processes, *evaluators* of projects, *specialists* in human and family problems, *social educators* conveying information on the rights of displaced persons and services available to them, *conflict mediators* with the ability to lead, summon parties and negotiate, *agents* for strategic alliances among organisations, groups and institutions to achieve the optimal utilisation of available resources.

At the end of the Policy Statement, IFSW states its awareness of the fact that humanitarian assistance for displaced persons cannot replace the political will of governments in their quest for solutions for internal conflicts that caused the displacement.

Social Work, Peace and Social Justice

It has long been the view of the majority of social workers that too many resources are used on military conflicts that should have been diverted to social development. For the profession, the issues of peace and social justice are interlinked, and without a radical reappraisal of priorities throughout the world, millions will continue to live in extreme poverty.

In the IFSW Policy Statement on "Peace and Social Justice" (adopted in 2000 as a follow-up of the statement on "Peace and Disarmament" from 1988), it is stated:

Social workers devote their energies to the peaceful resolution of conflicts. They are committed to social development and the achievement of social justice in which all living in a country are able to realise their full potential regardless of income, class, caste, religion, race or ethnicity. The social work profession therefore at international and national level has to direct its energies to the realisation of a world free from conflict in which its vision of the future can be realised. This will mean that

IFSW will work in collaboration with the United Nations and international human rights organisations to promote peace and social justice.

IFSW will campaign for redistribution of resources from military usage to social development.

IFSW will promote the concepts of mediation and arbitration to secure the peaceful resolutions of conflicts between nations.

IFSW will work with the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) to promote curriculum development in social work schools to include conflict resolution techniques.

IFSW will collect information from its member associations to detail and document the impact on social development of excessive expenditure on arms.

IFSW reasserts its long-standing commitment to peace and non-violence, and its belief that the promotion of social justice can only be achieved through non-violent change.

IFSW calls upon member associations to press their national governments to pledge:

- a) a reduction in arms expenditure*
- b) an increase in social development expenditure*
- c) renewed commitment to conflict resolution through the United Nations.*

Opposing Terrorism and Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction, but also Pre-Emptive Military Force

IFSW sent the message below to US-President George Bush, UK-Prime Minister Tony Blair and the Australian Prime Minister John Howard 18 October 2002.

We write to you on behalf of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) representing 450,000 social work practitioners in 78 countries across the globe.

The IFSW and its members opposes terrorism however and wherever it occurs. Over recent years our members in Ireland, Israel, Lebanon, Kenya, Spain, Russia, The United States and most recently Australia have worked with the consequences of such actions upon the lives of many innocent people.

Neither do we support the use of weapons of mass destruction nor their stockpiling. We have long been opposed to the use of such weapons as a threat to civilised society, and support multinational efforts to eliminate them through the United Nations system.

However we are united in our opposition to pre-emptive military action by any nation state against another unless threat is immediate and only with the support and sanction of the United Nations.

As social workers across the globe we regularly assist people who have been affected by war, terrorism and civil strife. We see the connections between war and poverty and that those most significantly affected are those least able to fend for themselves. While we support actions to prevent and stop terrorism these must be broadly based and include social, economic and political strategies and not be based upon military action.

We have become increasingly disturbed by a tendency to equate those who advocate a measured response with supporters of terrorism. Such a simple binary approach is ill-informed, inaccurate and dangerously divisive within our communities.

We urge you to exercise appropriate and wise leadership by ensuring that you neither lead nor support pre-emptive military action against Iraq or any other country. Further we urge you to honour the undertaking of your predecessors who established the United Nations with the express purpose to prevent the unnecessary and pre-emptive military force and instead to look to other more sustainable methods of conflict resolution.

AMERICAN SOCIAL WORK AND PEACE

"Nearly all governments preach peace through strength rather than strength through peace"

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW), USA remembered September 11 by inviting Colman McCarthy, a former Washington Post columnist to offer a three hour workshop at their National Headquarters. On a day of remembering victims of terrorism, the workshop sought to better understand the causes of violence and to consider non-violent responses.

Colman McCarthy has been teaching alternatives to violence since 1982. He is a firm believer in the possibility of learning peace. The quote in the headline is by him. He is also saying that "militarists believe wholeheartedly that violence is the way to stop violence. But it is obvious that history proves this approach wrong – if wars were effective, all our problems would have been solved thousands of years ago."

NASW sent 7 October the following open letter to President George W. Bush:

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) opposes unilateral, pre-emptive military action by the United States against Iraq. The human, social, and economic costs of war are immense. Such action should be undertaken only under imminent and immediate threat to our country, and with the sanction of the United Nations and support of our allies.

NASW policies have long advocated the abo-

lition of all chemical, biological, and nuclear warfare. We support U.N.-sponsored multinational efforts to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, as well as efforts by countries to cease production of, and destroy any stockpiles of such weapons. We strongly urge the non-violent resolution of international conflicts.

NASW policies also support the premise that the welfare of all people, and balanced economic and social development of all nations, should be the goals of U.S. foreign policy. Social workers, who work with immigrants and refugees, are acutely aware of the frequent connection between war and poverty. We know that those who are already poor and powerless are further victimized in violent confrontations. Therefore, NASW calls for the United States to foster cooperation and collaboration with allies and international bodies in all its foreign policy initiatives.

Jane Addams, the 1931 co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and a pioneer social worker, said, "We believe that war, seeking its end through coercion, not only interrupts but fatally reverses the process of cooperating good will, which if it has a chance, would eventually include the human family itself."

We urge you to oppose any pre-emptive or unilateral military action against other countries, including Iraq.

JANE ADDAMS 1860 - 1935



Jane Addams won worldwide recognition in the first third of the 20th Century as pioneer social worker, feminist and internationalist. Born in Cedarville, Illinois, USA she started studying medicine, but gave it up due to poor health. In the late 1880s she visited Toynbee Hall in London's East End and was inspired to go back to Chicago and open a similar house in 1889, called Hull-House, to help families, take care of children, nurse the sick and listen to troubled people. By its second year, Hull-House was host to more than 2 000 people every week. The House developed by also opening an art gallery, a public kitchen, music and drama schools, a library and an employment bureau.

As her reputation grew, Jane Addams was drawn into larger fields of civic responsibility as the Chicago Board of Education and later as President of the National Conference on Charities and Corrections (later the National Conference of Social Work). She was the first woman to receive an honorary degree by Yale University. Publishing about women's rights and peace, she became President of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, which still is an active international NGO. Addams urged the USA to join the League of Nations and the World Court.

She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. At the award ceremony the Norwegian Nobel Committee paid tribute to Jane Addams by stating:

"She held fast to the ideal of peace even during the difficult hours when other considerations and interests obscured it from her compatriots and drove them into conflict."

Practitioners and Educators Develop Global Standards for Social Work Education

IFSW and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) have established a Joint Committee to develop Global Standards for Social Work Education. The aim is to produce a final document for approval at the General Meetings of the two organisations in Adelaide, Australia 2004.

During the preparatory process of the present discussion document there was on the whole a favourable response to IASSW and IFSW developing a standards setting document that elucidates what social work represents on a global level. This paper, that identifies certain universals, may be used as guidelines to develop national norms and standards with regard to social work education and training. Such international standards should reflect some consensus around key issues, roles and purposes of social work. However, given the profession's historically fragmented strands; the contemporary debates around social work's intra-professional identity; its identity vis-à-vis other categories of personnel in the welfare sector such as social pedagogues, development workers, child care workers, probation officers, community workers and youth workers; and the enormous diversities across nations and regions, there was some scepticism about the possibility of identifying any such "universal". The suggestion was that such a standard setting document must be sufficiently flexible to be applicable to any context. Such flexibility should allow for interpretations of locally specific social work education and practice, and take into account each country's or region's socio-political, cultural, economic and historical contexts while adhering to international norms and standards.

Why are we doing this?

The main reasons for the development of such a standard setting document were to:

- * Protect the "consumers" or 'clients' of social work services
- * Take account of the impact of globalisation on social work curricula and social work practice;
- * Facilitate articulation across Universities on a global level;
- * Facilitate the movement of social workers from one country to another;
- * Draw a distinction between social workers and non-social workers;
- * Benchmark national standards against international standards;
- * Facilitate partnerships and international student and staff exchange programmes;
- * Enable IASSW and IFSW, in developing such standards, to play a facilitative role in helping those faculties, centres, departments or schools of social work that lack resources to meet such standards.

* Give practical expression to the aim of IASSW as some saw the formulation of global qualifying standards to be the core business of IASSW.

Core Purposes of Social Work

The discussion document is using the International Definition of Social Work as a reference, and has also identified the following core purposes of social work:

- * Facilitate the inclusion of marginalized, socially excluded, dispossessed, vulnerable and at-risk groups of people.
- * Address and challenge barriers, inequalities and injustices that exist in society
- * Assist and mobilize individuals, families, groups and communities to enhance their well-being and their problem-solving capacities.
- * Encourage people to engage in advocacy with regard to pertinent local, national, regional and/or international concerns.
- * Advocate for, and/or with people, the formulation and targeted implementation of policies that are consistent with the ethical principles of the profession.
- * Advocate for, and/or with people, changes in those structural conditions that maintain people in marginalized, dispossessed and vulnerable positions.
- * Work towards the protection of people who are not in a position to do so themselves, for example children in need of care and persons experiencing mental illness or mental retardation within the parameters of accepted and ethically sound legislation.

Standard Areas

The document is listing draft standards with regard to

- * The School's Mission Statement
- * Program Objectives and Outcomes
- * Program Curricula, including Field Work
- * Core Curricula
- * Professional Staff
- * Student Social Workers
- * Structure, Administration, Governance and Resources
- * Cultural and Ethnic Diversity
- * Social Work Values and Ethical Codes of Conduct

In its conclusion the document states that neither IASSW nor IFSW will play any monitoring, control or accreditation function, but that the roles of the international bodies are intended to be supportive and facilitative.

The Joint Committee is chaired by Vishantie Sewpaul in South Africa (IASSW), while David Jones is Vice Chair, representing IFSW. A comprehensive discussion document has been developed and was presented to the IFSW General Meeting in Geneva. It can be found at

www.ifsw.org/GM-2002/GM-GStandards.htm

If you should want to contribute your comments to the Committee, you are welcome to send them to David Jones at JonesDavidN@aol.com

Up-coming IFSW seminars and conferences



Copenhagen, Denmark

26-29 May 2003

IFSW European Seminar

Social Work in Future Europe

Secretariat:

HK/Kommunal, Ms. Güler Celik

H. C. Andersens Boulevard 50

DK-1780 Copenhagen V, Denmark

Tel: (45) 33 30 43 43 , Fax: (45) 33 30 44 49

E-mail: info@socialwork2003.dk

Web: www.socialwork2003.dk

Nagasaki, Japan

7-11 July 2003

17th Asia-Pacific Conference

Peace, Justice and Social Work

- A Vision for the 21st Century

Secretariat:

17th APSWC Secretariat

c/o ISS Inc, 23-3 Ichiban-cho, Chiyoda-ku,

Tokyo 102-0082 Japan

Tel: (81) 3 3556-7521, Fax: (81) 3 3556-7522

E-mail: 17apswc@issnet.co.jp

Web: www.17apswc.jp



**Were you present in Munich 1956
when IFSW was refounded?
Or do you know anybody who was?**

The German Association of Social Workers will host the IFSW World Conference in 2006 when social workers from all over the world will gather together in Munich to celebrate the "New" IFSW's 50th birthday.

The organisation would like to get in contact with persons who attended the meeting when IFSW was refounded and to ask them to write a short report of their memories of the refoundation.

Please contact Barbara Molderings, K.B.Molderings@t-online.de

More Social Work Conferences 2003-2004

Stockholm, Sweden, 19-21 May 2003

The Second International School Social Work Conference

The conference is sponsored by the Sveriges Skolkuratorers Förening (Association of School Social Workers of Sweden) and the conference language is English.

Contact person:

Ms. Monica Hansson Johnsson
RESURSen, Hantverkargatan 51

S-602 30 Norrköping, Sweden

Tel: (46) 73 02962

Fax: (46) 11 157770

E-mail: monica.h.johnsson@norrkoping.se

Webpage: <http://internationalnetwork-schoolsocialwork.htmlplanet.com/>

Quebec City, Canada 23-27 May 2004

4th International Conference on Social Work in Health and Mental Health

Secretariat: 4th International Conference on Social Work in Health and Mental Health, 210, rue Lee, Suite 275, Québec (Québec) G1K 2K6, Canada
Tel: (1) 418 523 3555, Fax: (1) 418 523 1371

E-mail: SWH2004@qvc.qc.ca

Adelaide, Australia, 2-6 October 2004

IFSW-IASSW World Conference Global Social Work 2004

Reclaiming Civil Society

Secretariat: Congress Secretariat ICMS Pty Ltd
84 Queensbridge Street, Southbank
Melbourne VIC 3004, Australia

Tel: (61) 3 9682 0244

Fax: (61) 3 9682 0288

E-mail: ifsw@icms.com.au

Web: www.icms.com.au/ifsw

NATIONAL REPORTS

In advance of the distribution of this edition of "ifsw news" we asked all member organisations for national contributions, and we are pleased to bring you reports from 4 countries. It does not take much knowledge in geography to see that they all come from our European region. Please be aware that we welcome contributions from all parts of the world to the "ifsw news" or to our monthly web-based "ifsw update".

Nordic Seminar 2002: Social Work, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism

Nordic professionals of multicultural social work met in Rovaniemi, Finland in August, 2002. Nearly 150 social workers, social work researchers and teachers participated in the seminar. Seminar participants came from all Nordic Countries. Nordic students of social work had a parallel meeting during the seminar.

The theme of the seminar was "Social Work, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism". The Nordic welfare model and social work with ethnic minorities was discussed in lectures, workshops and panels.

Social work in multicultural context, ethnic minorities in social work with the point of view of child protection, cultural competence and democracy, racism and fear of strangers; these are just a few examples of interesting lectures heard during the seminar.

Social workers are bridge builders, not gate keepers

- Attitudes to different cultures have become stronger at the same time as there is more emphasis on national identity.

Society tries to change the role of social work from bridge builder to gate keeper. Social workers must not accept this, said Eila Malmström, the President of the Finnish Union of Professional Social Workers (Talentia) in her opening speech at the seminar.

- Social work is more about support than control, she emphasized. The aim of social work is to diminish the obstacles in society, such as inequality and injustice. Full participation of immigrants, refugees and ethnic minorities in activities of society requires special attention and support.

Malmström demanded more activity also from social workers: Social workers need to take part in societal discourse and to influence the political decision-making by their know-how of people's everyday life.

The Nordic Seminar is held every second year and the next will be held in Sweden 2004.

Union of Professional Social Workers Talentia, Finland

Israeli Social Workers confront Government on 2003 budget

The worldwide economic downturn has hit the Israeli economy very hard. Add to that the uncertainty caused by the ongoing conflict with the Palestinian Authority and it is clear that the population is suffering. The backbone of the economy has been the high-tech and the tourism sectors. Both are going through serious cutbacks. Tax revenues are down and the government is planning to cut about 8 billion shekels (USD 2 billion) from the 2003 budget. The vast majority of the cuts are in social services and education. The major victims are the poor.

The Israel Association of Social Workers (IASW) is gearing up for a confrontation with the Finance Ministry over the proposed 2003 budget cuts which will be disastrous to the weaker segments of the population. In addition, the funds available to social workers for treatment services are being diverted to fund "soup kitchens" to feed the poor in a misguided policy of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (who has supported the budget cuts). Furthermore, there has been a steady increase over the years in reports of family violence and child abuse without a commensurate increase in trained personnel to treat these cases. The IASW is demanding that the government agree to placing limits on the

number of families each worker can treat at any given time. This is opposed by the finance ministry since it will require the hiring of more social workers at a time when they want to cut the budget.

This is without a doubt a difficult time for all but the richest segment of the population. Even the middle class have seen their incomes severely reduced by salary reductions and inflation. The recently released "Poverty Report" states that almost 20% of the population lived below the poverty line in 2001 including 50% of the country's children! The forecast for 2002 is worse as reductions in welfare payments and unemployment benefits took effect. 2003 will show no improvement as deeper cuts are scheduled. The current unemployment level of 10% is forecast to increase to 12%. The conservative government has shown no social conscience and the Labor Party has pulled out of the coalition in opposition to the proposed budget when they were unable to make changes from within. This will bring on early elections with the attending turmoil and the expenditure of millions on political party funding. The near future is not at all optimistic.

Brian Auslander, Israel Association of Social Workers

Portuguese Social Workers Strengthen their Voice

Social Workers in Portugal are through their national organisation Association of Trained Social Workers (APSS) taking steps to strengthen their voice in society. At a National Congress in May with 850 participants it was decided to establish a College to register social workers, protect users of services and provide a platform for communication with the government on social policy and social work education. A General Meeting of APSS in November will approve regulations for the College. Following this, discussions will take place with government and parliament. The President of Portugal, Dr. Jorge Sampaio, has already encouraged the social workers in their endeavours.

Christina Martins, APSS Portugal

Herbert Paulischin re-elected President of OBDS

In October the Austrian Association of Social Workers (OBDS) held its biannual General meeting in Innsbruck, and the theme was: "Quality Loss in Social Work?". At the meeting Herbert Paulischin was re-elected President of the association, and in this way the continuous carry-on work is ensured. In 2003 the organisation will focus its work on Education and Professional Codes for Social Workers.

More information can be found at the OBDS homepage: www.sozialarbeit.at

Judith Haberhauer-Stidl, OBDS, Austria

Con nuestros mejores deseos para 2003
Nous vous formons nos meilleurs vœux pour 2003
With the best wishes for 2003



Imelda Dodds
IFSW President

Tom Johannesen
Secretary General

UN Millenium Goals

By the year 2015 the United Nations Member States have pledged to meet the following goals:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

- * Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day
- * Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

2. Achieve universal primary education

- * Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling

3. Promote gender equality and empower women

- * Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

4. Reduce child mortality

- * Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five

5. Improve maternal health

- * Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

- * Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- * Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

7. Ensure environmental sustainability

- * Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources

- * Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
- * Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020

8. Develop a global partnership for development

- * Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory. Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction—nationally and internationally
- * Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction
- * Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States
- * Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term
- * In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth
- * In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
- * In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies—especially information and communications technologies.

For more information see: www.un.org/millenniumgoals