

Time to move to a more peaceful and equitable solution

As the year 2001 draws to a conclusion I am struck by the apparent reluctance of governments, peoples and leaders in every sphere to face the causes and consequences of the complex situation in which the world finds itself. I am disturbed by the particular reluctance of developed countries to ask how, if at all their foreign policies could have contributed to this state of affairs.

The continuing, indeed increasing, gap between those with wealth and those in relative and absolute poverty cannot be ignored. The manifest failure to address the causes of disadvantage have contributed to the current world instability and crisis.

The IFSW has never condoned violence of any type. However we can understand how individuals may be driven by desperate circumstances to undertake desperate acts. The focus has, not surprisingly, been on North America and Afghanistan. But the pain is much more widespread and manifests itself in war, civil conflict, poverty, famine and pandemic disease.

The African continent continued this year to struggle with the HIV pandemic, civil warfare, political instability, famine and natural disasters.

For the IFSW Afghanistan belongs to the Asia & Pacific region and colleagues in neighboring countries are dealing with the immediate impact of refugees and in the near future the process of reconstruction. Across the region the struggles for independence in Indonesia continue in the province of Aceh. The Pacific islands are addressing the issue of refugees, while Australia has turned its back on the question, its economic privilege not matched by compassion.

The political landscape in the Latin America & Caribbean remains changeable and colleagues there

continue the pursuit of ensuring that basic human rights are not trammeled.

The recent opening of discussions between the Russian government and Chechnya is welcome but comes at the end of a bitter struggle which has cost the lives of thousands and left thousands of others to deal with the memories and consequences of war.

The situation between Israel and Palestine gives little hope for peace in the immediate future although our colleagues in both countries both advocate for peace and daily respond to the consequences of ongoing conflict.

North America has experienced a level of terror that has not been seen in over one and a half centuries. The impact of the attacks on September 11 is now revealing itself in the effects of unemployment and its consequent stresses.

There has also been a strong trend towards the election of conservative governments, and liberal governments have also showed signs of increasing conservatism. With it seems to come a retreat into introspection rather than internationalism. The fight against terrorism has seen an escalation of xenophobia such as we have not witnessed for many years

It has been a salutary year. We will continue to work with the consequences of 2001 well into 2002 and beyond. In closing we wish for all of our members, Friends, colleagues in NGOs and their families that 2002 will see a turning point so that we can move to a more peaceful and equitable solution.

Imelda Dodds, IFSW President
December 2001

Deadline for material to the **ifsw news** in 2002

March Edition - 15 February August Edition - 15 July November Edition - 15 October Frontpage: Hands are black, white, yellow and brown, but the hue of the heart is one

(Photo: Lisbeth Mattsson, Collage: Inge Martinsen)



Durban: Diversity a Gift, not a Threat

The United Nations "World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance" in Durban, South Africa ended just a few days ahead of the September 11 attacks in the USA, when the attention of the world turned.

The Israeli and US delegations' withdrawal due to a controversial text on the plight of the Palestinian people dominated the news from the Conference. A lot of attention was also given to possible demands for compensation for slavery.

Still, the Conference made progress in a number of areas, and represents a breakthrough for the fight against racism. Recognising that racism is the wellspring of many of the world's conflicts and a key element of a vicious circle of poverty and social exclusion, it also speaks directly to the crisis we see unfold in the aftermath of September 11.

Follow-up crucial

As with all conferences of this kind, the follow up is crucial, transforming the outcomes into action. As many as 170 governments and 4 000 NGO representatives were accredited, including IFSW's Vice President for Africa, Kishore Ramgoolam.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson and the Patron of the Conference, Nelson Mandela wrote in their invitation: "Racism, racial discrimination,

xenophobia and all kinds of related intolerance have not gone away. We recognize that they persist in the new century and that their persistence is rooted in fear: Fear of what is different, fear of the other and fear of the loss of personal security. And while we recognize that human fear is in itself ineradicable, we maintain that its consequences are not ineradicable."

National action

The conference was exhausting, exhilarating and difficult. But it ended in a Declaration and Program of Action that implemented can change our lives, based on the view that cultural diversity should be valued, enjoyed, accepted and embraced as a permanent feature that enriches societies around the world.

The follow up will concentrate on how the international society can establish mechanisms to monitor the establishment of national action plans to improve the lives of women, victims of racism, Africans and people of African descent, indigenous people, migrants, refugees and minorities. A special Anti-Discrimination Unit at the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is in operation from December 1, 2001 as a follow up instrument, examining whether governments deliver on the promises made.

The World Crisis: Poverty, Terror and War

IFSW has issued several statements after September 11. The latest was issued in conjunction with our colleagues in IASSW who have also expressed their concerns. All can be found on the IFSW Web-site: www.ifsw.org

The main message in the statements is - in addition to IFSW's condemnation of all forms of terrorism - that in order to combat terrorism it is necessary to deal with the causes of the phenomenon. As long as people in low income countries perceive and experience real disadvantage in

comparison to the industrialised countries, dissident and extremist groups will have an ideal environment in which to ply their policies and recruit further generations of willing terrorists.

Therefore addressing the vexed issue of redistribution of wealth between developed and least developed countries should be of paramount concern.

We request all our member organisations to bring this "War against Poverty" message forward to responsible politicians.

Social Work Across Borders:

How do we position ourselves in the stream of change?

More than 1500 social workers met at four different social work conferences in 2001, in Tampere, Finland (3rd International Conference on Social Work in Health and Mental Health), in Singapore (16th Asia-Pacific Social Work Conference), in Vienna and Bratislava (IFSW European Seminar) and in Santiago de Cuba (2nd Cuban International Social Work Conference).

Different as they were in size and contents, one common theme seems to be shared: How do we make sure that our profession continue to be relevant for our users and society in the more and more rapid stream of change?

Measurement

Dean Edward Mullen from Colombia University School of Social Work in New York made a strong case in Finland for the role that outcome measurement can play in improving social work programs and advancing the profession's knowledge base. The conference was the 3rd in a successful row of events for health and mental health social workers; the next is set for Quebec City in 2004. IFSW is expanding its cooperation with the organisers, being aware of the need for specialised conferences for the profession.

Social Cultural Transformation

Singapore hosted the Asia Pacific Social Work Conference for the 2nd time, gathering educators and practitioners from across the region. Besides featuring presentations on the relationship between social work and information technology and the interface between economics and social work, the conference looked at social-cultural transformation. As urbanisation increases (there are as many people living in Bombay as in all of Australia), how does this influence traditional cultures?

Empowerment

The 15th IFSW European Seminar was like the last one (1999: Helsinki and St. Petersburg)

located to two cities in different countries: Vienna and Bratislava.

The Conference, named after the Danube river floating through both cities, gathered participants from 32 countries for the theme "Managing Conflicts in Social Work – Dealing with Contradictions". Professor Silvia Staub-Bernasconi from Berlin suggested that the term 'empowerment" was of limited use to fully acknowledge the need of professionality in dealing with power structures and conflicts. She advocated a new theoretical approach to understand conflict as a theme for social work.

Good health

In Santiago de Cuba, IFSW's new Cuban member association invited social workers from Latin America and beyond to the theme "Development and Perspectives for Social Work in the New Century".

Set in the City where Fidel Castro in 1959 declared the victory of the revolution, the contributions carried strong impressions of the importance of social work in a country which despite its failing economy has the best public health system in Latin America and an infant mortality rate among the lowest in the world.

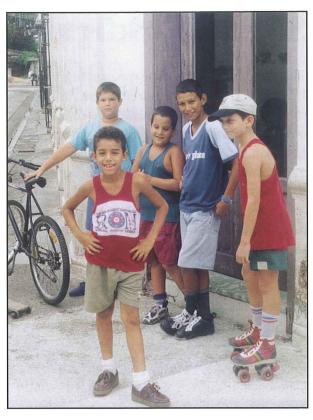
IFSW's President and Secretary General confirmed with their presence and plenary presentations on globalisation and on the new Definition of Social Work the links between Cuban social workers and the international social work community.

New Training Manual: Social Work and the Rights of the Child

The long awaited professional training manual on social work and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child will be published by IFSW in January. The manual takes readers through the Convention step by step, looking at how it can be used in day-to-day social work practice. A number of case examples from around the globe address the diverse needs and rights of children from different ages, backgrounds and personal circumstances.

More information will be available at our web site in January and in the next edition of *ifsw news*.





Maria de Soussa Matias IFSW Friend No. 1.000

Ms. Maria da Conceiciao de Soussa Matias (left) from Coimbra, Portugal became IFSW Friend No. 1.000. She attended the Danube Conference in Vienna in August and received a special diploma. The diploma was presented to her by IFSW President Imelda Dodds.

That's for sure!

Absurd!

Think about what the human race has accomplished. Space exploration. Satelite communication. Heart transplants. Cracking the human genetic code. We've done what previous generations never dreamed of.

But do you ever wonder, if we're so advanced, why 820 million people still don't have enough to eat? It's absurd!

Miriam Makeba, FAO Ambassador

Welcome, stranger!

Rich countries should recognise the benefits of immigrants and keep the costs in perspective.

Immigration, it seems, hardens hearts and softens brains like few other issues.

The Economist

Social Work Training Project in Ukraine

The social work training project initiated by IFSW and Christian Children's Fund in Ukraine in 1997 will continue until 2003. To ensure its continued existence, our Ukrainian partners has established a 'Trainers' Studio' which will take over responsibility for ongoing training. At present, training is provided by outside experts at 'main sessions' in the capital, but the Studio transforms the experts' input into curricular modules used for spin-off sessions at social work/social pedagogy faculties in various regions. Thus training of trainers continues at all levels. The training serves social work educators and practitioners as well as NGO personnel.

Other project components are: accredited certificate courses for non-diploma practitioners; distance learning; a summer school for volunteers: and 3 social work resource centres located in Kiev, Eastern Ukraine and Western Ukraine.

It is for these resource centres that I would like to ask for relevant and up-to-date social work literature on the following subjects identified by the Ukrainian partners:

- Social work/social pedagogy: theory and methodology
- Social work management

- Social work with families; children, youth and elderly people
- Social Work and disability
- Conflict resolution
- Prevention and treatment of 'deviant' behaviour
- Substance addiction prevention and treatment
- Practical psychology.

It is easiest to translate from English, French and German, but other languages can be considered. Gifts of text books would be of great help and could be sent to me at 31 rue de l'Athénée, 1206 Geneva, Switzerland for forwarding. For publications which you would wish to recommend but cannot donate, please send the necessary details to enable us to place orders (Fax +41 22 346 8657; e-mail: aem.apostol@span.ch).

Your assistance for this successful project in which many IFSW member associations have been involved will be highly appreciated by our Ukrainian colleagues and the project organisers. Thank you in advance for what you can and will do.

Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol
IFSW Representative for the project

Six months respite for Phyllis Coard

The Mercy Committee in Grenada has extended social worker Phyllis Coard's respite by another six months. -Not the best solution but a big improvement on what I heard they originally wanted to do, said Phyllis Coard commenting on the decision and in the same announcement she also extends her thanks for the support she has received from IFSW and social workers worldwide. Since the Mercy Committee did not release Phyllis Coard, the campaign for her continues and social workers and social work organisations are asked to send more letters to the Prime Minister of Grenada and the Chair Person of the Committee for the Prerogative of Mercy. Background and addresses are to be found on the IFSW Web-site www.ifsw.org

New Human Rights Book by Jim Ife

Professor Jim Ife, Secretary of IFSW's Human Rights Commission has written a new book: Human Rights and Social Work - Towards Right Based Practice. The book examines current human rights issues and shows how a broader understanding of human rights can be used to ground a form of practice that is central to social work, community development and the broader human service. It is set within the context of current debates about globalisation and the need to incorporate an internationalist viewpoint into all social work practice. The book is published by Cambridge University Press.

(ISBN 0521797012 PB, 0521792916 HB)

IFSW General Meeting in Geneva 10-12 July 2002

As reported in the last edition of ifsw news, there will be no IFSW World Conference in 2002, after we sadly had to cancel the planned event in Zimbabwe due to the political development in the country. The General Meeting, normally held in conjunction with the World Conference, will be arranged as a separate event in Geneva 10-12 July. Dates have been set to make it possible to combine presence at the General Meeting with participation at the World Congress of the International Association of Schools of Social Work in Montpellier, France (more information at this page).

In 2003, IFSW Conferences will be back on track with regional events in Denmark and Japan, possibly also in Africa. The next World Conference is set for Adelaide, Australia in 2004. The General Meeting in Geneva will be invited to approve a bid from Germany to host the 2006 World Conference in Munich, celebrating the 50-year jubilee of the establishment of IFSW in the Bavarian capital in 1956.

Social Work Conferences 2002-2004



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

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

Congress of the International Association of Schools of Social Work

Montpellier, France, 15-18 July 2002

Social work education and citizenship in a globalising world

Secrétariat de la Conférence ACI 2002 1, cité Bergère - F-75009 Paris, France

Tél: 33 (0) 1 53 34 14 71, Fax: 33 (0) 1 53 34 14 77

E-mail: aforts@aforts.com Web: www.aforts.com

Nagasaki, Japan, 7 - 11 July 2003 17th Asia-Pacific Conference

Peace, Justice and Social Work - A Vision for the 21st Century

Secretariat:

17th APSWC Preparatory Secretariat, c/o Japanese Society for the Study of Social Welfare, Moriyama Bldg., West 501, Sanei-cho 8, Shinjyuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0008, Japan

Tel: (81) 3 5366 5964, Fax: (81) 3 5366 5965

E-mail: renmei@apricot.ocn.ne.jp

Adelaide, Australia, September 2004 IFSW-IASSW World Conference

The Civil Society

Secretariat:

Australian Association of Social Workers P. O. Box 4956, Kingston, ACT 2604, Australia Tel: (61) 2 6273 0199, Fax: (61) 2 6273 5020

E-mail: aaswnat@aasw.asn.au

Con nuestros mejores deseos para 2002 Nous vous formons nos meilleurs vœux pour 2002 With the best wishes for 2002



Imelda Dodds
IFSW President

Tom Johannesen Secretary General

The year 2002 of the Christian Calender will be

57 in the United Nations era

159 in the Bahai calender

1380 in the Persian calender

1422 in the Muslim calender

2546 in the Buddhist calender

2755 in the old Roman calender

4700 in the Chinese calender

5121 in the Mayan cycle

5762 in the Hebrew calender

6238 in the Egyptian calender

In addition the year 2002 is proclaimed the International Year of Mountains and the International Year of Ecotourism.

In the Chinese Calender 2002 is also the year of the Horse.

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