

President's Message

Paulo Freire

I wish to begin by paying tribute to one of the most important persons in my professional life, **Paulo Freire**, who died 2 May this year in Rio De Janeiro.

His book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, from 1970 became the single most important book in the training of many social workers in the early seventies. He introduced into social work and pedagogy the concepts of *participation*, *dialogue* and *conscientization*. The goal was liberation or as we often phrase it today, *empowerment*. Paulo Freire, a moral giant and hero, leaves behind a legacy of commitment, love and hope for oppressed people in every country.

Responsiblities

In this issue of the Newsletter you will also read about the role and responsibilities of social workers not least in healing and reconciliation. Many social workers have been — if not part — often at least too passive when authorities have encroached and violated the rights of vulnerable citizens. The stolen children is just one example. The commitment of social work to human rights is not always evident in our daily actions.

The human rights work of IFSW is slowly gaining ground in the practical work of many social workers around the world. We have also had success in some of the cases where social workers are victims of human rights violations. We need to continue our efforts for those still in need of our support, but we also must find ways to reach out to those that we do not know about today.

Jerusalem

Some member associations have expressed concern about the choice of venue for our next world conference, questioning whether it is not a provocative political action to choose East Jerusalem. The Executive Committee at its recent meeting therefore had a thorough and open discussion on the issue.

In the General Meeting decision in 1994/96 to accept the offer from the Israel Association of Social Workers to host the IFSW world conference 1998 it was agreed by all parties that the conference and the preparatory work shall as far as possible be based on collaboration between neighbouring countries' social worker associations and the Israel Association as well as Palestinian organisations for social workers. This decision has been the ambition of the federation and the host committee throughout the preparatory period.

The suffering of the Palestinian and Jewish peoples is great and with a long history, which we in IFSW have followed with great distress many times. Many are the victims of the conflict and enormous pain is carried by children and other innocent people. Professional support and services cannot heal all the wounds, but social workers have a central role in helping the people involved to advance peace and social justice in their lives.

Conflict resolution

IFSW and the social work profession has always supported and strived for peace, disarmament and conflict resolution and has taken a very firm decision to support the peace process in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. The recent terrorist attacks on innocent people and the actions and policy of the government of Netanayhu have caused a halt to the neceassary peace process.

I am convinced that we as social workers have an obligation to the people in the area to make our contribution to this necessary process towards peace and reconcillitation. This is the only way social work can go.

Goodness and commitment

The work and lives of both Princess Diana and Mother Teresa are in this Newsletter compared with social work, though ostensibly very distant. Is it their goodness and good deeds that make people think of social work?

Or is it that we as professionals are also very often sneered at by media as Lord Spencer pointed out in his speach at Diana's funeral: "... genuine goodness is threatening to those at the opposite end of the moral spectrum."

But do social workers have a *special* responsibility for those who are marginalised, excluded and oppressed? More so than other professions? We have, through our choice of profession, an obligation to social justice and human rights. But is it therefore 'goodness'?

I am not sure, but I know that with true commitment and ethical reflections, though no saints or icons, we are more likely to be at the right end of the moral spectrum.

Stockholm, September 1997

Elis Envall President

IFSW on the World Wide Web

On http://www.ifsw.org you find updated directories, our ethical document, and other publications.

Reconciliation

The Process of Healing our Painful Past

Many in the international social work community will be aware of the historical plight of the first people of Australia - the Australian Aborigine. However, many may not be aware that it is only 30 years since an approximate 92% of the Australian population voted by national referendum to grant indigenous Australians the right to be counted in the nations census.

The continued debate around land rights for Aboriginal people, and the recent tabling of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report, entitled **The Stolen Children**, has sharpened the focus on human rights in Australia.

The Stolen Children Inquiry speaks directly to the policy of removing Aboriginal children from their families and placing them in white foster care environments.

This policy and practice, which was implemented over many years, has had profound effects upon the lives of innumerable Aboriginal people. We social workers, like so many others, must acknowledge that we were a party to this process.

The Australian Association of Social Workers has through the inquiry and other means, acknowledged the role of social work in the past and issued a profound and sincere apology.

We are saddened that the steps to taken by us and many other professions and political leaders to apologise and work towards healing have not been followed by our national government.

We will continue to advocate for the implementation of the recommendations of the Stolen Children Report and to press for an official apology from national government leaders which, we believe, is critical for the continuation of the healing process.

Imelda Dodds National President Australian Association of Social Workers

Executive Committee Meeting

Dublin, August 1997 - Summary report

The Executive Committee at its meeting in Dublin 29 - 31 August decided to recommend the General Meeting to *reinstate* the member associations in Luxembourg, Kenya and Niger.

The membership applications from Bulgaria, Macedonia and Japanese Association of Certified Social Workers will be subject to *postal ballots* for decision by the membership.

Applications from Bangladesh, Malawi and from South-Africa were not yet ready for decision

The Executive Committee received a bid for the **World Conference in 2002** from Zimbabwe.

The Executive Committee, confirming the General Meeting decision to arrange the World Congress in Israel, authorized the President and Secretary General to convey a **resolution** made by the Executive to the Israeli government expressing concern with the recent deterioration of the peace process between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority

A Consultation Day will be held on the 30th of June 1998 in Jerusalem. Part of this day will be set aside for discussions on **Ethics** and the other part of the day will concentrate on the work on a revision of the **Definition of Social**

Work. The first draft of the revision will be presented to the General Meeting 1998. The final draft is to be ready in the year 2000.

Guidelines for the **Preparations of Policy Papers** were discussed and will be finalised in the next few months.

A Task Force to consider if and how IFSW can develop a platform on **Social Policy Matters** will be set up. The Executive committee decided to authorize the President to designate further members to the task force on a Social Work response to the **Neoliberal Policies**.

To continue the organisational development of the federation the Executive Committee decided to establish **subcommittees** to the Executive Committee on:

- 1) Membership
- 2) Policy
- 3) Conferences
- 4) Structure and Operations
- 5) Publications

Membership of the sub-committees is to be open to include other persons than Executive Committee members and officers.

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Peace and Social Justice World Congress in Jerusalem

IFSW and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) invite in cooperation with the Israel Association of Social Workers (ISASSW) and the Israeli Association of Directors of Schools of Social Work (IADSSW) to a joint world congress in Jerusalem July 5-9, 1998. The theme has been decided as "Peace and Social Justice - The Challenges Facing Social Work", and the congress will in addition focus Protection of Human Rights in another plenary session. These two plenary sessions are shared with the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) international conference, which is arranged as a simultaneous event.

In a series of **parallel plenaries**, the IFSW/ IASSW congress will open for knowledge sharing and discussions on social work in relation to resettlement and reconstruction; traumatic experiences in war and persecution; migration and multiculturalism; the welfare state; our moral basis; the for-profit sector; quality control: information technologies; post communist Eastern and Central Europe; ethics and licensing; social development; children and young persons; client relations: trends in education; and trends in theory and practice.

Other features include one **pre-congress symposium** on Women and one on Community work, a special session on Social Work in Middle Eastern Societies and a celebration of social work. Workshops, paper/poster/video sessions, social theatre and cinema, and facilitation of interest group meetings. The congress will also invite to home hospitality, field visits and receptions and shows. Pre- and post congress tours are offered including both Israel and neighbouring Jordan.

Of special importance for a congress in this part of the world and with this theme are relations to social workers and others in the Palestinian National Territory, and efforts are made to link with and integrate colleagues both in the West Bank and the Gaza strip.

The deadline for receipt of **abstracts** has been set to December 31, 1997, and Early bird registration rates are available until April 1, 1998.

The IFSW **General Meeting** will take place July 1 - 3, and a special *Consultation Day* for member association representatives will be called June 30 to discuss Social Work Ethics and the ongoing revision of the Definition of Social Work.

Congress information is handled by Joint IFSW/ IASSW World Congress Secretariat, Kenes, P. O. Box 50006, Tel Aviv 61500, Israel, tel (972) 3 514 0000, fax (972) 3 514 0077 or (972) 3 517 5674 E-Mail: ifsw@kenes.com Web site of ISASSW on http://www.isassw.org.il



Photo: Derek Simpson

IFSW Project in Belarus and Ukraine

Supporting Social Work Education and Social Service NGO's

IFSW is working with the Christian Children's Fund to improve social work education and enhance social service NGO's in Belarus and Ukraine. The project, receiving financial support from UNICEF, links education of social workers with organization and practice of voluntary agencies. Over the period 1996 - 98, schools of social work and social service NGO's receive technical assistance in various forms, including curriculum development, organizational renewal, exchange visits, workshops, and advocacy for new social policies.

The two countries, like other countries in transition to a market economy, are facing immediate and long-term problems of major proportions which adversely affect the well-being and cohesion of the population. The rapid decline in standards of living has an impact on families and children which borders on the catastrophic. Family breakdowns, demographic haemorrhage, shortened life-span, increase in disability, decrease in marriages, increase in child mortality, increase in single mother family units, overuse of institutionalization of children are some of the symptoms of the crisis.

Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol ends term for NGO Ctte on UNICEF

On 6 June 1997 Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol, IFSW representative in Geneva, ended a two year term as president for the NGO Committee on UNICEF. We are proud to report that Ellen has done an "absolutely fantastic job" and significantly helped improve relations between UNICEF and the NGOs. In her address to the UN General Assembly in February Ellen pointed out that the UNICEF/NGO relationship has led to remarkable cross-fertilization, beneficial to both parties and the children they serve.

"Whatever the issue, the focus will be on children. ... Herein lies the greatest strength of both UNICEF and NGOs: all that is undertaken and accomplished has a human face."

Freedom for three social workers

Update on Human Rights Cases

At its meeting in Hong Kong in July 1996 the Human Rights Commission was supporting five detained social workers. Two have definitely been freed and the third is believed to have been released. At present IFSW is actively seeking support for representations on behalf of two social workers.

Roula Abu Doho, who was a Palestinian social work student sentenced following trial in a military court, was released with the group of Palestinian women prisoners as part of the Oslo Peace Accords.

Ma Tar was a social worker arrested in Prone, Myanmar (Burma) in 1990. She was detained following a demonstration in support of democracy. Nothing more was heard of her whereabouts. Early in 1996 unconfirmed reports that she had left the country arrived. Subsequently, Amnesty International has confirmed the truth of the reports, although they have no knowledge of when Ma Tar was released and her current whereabouts.

Riad Za'qiq is a social worker working with Defence for Children International in Hebron. Riad was made subject to an administrative detention order on the 20th June 1996. He was released on the 12th July 1997.

Faisal al Sa'ana was the Secretary General of the Kuwait Social Workers Association. At the time of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 he was detained and reportedly taken to Baghdad. He is among the group of 600 Kuwaitis missing since the invasion. Representations to ambassadors of Iraq in the countries of member associations may be effective.

Phyllis Coard is a qualified social worker who has been imprisoned in the Caribbean island of Grenada since 1983. She was sentenced to death together with her co-defendants for the murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. The allegation is that she, together with her husband and other political leaders, toook part in a conspiration to kill Maurice Bishop. The trial took place immediately after the American invasion of Grenada and there are a number of question marks about whether due process was followed.

The grounds for the intervention of the Human Rights Commission are however entirely humanitarian. Mrs. Coard has suffered from clinical depression and stress disorder. She has been deprived of contact with her children and has spent years in solitary confinement. Recently, the Jamaican government offered her asylum if she was freed by the Grenadian authorities. Representations were made to the Mercy Committee in Grenada but disappointingly the Committee rejected pleas for clemency.

It is important to sustain the pressure on the Grenadian government and you are asked to write to:

The Rt Hon Keith Mitchell Prime Minister of Grenada St Georgeís Grenada

appealing for the release on humanitarian grounds of Phyllis Coard who can pose no further threat to the government and whose release would now be seen as an act of compassion.

Child Rights - two important IFSW projects

An important part of the Human Rights activities of the IFSW in the past year has been directed at the Rights of the Child. As an IFSW response to the Agenda for Action adopted at the World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children held in Stockholm in August 1996 and to clarify the commitment and responsibilities of the profession a special project has been developed by the IFSW representative to UN in Geneva, Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol and the President.

The project, named Lives at the Crossroads, aims to focus social work approaches to sexual exploitation of children. The applications have now been approved and received a total of approximately US\$ 150 000 from UNICEF and the European Commission along with a smaller starting contribution from the Swedish member, SSR.

As a result of the project activities IFSW has been invited to a special expert hearing on sexual exploitation held by the European Commission in Brussels and a seminar in Latvia arranged by the Council of Europe.

As a sequel to the earlier Manual on Human Rights and Social Work a special working group to produce a manual on Social Work and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights and the UN Committee on Rights of the Child IFSW has been designated and has prepared a draft for the manual.

The plan aims at producing the manual for print during the first half of next year in time for the next General Meeting and World Conference in Jerusalem. It is now important to secure funding for the work and the support from the UN Committee.

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Making a Reality of a Caring Society Diana, Princess of Wales and Mother Teresa

David N. Jones, Honorary Secretary General and Anthony Tan, Chairman Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work, COSW



The recent deaths of two very different women have provoked worldwide emotion.

Diana Princess of Wales and Mother Teresa could not have been more different but both inspired people to do something about individual and social problems. Though few

watching the funeral processions in Calcutta and London would have made the link, both women shared the concerns and objectives of social work.

Diana probably had the same mixed motives as most of us, but was guided by the humanitarian principles which also underpin social work ethics. She worked for all sections of the community, respected the rights of individuals, treated people the same [regardless of origin, race or beliefs] and helped people to speak for themselves. She also realised that the solutions to individual problems, like disability from the random destruction of landmines, or homelessness or rejection because of leprosy or AIDS, require not only personal care but also changes in attitudes, laws and policies. Governments can silence social workers who speak out; colleagues around the world have been intimidated, abused, even killed. Governments were equally suspicious of Diana's campaigning flair - but could not silence her message.

What are the lessons for social work from the amazing worldwide reaction to these funerals? We must find a better language to explain what we do and why; nobody is inspired by the language of management and market increasingly used by politicians and managers. Mother Teresa and Princess Diana proved that, when genuine human concern is translated into effective communication, people respond and attitudes and policies can be changed. Social work must rediscover its campaigning zeal and speak up with renewed confidence about social ills.

NASW, Zimbabwe

More than 350 000 US\$ has been granted for a project 1997 - 99 by the LO/FT Council (Danish Trade Union Council for International Development Cooperation) to strengthen the National Association of Social Workers in Zimbabwe (NASW-Z) through training and other measures. The Danish Association of Social Workers and IFSW cooperate closely in executing the project.

Activities consist of leadership training; training of trainers, work-place representatives and members. NASW-Z has at this time appr. 200 members, while the potential may be as high as 4 000. One-week workshops, shorter courses, support to a full-time national coordinator and a secretary, office rent and technical equipment are components in the project.

It is hoped that the project can form a model that can be used in other countries with a need to strenghten the social worker organization. Ideally, both the Danish Association of Social Workers and IFSW hope to move the project to another country not later than by the year 2000 with continued support of the Danish Trade Union Council for International Development Cooperation.

It is expected that representatives of NASW-Z at that time will be in a position to make their experiences available to other social workers, and to develop innovation transfer from one developing country to another as a supplement to the traditional innovation transfer from Northern industrialized countries to the Southern world.

NASW, USA

World Wide Web The National Association of Social Workers, NASW has developed new web sites in order to communicate with social workers and others around the globe. The general NASW site http://naswdc.org connects you to current information on NASW products, services, as well as policy and practice breaking developments. In addition, the NASW Press site http://www.naswpress.org connects you with descriptions of books on clinical practice, management, social policy, and other subjects.

Job Growth An article in U.S. News and World Report entitled "Best Jobs for the Future" attributed the demand for social workers to swelling ranks of the ageing population.

Social Worker Elected Officials The recently published 1997 edition of Social Workers Serving in Elective Offices identifies over 200 social workers who hold public elected office at the national, state, or local level.

HIV/AIDS Training Project NASW has recently completed a series of training workshops for social work practitioners to keep them abreast with advances in the field of HIV/AIDS treatment. Training components included mental health issues, ethical issues, and substance abuse issues.

Mait Widmark-Nilsson in memoriam

The former Secretary of the International Association of Schools of Social Work, IASSW, Ms Mait Widmark-Nilsson from the School of Social Work in Stockholm suddenly died 1 August 1997. Mait was very dedicated to international social work and the development of professional exchange.

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Ending Extreme Poverty Possible UNDP Says From Go-Between, United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service

The Human Development Report 1997, published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), says much of the world's population has benefited from major advances in economic opportunity and human well-being, The report argues that given unprecedented progress in human and economic development over the past 50 years, eradicating extreme poverty at the beginning of the 21st century is a feasible, affordable goal.

The report says that gains in economic opportunity and human well-being in the developing world have covered as much distance in the past 30 years as the industralized world did in a century. **Richard Jolly,** Special Adviser to the UNDP Administrator and principal coordinator of the project, says that "The dramatic record of poverty reduction in the 20th century shows that we should raise our sights, not downsize our vision for human development. Extreme poverty could be banished from the globe within one or two decades. A score of countries are on track to do this."

However, the report warns that not everyone has benefited. Women and children are particularly affected by poverty. Also, many of the poorest and least developed countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have gained much less than the

developing countries as a group. South Asia has the most people affected by poverty, and Sub-Saharan Africa the most rapid growth in poverty.

The report recommends six priorities for concern:

- initiate people-centered policies that give individuals, households and communities expanded access to economic, social, political, environmental and personal assets
- · work towards gender equality
- focus on pro-poor growth in the appr. 100 countries from the developing world, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States where growth has been failing
- improve the management of globalization, including better trade policies
- create a political environment so that poor people can be heard, rather than suppressed
- take special action to prevent economic reversal, such as peace-building efforts in war-torn countries

Providing universal access to basic social services and transfers to alleviate income poverty would cost about US\$ 80 billion, which is less than the combined net worth of the seven richest men in the world.

First Joint European Seminar of Educators and Practitioners moved the Profession forwards

Dublin, Ireland was the venue for the first joint European Seminar of IFSW and the European Association of Schools of Social Work (EASSW).

520 participants from 44 countries gathered to discuss "Culture and Identity: Social Work in a Changing Europe" at the University College Dublin from August 24 - 28.

The Seminar especially targetted the impact of rapid change on people in terms of racism, ethnicity, migration and poverty; the values inherent in the notion of diverse cultural identities; and the challenges for social work educators and practitioners in a part of the world where the pace of social and economic change has been described as suddenly accelerating from a leisurely jog to a sprint.

Professor **David Makarov** from the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work in Israel stated in his seminar rapport that constant change and increased diversity form a challenge for social workers which we can never solve, but must approach on a continuing basis with our best ability and force.

In addition to six major plenary presentations on changes in Europe, human rights, multiculturalism, racism, racial equality and social inclusion, the seminar included close to 100 workshops on a variety of subjects linked to the main themes.

The Irish Association of Social Workers and the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University College Dublin hosted the seminar, and received very positive feedback from participants for having developed a professional and pleasant event that moved both the profession and the cooperation between practitioners and educators forwards.

A special event was the address of welcome by the **President of Ireland**, **Mary Robinson**. Her presentation showed why she has won the respect of not only the

Irish people but also a global audience for her strong commitment to human rights. The international community will be well served when she now moves from Dublin to Geneva to take the important post as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.



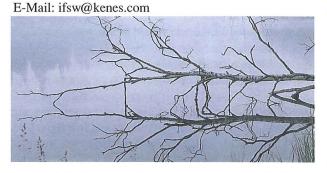
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Social Work Conferences 1997-2000

Four scheduled regional and global conferences arranged by IFSW and partnership organizations in the years to come. We also include information on three other conferences.



Jerusalem, Israel, July 5-10, 1998 World Congress: Peace and Social Justice -The Challenges Facing Social Work Kenes, P O Box 50006, Tel Aviv 61500, Israel Tel (972) 3 514 0000, Fax (972) 3 514 0077

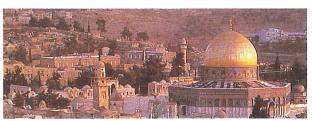


Montréal, Canada, July 29 - August 2, 2000
World Conference: Promoting Equitable Societies in the Global Economy: Social Work in the 21st Century Canadian Association of Social Workers, 383 Parkdale Avenue, Suite 402, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4R4, Canada Tel (1) 613 729 6668, Fax (1) 613 729 9608
E-Mail: casw@casw acts.ca

Bangkok, Thailand, November 17-21, 1997 Asia & Pacific Conference:

Enhancing Social Integration - Structure, Process and Intervention for Social Development

Faculty of Social Administration, Thammasat University, 2 Prachan Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand Tel (66) 2 224 1351 or (66) 2 224 1365, Fax (66) 2 224 9417, E-Mail: sirephan@alpha.tu.ac.th



Helsinki, Finland/St. Petersburg, Russia, June 13-17, 1999, A joint Finnish/ Russian venture European Seminar: Work, Economy and Welfare - Professional Social Work Promoting Human Society for All The Finnish Union of Professional Social Workers, Rautatieläisenkatu 6, FIN-00520 Helsinki, Finland Tel (358) 9 15021, Fax (358) 9 149 6440



2nd International Conference on Social Work in Health and Mental Health January 12-15, 1998, Melbourne, Australia Conference Secretariat: C/-ICMS Pty Ltd, 84 Queensbridge Street, Southbank, VIC 3006, Australia Tel (61) 3 9682 0244, Fax (61) 3 9682 0288, E-Mail: 2icsw.98@icsm.com.au

European Foster Care Conference 1998 August 21 - 23, 1998, Nyìregyháza, Hungary Conference Secretariat: European IFCO Conf. 1998, Plantage Parklaan 12, NL-1018 ST Amsterdam, Holland Tel (31) 20 626 9007, Fax (31) 20 626 9534, E-Mail: OKS@pi.net

XIX National Symposium of Social Workers
October 15 – 18, 1997, Mar del Plata, Argentina
Organizing Committee: Colegio de Asistentes Sociales o Trabajadores Sociales de la Provincia de Buenos Aires
Av. 7 No. 537, 1900 La Plata, Argentina, Fax (54) 21 83 13 70

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