



**International Federation of Social Workers  
Fédération Internationale des Travailleurs Sociaux  
Federación Internacional de Trabajadores Sociales**

**GENERAL MEETING**

**HONG KONG**

**JUNE 14-16, 2010**

<b><u>Countries Present:</u></b>	<b><u>Countries Represented by proxy</u></b>
1. Argentina	1. France
2. Australia	2. Ireland
3. Austria	3. Italy
4. Brazil	4. Korea
5. Bulgaria	5. Portugal
6. Canada	
7. Chile	
8. China	
9. Croatia	
10. Denmark	
11. Finland	
12. Germany	
13. Ghana	
14. Hong Kong	
15. Japan	
16. Kenya	
17. Malaysia	
18. Malta	
19. New Zealand	
20. Norway	
21. Philippines	
22. Romania	
23. Singapore	
24. Spain	
25. Sweden	
26. Switzerland	
27. United Kingdom	
28. Uruguay	

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## Day 1, June 14

### **1 Opening of the General Meeting**

#### **1.1 Opening of the General Meeting**

The President welcomed participants. He explained that preparing the meeting without a Secretary General had been a challenge. However more papers than in previous years had been available in good time on the website. He hoped that members agreed that the meeting had been well prepared.

The President explained that simultaneous translation from English into Spanish will be provided on 15 and 16 June. However whispering translation only was available on 14 June.

#### **1.2 Roll call of member organisations**

The President carried out the roll call. There were 29 countries present at the meeting and 5 proxies.

#### **1.3 Welcome from the Hong Kong Association of Social Workers and the China Association of social workers**

Frederick Wing Hoi, Lai, President of the Hong Kong Social Workers Association, welcomed the delegates to Hong Kong China. He said that the social work community in Hong Kong had grown stronger together in organising the conference and the General Meeting.

Xu Liugen, Vice President of the China Association of Social Workers, welcomed delegates to China and to the meeting. He said that people in China are beginning to see the vital importance of social work to social development. The China Association is therefore pleased to be welcoming social workers from around the world at this time.

#### **1.4 Introductions, including observer organisations**

The President and Executive members introduced themselves. The President gave apologies from Barbara Molderings who is retiring from the Executive at this meeting. He thanked her formally for her many years of work for IFSW Global.

The President introduced René Schegg (Policy and Communications Officer). This is the first time that René had been at a General Meeting – he was appointed shortly after the General Meeting in Brazil. The President thanked René for helping to prepare for the General Meeting.

K.S. Ramesh, the representative of the Professional Social Workers of Chennai, India, was introduced by the President as observing the meeting.

The winner of the Eileen McGowan scholarship, Erin Wanini, who works as an addiction counsellor in Canada, was introduced. Erin thanked the meeting for her Award; she said that the experience had been wonderful. She had learnt a great deal

from the people that she met and the experiences which she has had.

Charles Mbugua Senior Vice President, was introduced in his capacity as Joint President of the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work and the representative of COSW to the meeting.

### **1.5 Voting rights at the General Meeting**

The President explained that there were 34 countries represented. 29 countries attending in person and 5 represented by proxy. All had voting rights. Voting cards were distributed.

### **1.6 Appointment of Secretary(ies) for the meeting**

Siobhan Maclean (Honorary Secretary, IFSW Europe) was appointed as Secretary for the 2010 General Meeting.

### **1.7 Appointment of Parliamentarian**

Terry Bamford was appointed as Parliamentarian for the 2010 General Meeting.

### **1.8 Work Structure and proceedings during the meeting**

Notice of the meeting, the agenda and the timetable had been distributed as required by the constitution. The President explained that he would facilitate participation by members and that the formal structures were intended to support that objective.

### **1.9 Appointment of tellers for the meeting**

Eugenia Moreno and Sue Dworak-Peck were appointed tellers for the 2010 General Meeting.

### **1.10 Social programme during the meeting**

The Hong Kong Association invited delegates to a tea reception after the meeting.

The Norwegian Association asked that the meeting recognise that they have just completed a two week strike about equal pay for men and women.

## **2 Approval of agenda and timetable**

The meeting approved the agenda, timetable and work structure.

## **3 Minutes of the General Meeting, Brazil 2008**

The Minutes from the General Meeting in Salvador, Brazil, 13-15 August 2008 had been approved by the Executive Committee, in accordance with the Constitution, and were noted and agreed by the meeting.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

## **Elections**

The Elections Officer reminded delegates of the nominations which had been received. Papers had been placed on the website prior to the meeting. He explained that further nominations could be made from the floor during the first day of the meeting.

## **4 Eileen McGowan Kelly Scholarship 2010**

The report was received. The winner, Erin Wanini, had been introduced to the meeting earlier.

## **5 Andrew Mouravieff-Apostol Memorial Medal**

The medal is awarded every two years to recognise people who have made an outstanding contribution to social work in the world. The President explained that the call for nominations and process for selection had not been undertaken this year, due in part to the vacancy in the Secretary General position. He thanked Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol for her understanding and acceptance of the situation. It was noted that two awards had been made 2008.

## **6 IFSW Membership**

### **6.1 Membership report**

The report was received.

In response to a resolution of the General Meeting 2008, there is now a more transparent process for reporting to members about payment of fees. The President stated that a letter had been received from the auditor confirming that an audit of the collection of fees had been undertaken. The auditor had confirmed that appropriate arrangements are in place to collect fees from member organisations which have not paid; they had been sent on average 6-7 e-mails or letters per year as reminders.

### **6.2 New members**

No new members have been approved since the General Meeting in Brazil in 2008.

### **6.3 Applications**

New membership applications had been received from Belgium, Georgia, Serbia, Kosovo and Iran.

The European President explained that the European region recommends to the

meeting that Belgium, Georgia and Kosovo be accepted as members.

It was proposed that Belgium be admitted as a new member

Moved: Denmark

Seconded: Sweden

*Carried unanimously*

It was proposed that Kosovo be admitted as a new member

Moved: Croatia

Seconded: Austria

*Carried unanimously*

It was proposed that Georgia be admitted as a new member

Moved: Switzerland

Seconded: Ghana

*Carried unanimously*

The European President explained that, in relation to Serbia, there are applications from two organisations. According to the constitution, they need to form a co-ordinating body. At present the two bodies cannot agree to create a co-ordinating body. The European Executive has therefore agreed to meet with the two organisations to discuss further how it might be possible to create a co-ordinating body.

Ghana proposed that, where two organisations from the same country apply, then the first organisation to apply should be admitted. Other applicants from the same country could then be asked to form a co-ordinating body with that member.

The European President responded that the Serbian applications had also been discussed at the General Meeting in Brazil, where it was agreed that the applications should not be accepted. For procedural reasons, it could not be stated which application had come first.

The UK said that the Serbian association which had been present at the European Delegates Meeting in Malta had made a strong application for membership. Whilst the UK respects the decision of the European Executive, it seems sad that we are turning applicants away.

Australia said that their reading of the constitution (Article 5 c and d) suggested that taking a "first come first served" approach would be unconstitutional. The Parliamentarian agreed that it would require a change in the by-laws if the meeting wished to take a first come first served approach to applications.

Kenya said that it is important that we encourage rather than discourage membership.

Romania said that there were difficulties between the two organisations in Serbia and advised that IFSW should not become involved in a national issue. It was suggested that this problem cannot be solved at the Global level, but that the European plan to provide mediation for the two organisations to work together

seemed the most useful approach.

The European President stated that the advice of the General Meeting would be taken into account by the Regional President and Executive.

#### **6.4 Suspensions, terminations and provisional membership**

The President reported that there had always been some members which had not paid their fees and in the current financial climate these are likely to increase. The Executive wishes to review membership arrangements and proposed that the Task Force on Fees be disbanded and that a new Membership Development Committee should be established.

The UK commented that IFSW should be creative and flexible in encouraging countries into membership. Richer countries should support other countries in membership.

Denmark commented that two member organisations, who were part of the Danish Coordinating Group, had resigned during the year and this needs to be taken into account as it had had a significant impact on income. These organisations left partly because they felt they paid a significant amount in fees but did not have sufficient opportunity to influence the Federation's activities.

Malta asked if further explanation could be given on this as it would help in making future decisions. Denmark asked that the Executive consider this perspective in their discussions.

Germany stated that it is important to have the first discussions about these issues on a regional rather than global level.

The Secretary of the Permanent Committee on Ethical Issues said that it is important to consider ethical statements when we are looking at this issue – the value of social justice is vital to social work. The obligation to pay should be balanced with capacity to pay.

Australia said that it would be useful for the Executive to consider formalising twinning arrangements. A number of countries do have twinning arrangements, although this is not always formalised.

The Treasurer drew attention to the fee structure implemented in 2004 which recognises a number of factors relevant to the capacity of member organisations to pay fees, such as economic development of the country and organisational income. She strongly advised that any proposal to change the fee structure would have to include a clear proposal about how to deal with any fee income which was lost as a result.

Bulgaria asked how the committee will be composed. The President explained that the committee will be made up of Executive members and other interested parties. Anyone who was interested was invited to inform the Executive. Herbert Paulischin expressed his interest.

The President reported the Executive had noted those member organisations which had a record of non-payment of fees but recommended that it is not appropriate to move them into provisional status at this stage as members had not been informed. The Executive therefore withdrew the section of the report including proposals for transfer to provisional membership (page 2).

The report as revised was accepted.

### **6.5 Reinstatements**

There were no recommendations for reinstatement.

It was proposed that the President write to the Danish associations who resigned, to express regret and say that their involvement is missed and to invite them to discuss issues with IFSW in the future.

Moved: New Zealand

Seconded: UK

*Carried unanimously*

### **6.6 Special assessments**

The President reported that the Executive had recognised special arrangements for fees in respect of Brazil, Spain and USA. Discussions about fees continue with each organisation. In each case there is a federal structure with finances divided between the national and regional structures. The Executive has proposed the creation of a new Task Force to consider membership development, which will give further attention to this matter. The Executive is not proposing any further action at this time.

The report was received.

## **7 World Social Work Day**

The President presented the written report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. He noted the growing activity around the world to celebrate this day and thanked member organisations for their activity. He noted that the day is not exclusive to IFSW and that countries and organisations which are not members make good use of the day to promote social work.

Discussion of arrangements for World Social Work Day 2011 and 2012 was deferred to item 12.

The report was received.

## **8 Elections Committee Report**

The Elections Officer presented an oral report.

He reported that, following the 2008 General Meeting, there was a need for an



election for a Member at Large in the Asia Pacific region because the former Member-at-Large had been elected as Regional President. It had not been possible to hold an election at the General Meeting because notice of the election had not been given to all member organisations. The Elections Officer explained that there was no formal procedure in the constitution setting out protocols and procedures for elections between General Meetings. The Elections Officer therefore conducted the election by adapting the constitution as seemed appropriate. He first consulted others and then formed a regional elections committee which oversaw the election. There were some difficulties arising from the process and some delays. However it did prove possible to conduct a fair election and the successful candidate was declared and had participated in the work of the Executive.

The Elections Officer proposed to draft some additional bylaws to cover this eventuality. He proposed that draft bylaws would be circulated to member organisations for feedback and comment. He invited anyone who would like to assist the elections committee to contact him during the General Meeting.

The report was received and members congratulated Mariko Kimura on her election.

## **9 Biennial Report of Activities 2008 – 2010**

### **9.1 President**

The President presented his report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. He outlined the achievements and activities of IFSW over his 4 year term as President. He acknowledged the hard work of many people and stressed the reality that most of the work of the Federation is undertaken on a voluntary basis.

The President observed that two very senior members of the UN had made statements in the past 12 months, at IFSW events, about the importance of social work and more than 2,500 people had been present for the Hong Kong conference, both of which show that social work is recognised and the Federation is making a difference. The President said that the Federation needs to have good partnerships to survive and he feels that the Hong Kong partnership and process is a real way to progress our work.

The President said that, as he is retiring at the end of the meeting, he has been reflecting on his work over the last four years. He has visited 24 countries as President, spending time visiting social work services, associations and conferences as well as governments and partners. Meeting social workers around the world has been a memorable aspect of his four years as President.

The world economic crisis is creating difficulties for members. Where member organisations are finding membership difficult, the President said that it is important that they approach the Executive.

The President said that a more creative approach to membership and to income generation and income diversification is needed. This will be a key responsibility for

the new Secretary General.

The President recognised the distinguished service of Tom Johannesen as the former Secretary General. He had taken early retirement by mutual agreement in December 2009; a statement had been posted on the website and a video interview with the former Secretary General was also on the website.

## **9.2 Secretary General**

There is no report this year as the Secretary General position is vacant.

## **9.3 Africa**

The Regional President presented his written report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. Challenges still continue but colleagues across the region remain positive. He regretted that organisational problems had made it necessary to cancel the regional conference which it had been intended to hold in Libya. Membership in the region continues to grow, although some member organisations have difficulties with payment of dues.

Germany asked whether assistance from outside the region might assist the organisation of regional conferences. The Regional President explained that the difficulties in arranging conferences largely relate to funding. The IFSW President said that he is confident that there will be other conferences in Africa in the future.

## **9.4 Asia and Pacific**

The Regional President presented an oral report, a copy of which was later published on the website. He explained that the region has decided to focus on practical issues to achieve tangible outcomes in the hope that this will engage social workers more effectively. The region has just organised a regional workshop in Hong Kong which focussed on the social work role in disaster response. There will be another regional conference in Tokyo on 15-18 July 2011.

## **9.5 Europe**

The Regional President presented his report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. He explained that a great deal is happening in Europe. Over the past three years the region has been working on the project – Standards in Social Work Meeting Human Rights. Leaflets summarising this project were given to members.

The Regional President explained that the European Executive committee has developed a project called connecting members – this is improving communication with member and non member countries.

The region has made a number of statements on confidentiality and information sharing, prohibiting the physical punishment of children and climate change.

The region now has a presence on Facebook and has developed a blog.

## **9.6 Latin America and Caribbean**

The Regional President presented her report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. Key events during the past 2 years included the Mercosour conference in Santiago de Chile in September 2009, a regional meeting with the President of Chile, accreditation to the United Nations office in Santiago (CEPAL), activities to support World Social Work Day, communication with member organisations and also contact with the association in Mexico. The region continue to be concerned by the erratic communication and can feel excluded, for example in relation to the work on the revision of the definition of social work. There are also major financial concerns, with many economically weak countries and associations in the region.

## **9.7 North America**

The Regional President presented his report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. The NASW international exchange project, Social Workers Across Nations (SWAN), is now established. The first professional exchange intern (from Korea) is in post and there more time-limited internships are planned. Consultation visits have taken NASW staff and president to Rwanda, Tanzania, and Ethiopia; consultations have focused on HIV/AIDS services and strategic planning for professional association enhancement. CASW has been undertaking a strategic review of its internal structure. CASW supported IFSW work in Latin America through the direct involvement of its Executive Director. CASW also consulted with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA), which jointly organized an e-discussion on Women and Poverty. Both associations marked World Social Work Day.

## **9.8 UN, New York**

The main representative to the UN in New York presented his report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. He explained that the Federation continues to have strong representation. Social Work Day at the UN has been very successful and the social work internship works well. The representative feels that the Federation continues to have an impact at the UN.

## **9.9 UN, Geneva**

The main representative to the UN in Geneva presented her report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. She said that a major achievement recently had been the acceptance of the statement on the rights of children in alternative care. The major area of work at present is on the convention on extreme poverty, currently called the draft guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights.

IFSW representatives have met with staff in the World Health Organisation who are keen to work together on the revision of the mental health guidance and on the training of para professionals. WHO requires a very 'evidence-based' approach,

which is a challenge for social work. This is a continuing area of work.

#### **9.10 UN, Nairobi**

The main representative to the UN in Nairobi presented his report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. He explained that IFSW continues to have an active engagement with UN Habitat and NGO networks. He was able to represent IFSW at the recent symposium on the review of the International Criminal Court.

#### **9.11 UN, Vienna**

The main representative to the UN in Vienna presented his report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. He reported that he had been elected Treasurer of the CONGO Board in Vienna. IFSW had made a major contribution to a recent CONGO report on ageing, which drew on the IFSW policy.

#### **9.12 Amnesty International**

The IFSW representative to Amnesty International presented his report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website.

#### **9.13 IFSW Ambassador**

The IFSW Ambassador presented her report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. She reminded delegates that all activities and representation are at no cost to IFSW and are at the request of IFSW.

#### **9.14 Promotion of the Profession**

Nicolai Paulsen presented the report on behalf of committee, given that Veronica Marsman, the former Chair of the committee, was not able to be present. The Chair's report had been made available in advance on the website.

#### **9.15 Publications**

The IFSW Editor presented his report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. He reported that the International Social Work journal continued to do very well, with a number of special editions. The Human Rights Website had been launched at the conference. Each association had been provided with a DVD of the interview which Nigel Hall undertook with Tom Johannesen on the history of IFSW and the achievements of the Federation.

#### **9.16 IFSW Friends report**

Andrea Trenkwalder-Egger presented her report, a copy of which is available on the website. She reported that there are 823 Friends; 320 are active and 503 are "sleeping". Delegates were asked to promote the Friends programme. The value of the lower Friends fee for conferences and the Friends reception at future

conferences were noted.

## **10 Finance 2008 – 2009**

### **10.1 Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer presented her report, a copy of which had been made available to member organisations in advance. The Treasurer spoke to this in some detail.

She noted that income from membership fees had been below budgeted targets.

IFSW Friends Programme income had been reducing over time. Following the last General Meeting the Treasurer has reviewed the Friends programme and looked at how that can be revised to increase income. The outcome is included in her report.

It was proposed that the Treasurer's report be received.

Moved: Denmark

Seconded: Hong Kong

*Carried unanimously*

### **10.2 Accounts and Audit reports 2008 and 10.3 Accounts and Audit reports 2009**

The Accounts for 2008 and 2009 had been received by member organisations by the due date. The auditor's certificate has also been placed on the website.

It was proposed that the Accounts be approved

*Proposed: Switzerland*

*Seconded: Germany*

*Carried unanimously.*

### **10.4 IFSW Taskforce on Membership Fees**

The written report was received by the meeting with no comments. The President reminded delegates that the Executive had decide to replace the Task Force with a new Membership Development Task Force. This was noted.

### **10.5 IFSW Income development**

The Treasurer presented the report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. The President said that it is important to continue to explore how income can be generated from new sources, bearing in mind the loss of income from the two organisations which had resigned and the fact that existing members are not able to provide additional resources. The vision is to find project funding.

Austria said that it is important for IFSW to look at becoming a legal body as IFSW

Europe have done – then applications can be made for funding to outside organisations. The global level could use the same method as Europe have done so detailed research would not be needed.

The Secretary of the Human Rights Commission referred to the Jane Hoey fund. She suggested that this has more potential for income generation if properly supported. She referred to specific difficulties with the auction to raise money for this Fund in Hong Kong and the President responded.

Australia observed that their association had faced severe financial difficulties. However the organisation has since become financially very healthy. They have achieved this by working with bodies such as their Government to develop activities such as continuing professional development.

The report was received by the meeting.

#### **10.6 Investment policy**

The Treasurer presented the report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. The report was received by the meeting.

#### **10.7 Financing Regional Development**

The Treasurer presented the report on regional development, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. It was noted that the Executive will consider the allocation of funds for 2010 when the budget is approved. The report was received by the meeting,

#### **Elections**

The President reminded delegates about the deadline for late nominations.

## Day 2, June 15

The President opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the second day.

The Elections Officer announced that there had been no further nominations received for any of the vacant positions but a formal announcement of the election results will take place tomorrow. One regional election for the European member at large was required. The candidates' CVs and applications had been available on the website before the meeting.

The President noted that, although the formal announcement will take place later, it was evident that those nominated for positions where there was no other candidate were effectively elected unopposed. The meeting recognised that Gary Bailey was therefore elected as President and there was spontaneous applause.

### **11 Strategic and Constitutional Matters**

The President introduced the items and explained that there had been extensive consultation with member organisations about the proposed strategy relating to 11.1 and 11.3 and comments had been received. This consultation had resulted in the current paper, which had been made available in advance on the website. At the start of the process, it had been anticipated that the Secretary General would be retiring in 4 – 5 years. The decisions had now become more urgent since the Secretary General had taken early retirement.

Nicolai Paulsen introduced papers 11.1 and 11.3 on behalf of the Executive. It was noted that the proposals did not include any constitutional changes. He said that the aim is to appoint a new Secretary General from 2011 and that the recommendations made in the report are to be discussed in group work sessions.

#### **11.1 Future strategy and structure of IFSW**

The Japanese co-ordinating body spoke about the official languages of IFSW and asked the Federation to consider adopting Japanese as an official language. They would like to take more part in IFSW activities and acknowledging the language would promote this involvement. Members from Japan have attended the IFSW General Meeting for more than ten years and their numbers have been increasing year on year. However, language barriers have created problems for their delegation. They encouraged the meeting to consider this request in order not to exclude social workers from Japan. The President proposed that this should be discussed in the group work sessions.

The USA supported the inclusion of non European languages. They feel the bylaws need to be changed as these are specific about official languages. The Parliamentarian advised that the procedures for changing the bylaws are outlined in Bylaw 23b.

Austria said that, before agreeing to additional official languages, it is important to know the impact on the budget.

Group work feedback on these issues are detailed in agenda item 18.1.

Feedback points relate to the distributed paper.

The UK commented that the language issue is very important and must be considered. Ways to ensure that all members are able to participate effectively in debates must be a priority for the new Secretary General.

The UK supported the proposal to make the President a paid post in the future

The UK also commented that, given the pace of change in communications, it is now possible to work in a virtual office and the physical location is not so important. However the UK feels strongly that Africa would provide a good base.

It was proposed that recommendations 6.1 – 6.6 be accepted

Moved: USA

Seconded: Denmark

Australia supported the motion but with the qualification that some form of payment for the President (Para 6.1) should remain on the active agenda of IFSW. Providing some payment for the President, at least in part, is important to attract the best people.

Malta supported the qualification.

USA and Canada accepted the proposed amendment.

Uruguay asked that consideration be given to creating additional sub-regions in the Latin America region. Some issues cannot be dealt with satisfactorily at the regional level. This was noted and can be considered in the region.

Following further discussion, it was proposed that the wording of 6.6 be changed to “The sharing of back office functions with our sister organisations should be actively discussed with our partners”. This clarification was agreed without a vote.

The motion to agree 6.1 – 6.6, with the qualification that 6.1 remain on the active agenda was put to a vote:

*Passed with 2 abstentions.*

The President then invited comments on points 6.7 to 6.16

Malta proposed the setting up of a working group to look at translation. There is a range of technology which is available at no cost. Some of the options have not been discussed and fully explored. Malta offered to be involved in the work.

The UK said that they would want to change 6.7 entirely, since it is vital to improve access and communication in IFSW.

It was proposed that the Executive set up a working group on translation and ensure



that the Secretary General looks at this as a matter of priority following appointment.  
Moved: UK  
Seconded: USA.

Austria said if there are more official languages, then all documents would need to be translated into these languages and this has financial consequences. This needs to be taken into account before making decision on official languages. The Treasurer commented that the Federation would need an income stream to support funding for translation. Translation currently costs 5.5% of the membership fee income.

Romania proposed that the vote on 6.7 be taken separately from 6.8 – 6.16. They also proposed that the official languages of IFSW be reduced to English alone. Support should be given to regions to support communication and funding. The Parliamentarian said that this proposal is out of order as it would require a change to the bylaws. Romania then urged delegates to vote against the amendment.

Singapore said that the issue is about inclusiveness. The issue of cost should not be taken into account in putting barriers in the way of inclusivity. It was suggested that every country could bring volunteer translators, recognised by IFSW. In terms of cost IFSW could pay the expenses of volunteer translators. It was further recommended that it would be good to remove reference to languages from the bylaws.

Australia supported in principle the notion of greater inclusiveness. However it was necessary to look in detail at costs and what could assist improved communication.

Argentina said that the countries of Latin America feel that the reduction to a single official language would be going backwards in terms of the inclusion of all countries. They would like to support the suggestion made by Malta but we should also look at inclusion in all ways – not just language. Fee payment should be considered too.

The Regional President for Europe supported the proposal from Malta; inclusivity needs to be considered in a range of ways. This is also an issue in Europe. He suggests that it would be good to look at a simple proposal

The UK and USA accepted an amendment to the motion made previously, so that the motion should read:

This General Meeting, believing that it is vital to improve access and participation in IFSW by constantly improving our ability to communicate with each other, asks the Executive Committee to establish a working group to consider practical ways of achieving this and to ensure that the new Secretary General treats this matter as a priority.

*Proposed: UK*  
*Seconded: USA*  
*Carried unanimously.*

It was proposed that items 6.8 – 6.16 should be voted on together.  
Moved: USA  
Seconded: Australia.

Switzerland commented that 6.10 should be dealt with separately.

China made a point of order that 6.10 cannot be voted upon as it does not make sense in its current form. The Parliamentarian agreed.

It was proposed that “This General Meeting wishes to retain the principle of one country one vote”.

Moved: Switzerland

Seconded: Kenya

*Carried with 4 abstentions.*

It was moved that the remaining items be taken together.

Moved: Sweden

Seconded: Ghana.

An amendment was proposed that 6.12 should be voted on separately because this is an important topic and there is no clarity about how this would be addressed, since there are no protocols and there are therefore significant risks.

Moved: Romania

Seconded: Austria

*Votes for: 17*

*Votes against: 8*

*Abstentions: 7*

*Carried*

In relation to 6.12 Nicolai Paulsen said that this proposal was for the Executive to consider. No decisions will be made – the discussions will be brought to the next General Meeting. He therefore urged the meeting to vote against the proposal by Romania.

Canada agreed that it was important to note that the proposal in 6.12 is only to enable the Executive to look at the issue and report to the next General Meeting.

Romania agreed that the Executive should consider these issues.

It was agreed that the Executive should look at the issues raised in 6.12.

Singapore suggested that 6.16 should be reworded to be more inclusive - the Executive should look at the fees with a view to enable wider participation. Argentina agreed. Ghana said that the amendment does not reflect what is proposed. Fee level is a separate matter – the wording talks about swift action in terms of suspension. There is a need for some further clarity.

It was proposed that 6.16 should be reworded to delete the words ‘to allow for swifter action’ and to substitute the words ‘to enable wider participation’.

Moved: Singapore

Seconded: Argentina

*Votes for: 17*

*Votes against: 12*

*Abstentions: 1*

Amendment carried

There being no further comments or amendments, the President put the remaining proposals to the vote, as already proposed by USA and Australia.

All the remaining proposals were *carried unanimously*.

The President noted the significance of the debate and the decisions and thanked member organisations for their attention to these important questions for the future of IFSW and their co-operation during a complex procedural process.

### **11.2 Constitutional changes**

It was noted that the structural proposals and the process for the appointment of the Secretary General did not require constitutional change.

The USA introduced two constitutional amendments which were formally seconded by Canada. The proposals had been distributed to member organisations and placed on the website by the due date. There being no speakers, the resolutions were put to a vote.

Amendment to Article 21a (Ballots by the Executive Committee)

Moved: USA

Seconded: Canada

*Carried unanimously.*

Amendment to by law 7b (discrimination against groups of social workers or individual social workers)

Moved: USA

Seconded: Canada

*Passed with one abstention.*

### **11.3 Arrangements for appointment of a new Chief Executive**

The paper was received.

Sweden commented that it would not be a good idea to involve an external company in recruiting a new Secretary General. There is sufficient knowledge in the Executive to deal with this matter.

There were no other comments.

The General Meeting noted the report.

## **12 Social Work Agenda for the next decade**

## **12.1 To debate the agenda which emerged from the 2010 conference process and to approve the programme of action to be agreed with IASSW and ICSW**

Gary Bailey, IFSW Chief Rapporteur for the Hong Kong Conference, reported on the agenda and the programme of action which had emerged from the 2010 conference process. He noted that these matters had to be agreed with IASSW and ICSW.

The aim is to provide a second draft of the agenda by October 2010 which will be sent to all membership bodies for their first comments. The third draft agenda will then be developed by February 2011. It is then hoped that World Social Work Day on 15 March 2011 will enable worldwide discussion of the agenda.

The goal is that the agenda will be officially submitted to the United Nations Secretary General on 20 March 2012. Each region should also submit the final agenda to continental organisations. National Groups will also be asked to submit the agenda to their Government.

The aim is to demonstrate the power, breadth and depth of social work.

The work groups looking at this issue were asked to look at whether they agree with the timetable and to feedback comments they have on the content.

Group work then took place. With feedback as detailed in agenda item 18.2.

The President thanked the groups for their feedback. He explained that the timetable presented to the meeting needed to be voted on.

Germany suggested that in terms of the timetable it would be good to have a booklet of the agenda – this can be taken to the Council of Europe which can have more impact than email.

The UK feel that the Joint Conference has been excellent but, as the closing session indicated, now is the time for action to begin. The UK supports the timescale. They feel it is realistic and coherent. It is important to stress the identity of our profession and the international definition of social work and the statement of ethical principles. The UK feels that these must be reflected in all that is presented when the Agenda is finalised. The three organisations should also present a research paper on the impact of social work on the socio economic position of the world – based on three countries in each region – one rich, one average and one poor.

Sweden said they supported the timetable and proposed that the meeting accept the timetable.

Moved: Sweden

Seconded: Finland.

*Carried unanimously.*

The Treasurer thanked the President for all of his work on developing the Agenda with partner organisations.

## **13 Policy**

### **13.1 Report from Policy, Advocacy and Representation Commission**

The Chair of the Commission presented an oral report. He explained that the goal of the Commission is to ensure that IFSW has a contemporary, well researched and clearly articulated policy platform. He outlined the policies to be presented to the meeting and the consultative processes.

### **13.2 Policy on poverty eradication**

The paper was presented by Charles Mbugua as the policy lead.

Austria commented that the importance of the eradication of poverty had been emphasised in the conference. This policy paper focuses more on poverty alleviation rather than eradication.

Switzerland welcomed the paper as much clearer than the first draft but suggested that it is important to give more emphasis to co-operation with poor people in developing strategies.

Kenya said that the paper should be referred to as poverty reduction.

The mood of the meeting was that the policy title should be referred to as poverty eradication only and not poverty eradication and alleviation.

It was proposed that the meeting accept the policy on the eradication of poverty.

Moved: USA

Seconded: China.

*Carried with two abstentions.*

### **13.3 Policy on women**

The paper was presented by Gary Bailey. It was proposed that the statement be accepted.

Moved: Switzerland

Seconded: Austria

*Carried unanimously.*

### **13.4 Policy on homelessness**

The paper was presented by Gary Bailey who acknowledged that there had been some delay in revising this paper to make it appropriate as a global policy statement. Bulgaria explained that this paper was approved by the European region some time ago. It had been submitted to the global level as a basis for a global policy. The paper reflects the European context and needs further work to adapt it to global realities. The Chair of PARC confirmed that this work will be undertaken over the next two years including consultation with member organisations.

The paper and report were noted.

### **13.5 Policy on disabilities**

Lesley Chenoweth, a member of the group working on the policy, informed the meeting that an earlier draft of the paper had been distributed in error. Since member organisations had not had the opportunity to consult on the final version of the paper, it is not appropriate to take a vote at this meeting.

It was suggested that the draft policy paper be sent out to members for consultation and that the paper be reconsidered by the Executive in twelve months time.

Gary Bailey proposed that the revised draft paper could be distributed immediately for members to vote on the following day. Germany said that more time was needed because the paper is not in a final form.

It was proposed that the policy paper be sent to all member organisations and that be reviewed by the Executive for decision in 2011.

Moved: Australia

Seconded: Germany.

*Carried with two votes against.*

### **13.7 Policy on employer responsibilities**

This was presented by David Jones as the lead contact person. He explained that there had been limited time for consultation. The General Meeting could remit the paper for wider consultation or follow other options set out in the paper.

It was proposed that the policy paper be adopted.

Moved: Australia

Seconded: New Zealand

The UK said the paper addresses very important issues which need wide consultation with member organisations and regional meetings to ensure that it reflects the needs and views of the whole organisation. This paper has drawn on regulatory body standards from the UK and it was argued that the standards should be developed by social workers themselves.

Malta said that this matter had been discussed to a great extent across Europe. This matter must be addressed with much more discussion and consultation. The paper is on an important subject and should be consulted on much more. One issue which is not included in the paper is the support needed by social workers who speak out against employers.

Norway considered it important that the Federation takes the time to work on this paper. It is important to recognise that some member organisations are trade unions and therefore have to take account of their formal, negotiating relationships with employers. They recommended that there should be further consultation and a

decision taken at the next General Meeting.

Finland was glad to see this issue on the agenda, but agreed that there should be wider consultation. There are issues missing from the paper – including caseload management and size.

Romania agreed that this is a very important paper because it is about the working environment of practitioners. This paper must consider the different needs of countries. It may be too difficult to develop a paper which reflects global needs. It might be better to adopt regional papers on this issue, with guidelines from the Global level.

Switzerland spoke in support of adopting the policy paper at the meeting.

Argentina welcomed the paper as the basis for further debate. Research from Chile shows that 60% of social workers experience work related stress. The paper provides a useful start but much more is needed to look into the situation in different regions. However Argentina was concerned that papers can be debated for so long that they are out of date when they are finally agreed. The Federation should develop a system whereby papers can be debated and agreed in between meetings. This could be carried out through electronic voting.

Denmark agreed that there was a need for more consultation and it was not appropriate to vote at this meeting. They have responsibilities as a trades union which need to be taken into account. The Federation of European Public Service Unions (EPSU) should be consulted as part of the development of this paper.

Australia said that, in the light of the discussions, they withdraw the motion. The work needs to be continued because this is an issue which is vital to social work across the world. New Zealand agreed.

David Jones said that the work on this paper would therefore continue within PARC. He thanked all members for their constructive comments.

### **13.8 Other policy statements**

There were no other statements.

### **13.9 Future agenda and other policy matters**

It was noted that there have been discussions with IASSW about some joint work on disaster response and also on support for social workers in situations of political conflict. It will be proposed that these projects will be brought to the meeting later as part of the discussion about the work plan.

## **14 Human Rights**

This issue was deferred to day 3

## **15 Ethics**

The Secretary of the Permanent Committee on Ethical Issues presented his written report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. He thanked Titti Frankel, Arne Gronningsaeter and Sarah Banks for their contributions.

The Secretary commented that the proposed legislation against homosexuality in Uganda had been a very challenging issue for the committee, provoking considerable debate and the need for diplomacy and judgement whilst holding firm to the Federation's ethical principles.

Norway said that the issue of the legislation in Uganda had been dealt with very well by the ethics committee and the President. They remained concerned that one of our member organisations supported the death penalty and therefore appears to be in breach of the ethical principles. This should be discussed within the ethics committee.

The Secretary noted that, at the previous General Meeting in Brazil, it was noted that there were difficulties in getting regional nominees to contribute actively to the committee. It had therefore been agreed that people with specific expertise would be invited to contribute. This had led to the committee being almost entirely composed of Europeans. The Secretary suggested that this was unbalanced and that it is important that all regions are empowered to take part. The Secretary therefore invited regions to consider making a nomination to the committee in their regional meetings.

It was proposed that the membership of the committee shall include one official representative from each region and that the Secretary of the Committee be authorised to co-opt further expert individuals as committee members.

Moved: New Zealand

Seconded: Australia.

*Carried unanimously.*

## **16 Definition of Social Work**

The Convener, Nicolai Paulsen, presented a verbal report which was received by the General Meeting.

## **17 Briefing for concurrent sessions**

The President introduced the concurrent sessions inviting people to choose which group they wanted to join. Groups considered either the social work Agenda (item 12) or strategic issues (item 11) with each group facilitated by an Executive member.

## **18 Concurrent sessions**

Following the group discussions, feedback was presented to the General Meeting.



## **18.1 IFSW Strategic review including support for member organisations**

Germany fed back from the first group, as follows:

The group represented a range of regions and had a very interesting discussion. In relation to the question of language, they felt that the Federation needs to find a way of being more open with languages. The word 'official' in the term 'official languages' creates a problem. One possible solution could be that the Federation providing could provide technical support and countries could bring their own translators.

In relation to the Secretary General and the President, there was a significant difference of opinions. Some felt the Secretary General should be elected but there was a strong voice from many countries that the Secretary General should be appointed and the President elected.

The makeup of the recruitment committee was discussed. The group felt that the recruitment should be supervised by an external person.

The location of the Secretariat had been discussed. This could be changed based on who accepts the position of Secretary General. It was suggested that it could be useful to have a rotation between the regions, but this could create problems for storage and the location of historical documents and archives.

The Regional President for Africa fed back for the second group. This group had explored the report recommendations one at a time, and fed back as follows:

6.1 – agreed.

6.2 – supported review of sub regions – in considering this, the size and diversity of the region should be taken into account. It was necessary to guard against fragmentation of regions – sub regions would need support from the Global level.

6.3 – as above but specifically request that some countries in Asia Pacific and Africa tend to be put together – but in planning sub regions tend to consider the best interests of countries and if they can have their own sub region.

6.4 – supported by the group.

6.5 – supported. Specifically change should only take place if that adds value – but proximity to location of international organisations should be considered.

6.6 – supported. There are benefits of partnership but care needs to be taken that one organisation does not lose its identity

6.7 – supported.

6.8 – supported.

6.9 – no opinion.

6.10 – supported.

6.11 – supported.

6.12 – deferred to Executive.

6.15 – supported.

6.16 – recommend constitution should be adhered to but the committee should inform the Executive which in turn should inform the General Meeting.

Sweden fed back for the third group, as follows:

The group had lively discussions and supported most of the Executive suggestions. Specifically the group would wish to make the following comments to be considered by the Executive:

6.1 – the group supported this but want to point out that it is very important to have a very close working relationship between the President and the Secretary General.

6.7 – The group feel that the Federation needs to make better use of technology. It is important to look again at the bylaws about inclusivity – it may be necessary to review whether there should be official languages or not. The group felt that it is too expensive to provide translation for every language.

6.8 – The group feel that it is important to make sure that members feel welcome but fee income is also an important consideration.

## **18.2 Hong Kong Agenda and preparation for world conference 2012**

Australia fed back on behalf of the group that they had had an interesting discussion. They had looked at where the agenda will go to and this led to interesting learning about the range of our partnerships. The group feels that keeping to the timetable will demand a lot of work. Language was discussed at some length. How can all the countries communicate with each other about the Agenda?

The group feels that it is important also to look beyond 2012 so that the document is a working one.

Malta fed back on behalf of the second group. The group talked about inviting stakeholders who also have a financial or economic stake in the Agenda to become involved in the process. It is necessary to consider how these stakeholders can be involved now rather than at the completion of the process? They also spoke about referring to lessons learnt in other countries. It could be an idea to look at what the process and method of the Agenda development is. This could be considered as a research project which involves practitioners. The group looked at how the timetable could be addressed – this will need some concrete plans.

## **19 Report back from Concurrent sessions**

Feedback from the group work sessions is recorded in the previous agenda item.

## **20 Regional Meetings**

Each region held a meeting.



## Day 3, June 16

The President opened day 3 explaining that there was some business from previous agenda items still to be covered.

### **14 Human Rights**

The Secretary to the Human Rights Commission presented her report, a copy of which had been made available in advance on the website. She said that it had been a pleasure to be present in Hong Kong where human rights issues had been so central to the conference and all discussions.

The Human Rights website is launched and open for members to add contributions and experiences.

The two pre-conference workshops had been very successful. Special thanks were given to Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol for her work on birth registration. The other workshop was joint with the schools – 150 participants looked at developing the human rights agenda in social work education.

There is ongoing work with the International Criminal Court, focussing especially on children who have been recruited into the military.

In conclusion the Secretary to the Human Rights Commission called on delegates to inform others about issues of human rights which had been discussed in Hong Kong.

The report was received by the meeting.

### **15 Ethics (the remainder of the report was covered)**

The Secretary of the Permanent Committee on Ethics asked the regions to let him know the name of their representative. Communication is a significant challenge for the committee.

The main work of the committee had been the review of the ethical statement with IASSW. There have been questions about whether the statement reflects cultural diversity across the globe. Only a few comments had been received and those have been from those countries where it is alleged that the most influence has been. At the recent Asia Pacific conference, the Secretary of the Committee was told people were happy with the statement and wanted it to stay as it was. IASSW got the same message. A few minor amendments had been suggested, but on consultation, people had not agreed with these. A workshop was held in the days before the conference. Over a hundred people attended. The outcome was that the statement was seen as largely robust. The recommendation from the committee to the meeting is therefore that the statement has wide acceptance around the world and so no changes are proposed. The committee would also like guidance on whether or not to keep the statement under review. The Secretary concluded by reminding member organisations that the statement is not a code but a set of principles. It is recognised

that some members would like IFSW to promote a code.

Sweden suggested that the document relies on the current definition of social work and it is therefore appropriate to stop the review process at this point but begin it again when we have a revised definition.

Denmark agreed that the statement of ethics should be maintained as it is so that each country can make their own codes of ethics based on the statement.

Germany agreed that the statement should not be changed. Germany is reviewing its own principles of ethics. It is better in principle that core statements like this remain consistent for some time. Germany also suggested that the ethics committee could usefully support member organisations as they go through the process of developing or amending their own codes of ethics.

Austria argued that no changes should be made to the statement of ethical principles nor to the definition of social work.

The President noted that IFSW statements and the definition are quoted by many, including National Governments.

The President of the African region reported that the statement recently made by Uganda supporting proposed legislation in Uganda outlawing homosexuality was not supported by other associations in Africa. There have been discussions with the Ugandan association and the issue will be raised at the AGM in Uganda in August. The region will continue to keep IFSW informed of the situation.

The President said that this situation had created significant communications within IFSW about the situation and ethical dilemmas. IFSW remained clear about the ethical statement.

New Zealand said that after the review of the definition is complete, then work needs to take place to support indigenous social workers and the development of codes of ethics.

The Secretary of the Committee said that, where countries are developing codes of ethics, the committee would be pleased to offer support and advice. The committee is considering whether to provide some case studies, guidelines etc for discussion amongst IFSW members – these may be placed on the website.

It was proposed that the report from the Secretary of the Permanent Committee on Ethical Issues be received.

*Proposed: New Zealand*

*Seconded: Sweden*

*Unanimously agreed.*

It was noted that, as there were no proposals or motions to amend the statement of ethical principles, they remained unchanged. It was understood that IASSW would take the same position.

## **16 Definition of Social Work**

Nicolai Paulsen has been leading the review and presented a report. The work formally started in 2006 at the General Meeting in Munich. A report was provided at the General Meeting in Brazil in 2008 (which included a special session).

He apologised that there had been delays in the timetable and acknowledged that the members of the project group had not been fully involved. However there had been significant activity. Discussions have taken place at regional and national level. Feedback has been gathered.

Most of the feedback is that the present definition is good. The almost unanimous feedback has been that changing the definition now would not be good. However other feedback shows that some member organisations never supported the original definition and they would prefer a significant change. Some of the issues which are felt to be missing are:

- Spirituality
- Social action
- Clarity about Global roles and responsibilities
- Self determination
- Cultural sensitivity
- Competences for social work
- Methodology
- Structural and political issues

There have been a number of papers in writing providing feedback. Within the Federation there have been papers from Switzerland and Brazil.

The web survey has been translated into 7 languages. However so far only 112 people have replied. Mainly from Europe and North America.

There was a joint workshop in Hong Kong with about 200 active participants which included many very good inputs. This also gave the picture that views on the definition vary from country to country and person to person. It would be very challenging to develop a revised definition.

The two co-chairs (from IASSW and IFSW) met for the first time in Hong Kong and have now developed a joint proposal for the way forward. The meeting was asked to postpone the work allowing two more years for the review.

The proposal is to develop a resource package by September to assist with the review of the definition. Members will then once again be asked to engage their members in the review discussions.

The on line survey will be opened again and a new document should be ready for consultation from summer 2011, reporting in 2012.

Brazil said that this debate is of great importance in Brazil. There is a national definition of social work and a National curriculum for social work in Brazil. Social workers who do not follow the national definitions and national codes can lose their option to work. In Brazil social workers cannot carry out therapeutic work as this is not allowed in law. If social workers are found to be carrying out such activities they can lose their job.

This is why Brazil has always opposed this definition. Brazil feels it is vital that a world definition reflects the whole world. It must not prejudice National law, National codes etc. Since the review group has never met, the Brazilian member organisation feels that this has compromised their ability to comment or give feedback. They asked that the review listens to how social work is carried out in South America. They suggested that all regions could present a paper on the definition and then a book could be developed with all the regional contributions. Brazil would like to organise a consultative symposium with invitees from all regions as well as Latin America and look to providing feedback.

Austria said they were in total opposition to Brazil's view. They feel that international definitions are always stronger than national law. National law should change not international documents. The international definition is about producing a professional identity. The current definition is being used in curriculum design, legislation etc but it has taken five years to get to this point. If changes are made then it will take another five years. They feel that changes should only be made very rarely because statements such as these take a long time to embed themselves.

The UK welcomed this really interesting debate. The UK has a different view from both Austria and Brazil. This is an ongoing debate about professional identity. It is right in many ways that an international definition will come into conflict with national laws. The UK suggested that a basic definition that can be seen to be consistent with the arrangements in all countries around the world could be empty. If the definition is so basic, it can become meaningless. The UK supported the proposed workshop in Brazil. All countries should have workshops to discuss the definition. They concluded by saying that as social workers we should define the profession for ourselves and for the world.

The President said that the Executive has been having conversations with Latin America to try to open up much more dialogue about this issue.

Argentina disagreed that statements should not be changed. Human rights evolve over time. Our profession needs to evolve too. The international context has changed. This definition reflects what they call regulated social work. This is social work which places the problem on the family that receives it. It does not propose structural change within economies. This creates problems. Social work should look to structural change and the unjust distribution of wealth. Argentina commented that this is a change that all members in Latin America support.

The Secretary of the Permanent Committee on Ethical Issues noted the comments as a social work educator and practitioner. He appreciated the struggles of colleagues in Latin America to make the definition of social appropriate for them. In Australia there are struggles to maintain social action and community work as part of

social work. It is important however to be as broad minded as possible. Having counselling in the definition should not be problematic. Everything from counselling through to social action is social work.

China proposed to conclude the debate at this point with two clear understandings: that the definition and statement are vital. China has struggled to find its own role for social work using the definition as a background to this. China feels that international and national definitions can be different. There should be mutual respect for social work in different countries.

Malta said that in Malta social workers work across a range of areas from therapeutic work to social change. There is a high turnover in Malta of people leaving the profession. The Association therefore did a survey – which found that most people working in therapeutic areas feel comfortable. Those who are working trying to create social change are frustrated, because they don't feel that have a realistic method or model to work with groups who have no voice and where there is no political or social support. Malta feels that we could learn from the Latin American model to help social workers in these difficult situations.

The President explained that the idea of the proposed symposium would be that there would be about 40 people from IFSW and IASSW invited from all around the world. The definition would be discussed and there may be a national conference at the end. This would also help to create more dialogue between colleagues in Latin America and the rest of the world. Brazil was willing to support the symposium.

Nicolai Paulsen said that the discussion and process may be the most useful part of the development of the definition. It is very important that members look at the review creatively and that they engage social workers in discussing the definition and the review. There are representatives from most regions on the group looking at the review, but Nicolai will be proposing at the upcoming Executive meeting that other regions and possibly sub regional areas are represented on the group.

It was proposed that the General Meeting receive the report and accept the recommendations.

*Proposed: China*

*Seconded: Singapore*

*Carried unanimously.*

## **21 Action Plan 2010 – 2012**

The President explained that the Action Plan is a working paper for the Executive Committee. The President said that the plan has become more and more detailed over the years and needs review.

The action plan and risk assessment were not placed on the website and had not been distributed. Delegates expressed a wish to see the documents. A copy of the action plan was given to each country and the item was deferred for discussion to the afternoon.



Denmark asked the President to reaffirm the status of the paper. The President said that this is an Executive working paper. It is not placed on the website. It is not a formal paper of the General Meeting.

Germany thanked the Executive for all of the work that is carried out. They said that they would like the new Executive to circulate the action plan when it is complete. They also asked that the work of the promotion of the profession committee is reflected more fully in the action plan.

The UK commented that this is an important document which will obviously change very significantly as work on the development of the Agenda progresses. They would like to ask that the Executive have a review of representation and appointments to ensure:

- a) That we are making the most effective representation possible
- b) That we are clear about the full extent of the role of representatives in the future
- c) That we receive the best possible feedback from representatives.

The President responded that the Executive will consider these proposals.

## **22 Risk Assessment for IFSW**

The Treasurer explained that the Risk Assessment plan is reviewed by the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee. The President said that the risk assessment will be integrated into the work plan over coming months as this is viewed by the Executive committee as good practice. The President invited delegates to make comments. No comments were received.

## **23 Appointment of IFSW Representatives**

The President said that the Executive proposes that the existing appointments are reaffirmed.

*Proposed: China*

*Seconded: Australia*

*Carried unanimously*

The following appointments were therefore made:

23.1 Human Rights Commission Secretary  
Ruth Stark, United Kingdom

23.2 Permanent Committee on Ethical Issues, Secretary  
Richard Hugman, Australia

23.3 Policy, Advocacy and Representation Commission, Chair  
The current person is Gary Bailey, United States. The proposal is that the Executive will consider who should take this role.

23.4 United Nations, Geneva  
Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol, Switzerland

23.5 United Nations, New York  
Michael Cronin, United States

23.6 United Nations, Vienna  
Georg Dimitz, Austria

23.7 United Nations, Nairobi  
Charles Mbugua, Kenya

23.8 UNICEF  
Ellen Mouravieff-Apostol, Switzerland

23.9 Amnesty International  
Terry Bamford, United Kingdom

23.10 IFSW Ambassador  
Suzanne Dworak-Peck, USA

23.11 Sage Publications  
Nigel Hall, United Kingdom

23.12 Other appointments  
United Nations, Santiago, Chile – Omar Ruz

## **24. Finance 2011- 2012**

The President explained that, given the uncertain timetable for the appointment of a new Secretary General, the Executive proposes to report the budget to the meeting and to ask the meeting to delegate responsibility to the Executive for making any necessary changes to ensure that financial decisions can be responsive to the current climate.

### **24.3 Budget 2010**

The Treasurer explained that a budget was agreed in Brazil in 2008. The budget needed to change as there have been significant changes within the organisation. A draft budget was therefore presented to the meeting. The President asked that the meeting delegated approval of the budget to the Executive.

Germany asked the following three questions:

Why the budget for the website is planned to reduce in coming years. The Policy and Communications Officer explained that in some years funds are allocated to pay for development. There is no need for this to be budgeted in 2011.

Is there a plan to recover the 2009 loss in future years? The Treasurer said that the

early retirement was an extraordinary situation and there are no plans for immediate recovery.

What is the rationale for the assumption that there will be an increase in membership fees? The Treasurer replied that there has been a significant increase in the payment of fees.

Sweden suggested that the resignation of the two Danish member organisations had not been taken into account in the budget. The Treasurer replied that she had consulted with the IFSW Accountant who feels that the fee budget is appropriate.

Ghana asked about income from the website. The Treasurer explained that website income from advertising is included in the "other income" section. This has the potential to increase.

It was proposed that the Treasurer's report be received and that the Executive be authorised to approve the budget.

*Proposed: Denmark  
Seconded: Germany  
Carried unanimously*

#### **24.4 Budget 2011**

This was covered jointly in the previous agenda item.

#### **24.7 Approval of auditors 2011-2012**

#### **24.8 Other financial matters**

There were no other financial matters.

#### **25 World Social Work Day 2011- 2012**

The President explained that the new Executive will appoint a new chair of the Promotion of the Profession Committee, which is responsible for WSWD. World Social Work Days in the next two years will be linked to the Agenda process. Member organisations are encouraged to promote World Social Work Day and encourage every social worker, student and agency to celebrate the day and to engage in a debate about the Agenda statement.

Organisations were encouraged to start planning for WSWD immediately because of the long-lead times needed by press and professional journals. The report was noted without comment.

#### **26 Resolutions**

The President said that he had no notice of resolutions but some people had asked

to raise issues.

The Secretary of the Human Rights Commission raised the fact that Fernando Callibao from the Philippines had been murdered in Malaysia. During the conference the Secretary was able to talk to the Associations in Malaysia and Philippines about a suitable way to mark the death of such a committed social worker and to recognise the significant contribution Fernando had made. With his family's consent, the Commission will be looking at marking the anniversary of his death linked with issues of human trafficking.

The President said that on World Social Work Day 2010 a social worker in Poland had been murdered visiting a service user. Social work is dangerous work and we should recognise and honour those who have lost their lives when carrying out social work.

The President said that IASSW had passed a resolution calling for IASSW to join the international condemnation of Israel's attack on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla. This resolution was shared with the meeting.

Gary Bailey as President Elect then explained that IFSW had passed a resolution on victims of violent conflict in Munich 2006. The resolution was presented to the meeting.

The representative to Amnesty International commented that it is important to speak out about the Gaza blockade.

The UK agreed that it would be appropriate to reaffirm the statement made in Munich.

Kenya agreed that it is important to reaffirm the statement. Some African countries have benefited from resolutions made by IFSW – such as the statement on genocide. Kenya thanked IFSW for statements which have supported the region in the past.

The Secretary to the Permanent Committee on Ethical Issues said there is a good argument to reaffirm the past statement as there are so many situations of conflict. However, he also agreed with the representative to Amnesty International that there is a specific set of circumstances. He also advised that the General Meeting should avoid becoming aligned with one side or the other in this conflict. He suggested that the statement could be reaffirmed by the meeting with a statement saying that this reaffirmation had been made because of recent events.

Brazil said that Latin America supported the views of the representative to Amnesty International. It is very important to talk about the blockade. Sometimes we need to be more direct in taking social action.

Sweden argued that such sensitive issues should not be raised unless notice is given at the beginning of the meeting. The statement by IASSW should have been raised at the start of the meeting. National associations need time to consider such sensitive matters before a decision is made.

It was proposed that the General meeting reaffirm the 2006 statement on conflict.  
Moved: USA  
Seconded: New Zealand.

The Secretary of the Human Rights Commission agreed with the Secretary of the Permanent Committee on Ethical Issues. There is a need to update what was said four years ago. The situation is very complicated. We have membership from both Palestine and Israel in this body. It would be negligent to leave the meeting without making some comment.

Austria proposed that the 2006 statement could be reaffirmed with an addition that IFSW urges all nations and groups not to hinder the delivery of humanitarian aid and endanger humanitarian helpers.

Denmark argued that reaffirming the prior statement could be interpreted to indicate that we have not realised that the world has moved on. It was proposed that it would be better to make no statement as there is not time to reach agreement.

The US with the agreement of New Zealand withdrew the motion.

### **27 Joint World Conference (2012)**

Sweden reported that work has been taking place on the 2012 Stockholm conference since 2007. The Logo is an 'S' which stands for Stockholm, Sweden and Social Work. Delegates will be very welcome in Sweden.

Ghana asked that a roll call should be incorporated into the conference.

The Human Rights Commissioner commented that the Federation must make better arrangements for the IFSW stand at the conference.

Austria commented that the Friends reception needs to be better integrated into the conference. Austria also suggested that papers presented by practitioners should be identified in the programme with a 'P' – so that delegates can see who is making presentations from a practice perspective.

China did not support the involvement of ICSW as a partner, unless the membership of China in ICSW is rectified.

Australia supported setting up a Facebook site for conferences generally.

Sweden said that the Hong Kong Conference had been a great success, thanked delegates for their feedback and said that Sweden is ready to take on the challenge.

### **28 Joint World Conference (2014)**

The President reported that IASSW will lead on the liaison with the host country. One

bid has been received. No decision has yet been made.

### **30 Reports on Regional Conferences**

The European Region invited delegates to the Joint ENSACT Conference from April 10-13 2011.

The Asia Pacific region invited members to a conference in Japan on 15-18 July 2011.

The Latin American region invited members to a conference in June 2011 in Argentina.

### **31 Other Business**

Australia informed member organisations that the association is about to make significant changes in their organisation to make it more inclusive. Making more use of web based tools to give a forum for discussion between leaders across IFSW could be helpful, including sharing podcasts about critical issues each is facing. They will invite people to join in this project in the future.

Ghana put on record that they are very grateful to Switzerland for assisting and supporting the Association through a twinning arrangement. Twinning is very helpful and is continuing. Ghana suggested that other more wealthy members could assist African and other developing countries in similar ways.

There was no other business.

### **32 Election of Officers and Executive Committee**

#### **32.1 Report from the Elections Officer**

The Elections Officer gave his final report of the meeting. The following people had been elected:

#### **32.2 President**

Gary Bailey

#### **32.3 Regional Presidents**

North America: Darlene MacDonald

#### **32.4 Members at large**

Africa – Daniel Opare Asiedu

Europe – Anthea Agius

Asia Pacific – Mariko Kimura

Latin America / Caribbean – Laura Acotto

North America – Jim Kelly

The Elections Officer concluded by stating that a small group had been formed to review the bylaws and proposals will be brought to the General Meeting in 2012.

### **33 Election of Elections Officer and Alternates**

It was proposed that Bob Lonne be appointed as Electons Officer, supported by Suzanne Dworak Peck and Claudia Kuzma as Alternate officers.

*Moved: Canada*

*Seconded: Finland*

*Carried unanimously.*

### **34 Date and place of the next General Meeting**

The next General Meeting will be in Stockholm in 2012.

The President invited comments on the timing of the General Meeting (before or after conference). There was no strong preference within the meeting although slightly more wanted the meeting before the Conference. The President commented that the Executive will consider this issue and report back.

The Treasurer asked for comments about whether the General Meeting could be shortened to two days.

Denmark said it would be possible to have the meeting across two days, but they feel that the meeting process would need to be improved. All papers would need to be produced in plenty of time so that everyone could comment on papers prior to the meeting.

The USA said that the Federation should explore modern technologies to improve the way the meeting is conducted. It would be feasible to hold a one day face to face meeting if more work was carried out electronically.

The President invited a show of hands to see the feeling about the meeting length. There were two votes against the meeting being shortened to two days.

### **35 Closing of General Meeting**

The President thanked the people he had worked with during the 4 years he has been President. He concluded his Presidency by stating that social work and supporting people is vital for the world. It has been a pleasure to serve the organisation and lead the profession. He thanked the meeting for giving him the opportunity.

A number of tributes were then made to the President from:

- The Representative to Amnesty International.
- Regional Presidents.
- The IFSW Ambassador.
- Past Presidents.
- The Treasurer.
- The nominating organisation – BASW.

The President again thanked the meeting and then said that he was very proud to hand over to the new President Gary Bailey. He knows that Gary will provide strong leadership for the federation.

The incoming President paid tribute to the outgoing President and talked of the shared legacy of IFSW. He gave thanks to members, hosts and those who had worked to support the general Meeting.

The incoming President called the meeting to a close at 4.40.