



international federation of social workers

Newsletter

Secretariat: 33 Rue de l'Athénée, 1206 Geneva, Switzerland.

APRIL 1987

News from the President

My recent visit to Vienna, Geneva and Paris on behalf of the Federation was packed with meetings and events which were not alone fruitful and rewarding but most enjoyable as well. I met with a wide range of people and had the opportunity to discuss various aspects of Federation business throughout my trip.

In Vienna, I represented IFSW at:

- the NGO International Workshop on the FAMILY.
- the 30th session of the UN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION.
- meeting/reception of the INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL WELFARE.
- meeting with the INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK arranged by Dr. Vera Mehta, Secretary General of IASSW.
- meeting with senior officials from the EUROPEAN CENTRE, Dr. H. Wintersberger and Dr. M. Hoffman.
- reception given by the AUSTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS in honour of my visit to Vienna.

Monika Vyslouzil, the IFSW representative at the UN, made all the arrangements for my meetings in Vienna and great credit is due to her for such a well organised and successful visit.

In GENEVA, I spent a very productive two days with our Secretary General, and his wife, Andrew and Ellen Mouravieff Apostol. Just back from their successful visit to Sweden concerning the 1988 Conference, they were full of news about the plans and progress of our colleagues in the Nordic region. I also had the opportunity to meet with the new Secretary General of the INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE, Madam Marcelle Brisson, for a most useful exchange of news and views.

In PARIS, I met with our Vice President for Africa, Mr. Mustafa Bushaala and our discussions ranged over the current developments in his region, the Pan African Conference in Kampala in August, and the report from Victoria Somers (Irish Association) who, on a private visit to Kenya and Tanzania, met with social workers there and, at the request of IFSW, made a special trip to Uganda to

meet our Executive member, Mr. Bwanika Bbaale and colleagues.

As never before, the value of the ongoing work of the IFSW was brought home to me when I attended the International workshop on the FAMILY. Drawing on the IFSW Montreal/Paris Conferences, I was able to speak on behalf of social workers internationally and point to the universal experience of (i) inadequate resources to support families in need (ii) lack of social planning for families e.g., housing; and (iii) lack of sufficient pressure on the home front for Governments to get the balance right between social and economic policies. On behalf of the IFSW, I supported the proposal from the Polish delegate that the UN proclaim an International Year of the Family.

A similar line informed the IFSW submission to the UN COMMISSION on SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT where we called on the UN to give the strongest possible support, with the highest level of consultation, to the forthcoming International Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes. Social policies have lost out with the current almost exclusive focus on economic policies. As pointed out by the Chairman at the opening of the 30th session of the Commission, we must try to raise the prestige of social planning and seek to redress the balance. The important role to be played by women in social development was stressed by IFSW.

My presence in Vienna coincided with that of many friends and colleagues from other organisations with which IFSW has close links. I was delighted to have the opportunity to meet and have discussion with the President of ICSW, Mr. Norbert Prefontaine and the Secretary General, Ms. Ingrid Gelinek. I met with Mr. Kinos, Director of Social Services in Cyprus and we talked about the plans for the October IFSW meeting in Nicosia. I was particularly pleased to meet with Elizabeth Fishbacher, Asst. General Secretary of the Swiss Association and to hear of her progress with plans for the 1989 European Regional Seminar to be held in Switzerland.

In conclusion, I must record my appreciation

for the kind assistance offered by the UN officials, Dr. M. Rao and Mr. W. Sims of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in Vienna and their interest and encouragement for the work of the Federation. It was a most valuable

experience and I have returned full of new enthusiasm for the work ahead, and satisfied to report to you that the IFSW network is in good shape.



IFSW Activities

In mid-February the Secretary General and the Associate Secretary General, Andrew and Ellen Apostol, visited the IFSW Swedish member association to discuss detailed arrangements for the Federation's 10th International Symposium scheduled for July 26-30, 1988 in Stockholm.

The theme of the Symposium, or the Social Workers World Conference as the Swedish hosts prefer to call it, is:

ATTITUDES, VALUES AND IDEOLOGY IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE.

Many important areas affecting social work practice will be discussed and among them such burning issues as the Welfare State and Democracy; New Conservatism and Social Work; Social Work and Racism; the Refugee situation; Social Work in Developing Countries; Unemployment and Social Work; and the ever present and challenging issue of Ethics in Social Work Practice.

The Swedish Welfare State has often been held up as a model for other countries which it undoubtedly is. Yet Sweden and other Nordic countries have not been spared by the world-wide economic crisis and it will be interesting for non-Nordic social workers to see how the Nordics cope.

Seeing and hearing about the Swedish social structure and the practical application of its welfare policies at first hand will be a vital experience for social workers from other countries. Telling their Swedish and Nordic colleagues about their own experiences may, in turn, have wide-ranging implications for future social work in Scandinavia.

The Conference will be held at the Stockholm International Fairs and Congress Centre where Nobel prize award ceremonies have often taken place.

A call for papers has gone out to all Member Associations and the Executive Committee. Please respond!

In 1987, three regional events will take place in Africa, Asia and Europe. A Pan-African Conference is scheduled for August 16-21, 1987 in Kampala, Uganda — Theme: "Social Work Practice in Social, Economic and Political Crisis". A joint APASWE and IFSW/Asia Regional Seminar on "Integrating Social Work Teaching and Practice

to meet Community Needs" will take place in Djakarta, Indonesia, 19-23 August, 1987. A European Regional Seminar on "The Rights of the Disadvantaged in Modern European Society and the role of Social Work" will be held in Nicosia, Cyprus, 5-8 October, 1987.

The International Federation's fourth Annual Social Work Day will be held on April 28, 1987 at U.N. Headquarters in New York. The theme for this year's meeting is "International Perspectives on the Changing Family: Implications for Social Policy" and various aspects of this topical subject will be considered by speakers drawing on family relationships in North America, Africa, Latin America, South-East Asia and Scandinavia. According to Lillian Lampkin, Chairperson of the IFSW team at UN/New York, 2,500 social workers and social work educators and students are expected to attend.

Forthcoming events

International Conference on "Adoption Today: Developments and Perspectives"

July, 6-9, 1987

Holiday Inn Hotel

Athens, Greece

Contact: Mrs. Chrysoula-Dora Gondicas

19, Anagnostopoulou St.

GR-106 73 Athens.

ICSW 14th European Regional Symposium:
"People on the Margins of Society: Strategies
Against Exclusion"

September 20-25, 1987

Contact: CISS

Via Duilio, 13 — 00192 Roma

Tel. (06) 318696.

SECRETARIAT:

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Australia

The year-end report of the Australian Association's International Relations Standing Committee lists among its achievements in 1986 the strengthening of links with Amnesty International and its intervention on behalf of seven social workers declared "prisoners of conscience" of whom all but one were released. Spurred on to further activity by such encouragement, the Committee contacted individuals in every state and wrote articles for publication in the newsletters of each of the Australian Association's branches requesting that small groups of interested people be formed to continue this work.

Contacts with an organisation "Community Aid Abroad" and specially with its Field Director in India who for nine years has worked with some of India's poorest communities, rekindled enthusiasm among committee members to work with and for the needy in Australia.

The Committee launched an appeal on behalf of social workers in Uganda who are helping displaced persons, widows and children re-establish themselves after years of political upheaval. Again an article was distributed to editors of all branch newsletters.

Committee member Denis Ladbrook brought back two projects from his year overseas on study leave. One involves an opportunity for qualified social workers to gain experience in the United States, and the other concerns a study tour of Berlin and Scandinavia to coincide with the next IFSW International Symposium in 1988. The Committee received a glowing report on the IFSW 9th International Symposium in Tokyo from its four attending members.

In October 1986, the Committee held a workshop on peace issues at a conference of the Australian Association's Western Australian branch which was chaired by the person in charge of religious broadcasting for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation who had recently returned from Chile where she had personally experienced life under a restrictive autocratic regime. One of the points stressed at the workshop was how everything is inter-related from the individual to the universe.

The Committee has at present 34 individuals on its mailing list and is encouraged by Australian social workers' growing interest in international matters. 1986 was considered a very good year and 1987 will hopefully be better.

Austria

Revision of its professional profile is one of the focal points for discussion at the Austrian Assoc-

iation and a new version will hopefully be adopted at the spring 1988 General Assembly.

Further debate concerns a proper balance between social policy and ecological considerations.

Every other year Austria hosts a German-language international seminar which in 1987 will take place September 30–October 3 in St. Virgil, Salzburg, on the theme "Elections, Changes, Resistance — The New Responsibility of Social Work".

Canada

Social workers in Canada are responding to growing public concern and to a federal government initiative to address child sexual abuse. In December 1986, Madeleine Rivard-Leduc, President of the Canadian Association CASW, leading a delegation of social workers discussed with politicians the need to change the court system to assist young "abused" children to tell their story in court. "It is important that the legal process be open, just, and therapeutic for families facing child abuse". Equally important, social workers are encouraging the government to spend an allotted 20 million dollars for child sexual abuse to develop an extensive range of community-based health and social services to address this problem.

In 1987, Canadian politicians plan to review the present national policy that abolishes the use of capital punishment. As domestic and urban violence increases, there is mounting public pressure to reintroduce capital punishment for murder. As a professional organisation committed to the integrity and intrinsic worth of all human beings, the Canadian Association has for many years expressed firm opposition to capital punishment and will continue to do so. The CASW National Office (Mary Hegan, Executive Director, 55 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1Y 1E5) would appreciate any written material from fellow IFSW members describing alternatives to capital punishment.

Canada continues to face high unemployment (including a lack of jobs in parts of Canada for trained social workers). Social workers are working with other national organisations to develop new national policies to provide meaningful work opportunities for citizens in all parts of Canada. New employment initiatives are considered to be an integral part of reform for income security.

Chile

The Consejo General del Colegio de Asistentes Sociales of Chile celebrated the Social Workers International Day of Peace on October 30, 1986 with a panel discussion on "Peace Building as a

Social Challenge" attended by U.N. officials from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the U.N. Peace University and by representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and the Vicariate of Solidarity whose persistent and effective efforts on behalf of the poor and the politically persecuted in Chile are known throughout the world.

Members of the Consejo General (Board) met with the Chilean Minister of Health on September 23, 1986 to discuss the role of social workers in health and education. The Minister agreed to most of the Colegio's (Chilean Association) seven-point proposal involving the participation of social workers at ministerial and regional level and in health services; consideration of technical measures such as home visits, group education, co-ordination, consultation and individual and group therapy as part of planning at the Ministry of Health; recognition of the importance of social services for health; equitable remuneration for social workers; inclusion of social workers in the Human Resource Expansion Programme; the appointment of social workers to leadership posts in social welfare; and the inclusion of social workers in the redeployment of responsibilities under the decentralisation plan. The Minister undertook to recommend to local authorities that posts in rural health, soon to be transferred to them by the Ministry, be filled by social workers.

Social Worker Day in Chile celebrated on December 11, 1986 in the presence of a representative of the Catholic University of Chile and the Dean of the School of Social Work of the American Catholic University was preceded by an ecumenical service on December 1.

Cyprus

The Cypriot Association of Social Workers is hosting the next European Regional Seminar on the theme "The Role of Social Work and the Rights of the Disadvantaged in European Society" in Nicosia, 5th-7th October, 1987.

The Seminar will try to determine who are today's disadvantaged groups; what social, legal, economic and other action is required to safeguard their rights; and what measures and co-ordinated action should be taken at local, national and international level to prevent conditions leading to the emergence of disadvantaged groups. Apart from the key-note speeches, participants will have the opportunity to discuss specific aspects of the problem in workshops on Youth, Women, Disabled/Aged persons, Destitute persons, Refugees/Migrants and Children.

There will be opportunities for participants to visit social agencies and to exchange social work experience with their Cypriot colleagues. Tours and excursions are also being organised to enable them to visit the country.

The detailed programme of the Seminar will be circulated soon to all Member Associations.

France

The French Association (ANAS) held its 41st annual congress in November 1986 in Lyon on the theme "Tomorrow's Social Worker".

Six hundred and fifty social workers as well as members of related professions (group leaders, child-care workers, counsellors in family and home economics) attended the event.

It was deemed important, at a time of administrative decentralisation, to recognize different professions fulfilling specific tasks, yet all striving to improve individual, group and collective well-being. Further discussion of the theme is being carried on at departmental level with a view to ensure widespread participation for the conception and implementation of innovative social measures.

Two-day advanced training sessions for French social workers took place in Pessac, near Bordeaux, in early February. Three themes were considered, dealing, amongst others, with responsibility and risk and with marketing in social work.

ANAS President and her Executive Committee continue to work with officials of the Ministry of Social Welfare for the improvement in the status of social workers and social work training.

A group for professional exchange in human sciences between France and Colombia called the "France-Colombia Exchange Association" was founded in March 1986 by a youth worker, a nurse, a psychologist and a social worker, Paul Vannier, who is also an active member of ANAS' Commission for International Affairs.

The Association's four founding members undertook a study tour to Colombia from 24 October to 8 November, 1986 and have put together an interesting brochure in which they report on their experience and findings in Colombia and on exchanges with Colombian colleagues. This publication is available on request from ANAS in Paris. A return visit of six Colombian social workers to France is planned for June 1987 and funds of approximately 45,000 French francs for travel expenses are being sought among the French social work community. Donations from social workers in other countries would be welcome.

Among Mr. Vannier's interesting suggestions is the establishment of "Travailleurs Sociaux Sans Frontieres" (Social Workers beyond Frontiers) modelled on the principle and structure of the world-famous body "Medecins sans frontieres". IFSW might wish to adopt this idea and carry it further and would be grateful for Member Associations' views and suggestions on the matter.

Israel

The Israel Association of Social Workers (ISASSW) joined other groups in strong and successful opposition to a tax reform envisaged by the government which in its original form

would have worked greatly to the detriment of the weaker segments of the population. Fortunately the Treasury revoked the planned cancellation of tax exemption for the disabled, the aged and the poor.

A special study day on social workers' contribution to the advancement of human rights will be organised by ISASSW in March 1987 and will include the presentation of various projects recently initiated by social workers.

Plans for the establishment of a "National Institute for Research and Prevention of Violence in the Family and Society" are progressing smoothly. This institute will perpetuate the memory of Amy Levin, the social worker murdered some months ago in the course of her duty.

A new school of social work will be established at the Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheva for which a steering group composed of specialists from the US, UK and Israel have recently set up a preparatory programme.

ISASSW President Sara Silberstein and IFSW Executive Committee member Dr. Yitzhak Kadman were among the 9 Jewish and Arab Israeli social workers to attend a meeting called by the President of Israel to commemorate International Human Rights Day and the Social Workers' Day of Peace. Participants were chosen for their contribution to peace and understanding among nations and were invited to give a brief description of their activities.

"Never too late" was the theme of a recent conference dealing with the adoption of older children which was attended by hundreds of social workers, judges and adoptive parents. Other Israeli social workers took part in a joint Dutch/Israeli seminar in Holland on the subject of alternative arrangements for children outside their homes.

A special combined professional and sight-seeing tour will be offered to participants at the IFSW European Seminar in Cyprus in October 1987, Nicosia being a mere 45 minute flight from Israel.

Korea

Mr. Eun Sik Min, President of the Korea Association of Social Workers, wrote to the secretariat to express his satisfaction at having been sent information on licensing and certification of social workers by NASW (USA) and by the IFSW Vice President for Asia & Pacific, Ms. Corazon Alma G. de Leon.

The Korean Association's national conference on "Democracy and Social Welfare" was held in Seoul, 5-6 December, 1986. Its five fora dealt with Changing Needs and Counter-measures; Future Welfare Policies in Korea compared to Policies in Advanced Welfare States; Effective Action by Persons with Legal Status

in Social Welfare; Professional Intervention in Social Welfare Services; and Strategies to Develop Voluntary Resources in Social Welfare.

Philippines

The Philippine Association of Social Workers set up a Human Rights Sub-Committee which is channelling petitions on behalf of victims of human rights violations to the President and other authorities in the country.

Miriam Ruth Dugay, for whom many IFSW Member Associations intervened to obtain her liberation, was transferred from her jail in Cagayan to Camp Lame Station Hospital in Quezon City on orders from the Presidential Committee on Human Rights, but she has not yet been freed. International pressure on her behalf should therefore be kept up to reinforce local pressure, including that of a recently established "Free Miriam Dugay Committee" composed of seven human rights and church groups.

A national women's coalition of organisations, GABRIELA, also joined the campaign to free Miriam Dugay and is otherwise actively engaged in promoting the advancement of women as well as a peaceful solution to the long-standing insurgency in the Philippines.

Uganda

The Uganda Association has set the ball rolling for the 3rd Pan-African Conference of Social Workers to be held in Kampala, August 16th-21st 1987. The Theme is "Social Work Practice in Social, Economic and Political Crisis" and national associations from all over Africa are expected to attend.

United Kingdom

The British Association of Social Workers completed the revision of its Code of Ethics which had originally been adopted in 1975. Amendments passed by the Annual General Meetings of 1985 and 1986 involve gender issues and a positive stance against racism.

United States Of America

Welfare Reform Policy

The National Association of Social Workers' President Dorothy V. Harris is convening a select group of social work professionals who are experienced in the study of poverty and public

welfare policy. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the profession with information derived from poverty and welfare analysis, with special emphasis on how the experience and practice of social workers can contribute to such an analysis.

The results of this meeting will be reported to NASW members for discussion and use. It will also be used to inform the ensuing policy debate in Washington and to educate the public so they can be enlightened advocates for better social policy. In President Harris's recent testimony on welfare reform before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Social Security and Family Policy, NASW called for welfare reform policies to promote self-sufficiency; address economic and structural causes of poverty; assure individuals a decent standard of living in order to meet basic needs; promote family strength and stability; address the needs of the whole person and family by giving particular attention to the provision of needed social services; emphasize transitional, as well as, preventive services.

Children in Poverty

More than 13 million American children, or one out of every five, are poor.

Drawing attention to problems associated with children in poverty, NASW is beginning a year-long public service campaign to remind the public of the needs of this underserved population. The theme is "Children in Poverty: Is a Fair Chance Too Much to Ask?" It is being launched in conjunction with the observance of March 1987 as National Social Work Month.

As part of its public service campaign, NASW is asking the public to support leaders willing to attack the problem legislatively and politically, and to make personal contributions of time or money. Campaign packages are being distributed to NASW chapters and to those who express interest. For more information, write to NASW Public Information Office at 7981, Easter Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

United Nations and Other International Organisations

In a statement submitted to the Commission on Social Development in Vienna in February 1987, IFSW expressed its strong support for the coming Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes for which it is preparing a background document based on input from many of its Member Associations. The Consultation will take place in Vienna, September 7-15, 1987 and will be the first global social welfare meeting at inter-governmental level to follow the 1968 International Conference of Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare.

IFSW seeks representation

A SOCIAL WORKER specialised in the field of DRUG ADDICTION is sought to represent IFSW at the (U.N.) International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking scheduled 17-26 June 1987 in Vienna. Private accommodation can be made available but the representative will be responsible for his/her own travel arrangements.

Information-exchange mechanisms for improved prevention and control; strategies for international action; harmonizing and reinforcing national legislation and treaties; rural development to eradicate raw-material sources for illicit drugs; more effective control of production and distribution of drugs and restriction of their use to medical and scientific purposes; co-operation in dealing with drug abuses are among the many subjects to be considered by the Conference. The major document to be considered by the Conference is already available in draft form at the

United Nations. It is entitled "The Comprehensive, Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control" (A/Conf. 133/PC 18).

Would interested persons please contact their own association and/or the IFSW Secretariat in Geneva?

Children

In early December 1986, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a Declaration on Social and Legal Principles Relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption, Nationally and Internationally. In connection with this declaration, a two-day expert meeting will take place at the Vienna International Centre in June 1987 to discuss ways to encourage and enable the implementation of the principles contained in the declaration. IFSW is planning to participate in the meeting.

International Year of Shelter for the Homeless 1987 (IYSH)

IYSH tells us that about a quarter of the world's people — 1,250 million human beings — do not have adequate shelter and that one hundred million people have no housing whatsoever. In Latin America, it is estimated that 20 million children and youth live and sleep in the streets while a quarter of the urban population in most African and Asian cities cannot afford even minimal housing.

Areas for action during and beyond IYSH

include, among others, the regularization of residents' tenure in slum and squatter settlements; the protection of spontaneous settlements against floods, landslides and other environmental and fire hazards; the availability of land and provision of housing loans to the poor on affordable terms; the promotion of effective participation of specific target groups in planning for housing and in its legislative and institutional implementation; and the provision of basic services and of low-cost building material.

Elderly

Dr. Celia B. Weisman, IFSW Representative and Chair of the NGO Committee on Aging at the United Nations in New York, urges Member Associations to

1. Continue to keep their countries aware of the plight of the elderly.
2. Provide technical assistance to governments by sending experts and supporting seminars and specialized work groups.
3. Promote research into the social, economic and health aspects of aging in individuals and populations.
4. Support training programmes for professional workers in gerontology and in education for aging to ensure that policies and services for the elderly are provided.

Health problems of the elderly, homelessness, the use and misuse of drugs and the particular problems of the older woman continue to be discussed at the U.N.

OTHER NEWS

A number of social workers from IFSW European Member Associations have been invited by the COUNCIL OF EUROPE to participate in a Meeting on Social Work Training and Human Rights in Strasbourg, 8-10 April, 1987.

Two new NGO groups have been started: one in New York, the NGO Working Group on the Family at which IFSW is represented by G. Winifred Kagwa, and the NGO Committee on Peace in Vienna where Monika Vyslouzil speaks for the Federation.

Women Groups within IFSW Member Associations might be interested in a list of women's international and regional environment and development organisations, including organisations which were not women-oriented at their inception but have now established women's programmes. Please write for a copy to the IFSW Secretariat in Geneva.

Position vacant

The Environment Liaison Centre (ELC), a global environment and development NGO network, is looking for an Executive Director for

its Nairobi Secretariat. Relevant experience: programme planning, fund raising, financial management, personnel/administration.

NGO networking and UN liaison experience desirable, fluent English essential, French/Spanish if possible.

Salary US\$25000-35000 per annum tax free.

Send CV plus 3 references and one page suitability statement to: Executive Director Recruitment ELC, P.O. Box 72461, Nairobi, Kenya.

Closing date: May 7, 1987.

CHILDSHOPE is a new NGO founded in April 1986 which will start its activities in 1987 to defend the rights and fulfil the needs of street children world-wide.

CHILDSHOPE intends to focus international concern into four areas of activity: research, programme support, communications and resource development. For further information contact Peter Tacon, Executive Director, P.O. Box 20433, Dag Hammarskjöld Center, New York, N.Y. 10017, USA.

"Action for Children" Vol. 1, No. 6, 1986

The next Paralympics will be held in 1988 in Seoul, Korea, shortly after the Olympics. A newsletter about preparations for the games is published by the Seoul Paralympics Organizing Committee, 168-9 Yeomri-dong, Mapo-gu, P.O. Box 121, Seoul, Korea.

The 1986 Nansen medal was awarded to the People of Canada in recognition of the major and sustained contribution made to the cause of refugees in their country and throughout the world, and presented in Ottawa on November 13, 1986.

The 1986 UNESCO Prize for Peace Education was awarded to the Brazilian sociologist and educator Paulo Freire for his 40-year efforts to provide literacy training and education for the poorest population groups in his own country as well as in Bolivia, Chile, the Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa and Tanzania. This prize, established in 1980, is funded by the Japanese Shipbuilding Industry Foundation and was awarded for the first time in 1981.

The Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme set a target of 399.3 million dollars for 1987 for its world-wide programmes. In terms of expenses, the main country programmes will take place in Pakistan, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Thailand, Iran, Honduras, Mexico, Costa Rica and the Philippines.

Trends and Strategies for Social Integration through popular participation and policies for the advancement of specific social groups

Statement on the Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes, submitted by the International Federation of Social Workers, a non-governmental organization in consultative status, category II, with the Economic and Social Council.

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

"The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) is composed of 49 national associations of social workers from the regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. It has been in category II since 1957.

The aims of IFSW include the development of social work as a fully recognized profession with agreed standards of practice and training, the establishment of national associations of social workers, where they do not already exist, to further the aim of professionalism; the support of national associations already in existence; the fostering of social workers' participation in social planning and the formulation of social policies; the presentation of the point of view of the profession at international level through relations with international organizations involved in the field of social welfare and social development; and participation in the planning, action and welfare programmes of such organisations.

Social workers, who are in direct contact with the daily lives and problems of people in many countries with vastly different circumstances, have emerged as realistic, resourceful, inventive problem solvers in the area of social ills and as agents for social change.

Social workers are constantly documenting unmet needs and detecting gaps in existing service provisions. Until provision is made to meet such needs and to provide relief for people affected by such gaps, action will have to be taken by the voluntary sector of the social services.

Evidence from experience points to the need for close co-operation between the statutory and voluntary sectors based on mutual respect, support and understanding as a *sine qua non* for all future developmental and other social welfare policies and programmes.

Human development and fulfilment require that individual differences in cultural, social and economic circumstances are catered for and respected. IFSW believes that developmental policies and

programmes must stress the importance of families and provide support for families through, for instance, allowances and facilities for housing, health services and education.

IFSW recognises that even the best policies and programmes should be subject to constant review and evaluation to ensure that they continue to keep their primary objectives in view; that any unintentional negative consequences they may have engendered are corrected; that new developments are taken into consideration; that optimal cost effectiveness and dynamism are maintained; and that there is respect at all stages for cultural traditions and differences and for the persons for whom the policies and programmes were devised regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, marital status, religion, political affiliation, language, socio-economic status and ability to contribute to society.

IFSW believes that a regular and comprehensive global review of social welfare policies and programmes is essential for social progress and development. During the past 19 years, since the convening of the International Conference of Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare, several global events of critical social significance have taken place. The forthcoming Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes will provide an excellent opportunity to obtain an integrated review of these events in the social development field and to indicate future directions. For this reason, IFSW strongly supports the holding of the Consultation and calls on Governments and the Secretary-General to provide strong support. IFSW further requests that, in line with the preceding international and regional intergovernmental meetings on this topic, the Consultation should be deemed to be the second international conference of ministers responsible for social welfare.

IFSW firmly believes that the most important aspect of social work is to uphold human dignity under all circumstances. Social welfare policies and programmes that do not achieve this may bring about material benefits but will fail in the most fundamental objectives of any endeavour geared to improving the condition of humanity."

In speaking to the paper, our UN Representative in Vienna, Monika Vyslouzil emphasised the role of women in development and the importance of support for families and reiterated the IFSW Presidents call for the UN to declare an international year of the family.