



# **IFSW**

# **Chronology**

# **1956-1974**

**Tom Johannesen**  
**Secretary General**  
**International Federation of Social Workers**  
**PO Box 6875, CH-3001 Bern, Switzerland**  
[global@ifsw.org](mailto:global@ifsw.org) [www.ifsw.org](http://www.ifsw.org)

Year		Page
<b>1956</b>	<b>Organisations in 12 countries form IFSW</b>	3
<b>1957</b>	<b>Social work ethics to be explored</b>	3
<b>1958</b>	<b>Publications in focus</b>	3
<b>1959</b>	<b>Consultative status with the UN approved</b>	4
<b>1960</b>	<b>Influencing social policy</b>	4
<b>1961</b>	<b>Concerns over the changes in ICSW</b>	4
<b>1962</b>	<b>Looking at community development</b>	5
<b>1963</b>	<b>Concerns over South Africa</b>	6
<b>1964</b>	<b>Expanding relations with international bodies</b>	6
<b>1965</b>	<b>Planning own conferences</b>	7
<b>1966</b>	<b>First European seminar</b>	8
<b>1967</b>	<b>First regional conference for Asia</b>	9
<b>1968</b>	<b>First World Conference</b>	9
<b>1969</b>	<b>Student revolt coming to social work</b>	10
<b>1970</b>	<b>South Africa suspended from membership</b>	10
<b>1971</b>	<b>Preparing a Permanent Secretariat</b>	12
<b>1972</b>	<b>First Non-European President</b>	12
<b>1973</b>	<b>Regional IFSW Offices in Focus</b>	13
<b>1974</b>	<b>Major Progress in Africa</b>	14

## **1956: Organisations in 12 countries form IFSW**

The International Conference of Social Work was held in Munich, Germany 5-10 August, 1956. It had been agreed in 1950 to form an International Federation of Social Workers, provided that at least 7 national organisations would join. In 1956, organisations in 12 countries (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and USA) had taken formal action to become affiliated to the new international body. The International Federation of Social Workers was formed August 9, 1956, and an Executive Committee was elected. It agreed to work on "finding definite ways and means for contact between national associations with the aim of raising the professional level of their members, and that it should represent the profession at the United Nations and maintain contact with international organizations that are socially oriented."

Ms. Marie-Louise Ginot from France was elected as the first President, a post she kept until 1962.

## **1957: Social work ethics to be explored**

Since 1956, IFSW had its first Secretary General, Donald V. Wilson, who worked for the International Society for the Welfare of Cripples in New York. During a world tour in 1957 he worked on expanding the number of member organisations. The Executive Committee Meeting in 1957 was held 15-16 August in Brunnen, Switzerland, arranged by the first Treasurer Hedda Fredenhagen. At the meeting a 13th member organisation was approved (The Association of Social Workers, Sweden). The President, Marie-Louise Ginot discussed possible cooperation with the International Council of Nurses during a visit to London. The Executive Committee decided to explore the question of obtaining consultative status with the United Nations. Jane Hoey, who later funded IFSW's Development Fund, represented USA at the meeting and undertook to explore the approaches to professional social work ethics in various countries.

## **1958: Publications in focus**

IFSW expanded its membership from 13 to 16 countries by admitting social worker organisations in Israel, Luxembourg and Pakistan, following an Executive Committee meeting in Paris in conjunction with the World Family Congress. A representative of the United Nations took part in the meeting to introduce the social service of the UN in Europe and outlining how IFSW could seek status as an NGO to the UN. It was decided to formally apply for consultative status with the UN. The IFSW Secretary General informed about this travels to a number of countries where he had linked with social workers: Argentina, Chile, Greece, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Uruguay (all on behalf of his organisation "International Society for the Welfare of Cripples"). Later the same year, a Council meeting (General Meeting) was held in Tokyo 4 December in conjunction with the 9th International Conference of Social Work "Mobilizing Resources for Social Needs". IFSW sponsored an open meeting on "The Role of the Professional Social Worker in Determining Needs and Mobilizing Resources". The Council meeting had 15 participants from 9 countries. A main focus during the meeting was potential new members, among them the social worker organisation in Belgian Congo as the first possible "African" member. The Council decided that IFSW should join the initiative taken by ICSW and IASSW to establish a journal called "International Social Work"

The IFSW Newsletter, called "The Social Worker" had its first edition in January 1958, "not intended to offer any extensive contribution in social welfare literature, but rather aim to provide a medium through which social workers may read about the work and problems of their counterparts in other countries, about international activities in the social welfare field and about developments concerning the profession". The first editor was Marios Raphael from Greece.

## **1959: Consultative status with the UN approved**

IFSW moved membership from 16 to 18 countries by admitting the Philippines and the National Association of the Union of South Africa. The latter was admitted on a provisional basis, asking that work should be undertaken to work with another South African organisation of "coloured" social workers, which was reported to not be very active.

23 April IFSW was granted consultative status by the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The Executive Committee meeting of IFSW, held in Strasbourg France in July 1959, decided to focus the UN work on the Social Commission and UNICEF, and to ask the National Association of Social Workers in the USA to carry out the new status functions in New York and the Swiss Association in Geneva.

The Executive Committee also discussed a proposal from Jane Hoey to involve the Federation more in two specific areas of common interest: Community Development and the Ethics of Social Work.

Another matter discussed was editorial policy for the two publications "The Social Worker" and the "International Social Work" Journal. While the first should be considered a "house organ" and include coverage of the Federation's and its member association's activities, the second should "publish articles of general professional interest on matters of philosophy, practice and methods."

## **1960: Influencing social policy**

The 10th World Social Work Conference were to take place in Rome in January 1961 with the theme "Social Work in a Changing World: Its Function and Responsibilities". IFSW had responsibility for a special session on "The Role of the Social Worker in Influencing Social Policy", and a questionnaire was sent to member organisations in preparation of this. A lot of effort was put into this during 1960, including a special committee meeting in Zurich in October.

The IFSW Executive Committee met in Copenhagen, Denmark 23-25 July. A lot of discussion took place in relation to national representation to the Council of Europe and the UN Social Commission, which was conceived as often lacking sufficient knowledge about social work and social policy. It was decided to try to influence governments to include social workers in the national delegations. Chile had been approved as member organisation no. 19, and while no further membership applications had been received, interest was reported from Burma, Cuba, Hong Kong, Japan, Portugal, Thailand and Venezuela.

The Executive Committee also prepared a meeting to be held in Rome in January 1961, focusing on Ethics, and hoping that this could lead to the development of an international Code of Ethics for social workers.

## **1961: Concerns over the changes in ICSW**

The IFSW Council (General Meeting) met in Rome January 12 with delegates from Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, South Africa, United Kingdom and the USA. Observers were present from Japan and Lebanon, while apologies had been received from Chile, Denmark, Luxembourg, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Sweden. The Philippine association had sent their President, Dr. Garina, to Rome as representative and Vice President candidate, but she died unexpectedly in Rome during the World Conference 3 days ahead of the Council meeting.

The Council also held an opening meeting on 'Professional Ethics' ahead of the business meeting, attended by more than 300.

It was reported at the Council that IFSW had cooperated in a UN Europe Seminar on Personnel and Industrial Social Work in September 1960.

During the 10<sup>th</sup> World Social Work Conference held in Rome in conjunction with the Council meeting, the special session arranged by IFSW on "The Role of the Social Worker in Influencing Social Policy" had been very successful with more than 100 participants.

The IFSW Secretary General Donald Wilson reported on contacts with social workers in Asia and focused on the growth of social worker organisations in several countries, including Japan, which was accepted as member organisation No. 20. The Japanese Association of Social Workers had nearly 1000 members, of which 90 % were men. Later in 1961, Costa Rica and Thailand (270 members) joined as members No. 21 and 22.

Marios Raphael from Greece resigned as editor of "The Social Worker", and Mrs. J. Small from Geneva took his place. The Swiss association would provide assistance in terms of publication and distribution. Donald Wilson also resigned as Secretary General and was replaced by Margaret E. Adams from the USA, Assistant Director of the National Association of Social Workers.

The Executive Committee met in Paris September 9-10. A representative of the International Association of Schools of Social Work was present. A lot of the time was dedicated to prepare for the International Social Work Conference to be held in Rio de Janeiro in 1962. A Program Committee meeting had been held in Oslo in August, attended by the IFSW President. It was reported that a Brazilian Association of Social Workers had existed for 14 years, composed of local trade unions. It is working on obtaining the necessary permission from the Ministry of Labour to join IFSW.

The Executive discussed at length a proposed name change of ICSW from International Conference of Social Work to International Council on Social Welfare. The change was intended to move beyond conference activities into more active involvement with the UN. While there was a majority skeptical to the name as a sign of moving away from a social work focus, Marie Louise Ginet was authorized to use her discretion at the next ICSW Executive Committee meeting.

A new formula for membership fees was approved, with 25.00 Swiss francs per year for associations with up to 100 members, 100.00 for associations with 101-1000 members and steps of 100.00 for each 1000 members up to a maximum of 20 000 members.

It was reported that a seminar had been held in the United Kingdom together with the United Nations on "Mental Health Aspects of Social Work" with 40 participants from 17 countries.

## **1962: Looking at community development**

The XI World Conference of Social Work was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 13 –20 August and titled “Rural and Urban Community Development” . IFSW also held its Executive Committee and Council meeting in Brazil. An open meeting was arranged by IFSW during the World Conference, focusing “The Contribution of Social Work Professional Associations in Community Development”, attended by approximately 300 persons. The event was based on questionnaires sent to all member associations, asking for views and experiences in relation to community development.

Litsa Alexandraki from Greece was elected as the new (and second) IFSW President, a position she held until 1968. She was President of the Greek Association of Social Workers and Deputy Chief of the Liaison Mission in Athens of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration. M. Bruce McKenzie from Canada was elected as Treasurer.

Panama joined IFSW as member No. 23, while India and Singapore both were invited to join. A discussion took place following a letter from the Association of Non-European Social Workers of South Africa, stating that the South African Association of Social Workers did not represent them. It was decided to investigate alternatives for offering the Non-European group affiliation with IFSW. It was also noted that few of the Latin American social worker associations had applied for IFSW membership because they already participated in the International Catholic Union for Social Service.

## **1963: Concerns over South Africa**

The Executive Committee met in Stuttgart, Germany 29 August – 1 September in conjunction with the International Conference of Social Work’s European Symposium 1 – 6 September. No new members were approved, but efforts were reported on Egypt, Finland, Haiti, New Zealand, Norway and Yugoslavia.

Discussions concerning the situation with regards to South Africa continued, and the member organisation in the country reported progress on liaising with the Association of Non-European Social Workers for participation in IFSW. However, the Executive Committee noted the need for further clarification, and asked the IFSW President to be personally responsible for the contact with South Africa.

The French member in the Executive had explored possibilities to establish official relations with UNESCO, and was authorised to continue contacts and set up a representation. The same development was noted with regards to the Council of Europe. On a parallel basis, links were explored with the Organization of American States.

The Executive had been asked by the United Nations to present comments on the Fourth International Survey of Training for Social Workers. In a statement to the UN the IFSW Secretary General Margaret E. Adams especially emphasised the need to develop practice based teaching material and to set high standards for admission to professional training.

## **1964: Expanding relations with international bodies**

The 12<sup>th</sup> International Social Work Conference was arranged in Athens 13 – 18 September and titled “Social Progress through Social Planning: The Role of Social Work”. IFSW had accepted special responsibility for a study group on “Social Aspects on Housing and Planning and the Contribution of Social Work.” The idea was to gather experts in the area and organise a 15 hour (!) session, of which the first five hours should be spent on identifying a general frame of reference, the next five to deal with presentations on different relevant projects and the last five to reach and formulate conclusions. For the Athens conference, an exhibit of publications of member associations was also planned.

The IFSW Executive Committee and Permanent Council (with 19 member associations present) also held their meetings in Athens. The Executive Committee meeting opened by a tribute to IFSW’s first President, Marie-Louise Ginet from France, who just had passed away. A Memorial Fund was set up in support of an African social work program under administration of the Institute of Social Services in France where Ms. Ginet had been Director. The Executive discussed at length the financial situation of IFSW and the need to obtain a significant increase in funding to ensure that the programs of the Federation could be supported.

Finland and New Zealand were approved as members no. 26 and 27, while India and Singapore previously had joined as no. 24 and 25. Pakistan had in the meantime fallen out of membership due to lack of communication. It was also reported that South Africa had set up a formal coordinating council to represent three social worker associations in IFSW. Contacts continued to encourage membership in Latin America, and also Iran and Norway were stimulated to join the Federation.

The cooperation with the United Nations was a main theme at the meetings, focusing on how IFSW could support the establishment of social work as a profession in Africa, how relations could be set up with UNESCO and WHO and how the development of a vibrant United Nations Social Welfare Program could be supported. With Danish support IFSW had also collected information from all National associations on children born out of wedlock and submitted it to the Social Commission of the UN. In another development, IFSW had acquired status as a cooperating organisation to the Organization of American States.

## **1965: Planning own conferences**

The Executive Committee met in London 31 July – 2 August. Miss Mary Windsor, who later were to become IFSW President (1976-1980) had prepared for the meeting, which was arranged at St. Bartolomew’s Hospital.

Since the last meeting, efforts had been made to increase communications with member organisations, and it was reported that IFSW had sent more than 400 letters the last year. The Executive Committee discussed the need for IFSW to establish its own conferences in the future and not only be part of ICSW’s conferences.

IFSW had been granted consultative status with UNESCO, and a first representative was named (Ms. A. de Laage, France, who also served as Vice President for Europe). The European members reported that there was interest in having a specific meeting of regional members in preparation of the World Conference in Washington, DC in 1966, and the Executive Committee approved this move, which in retrospect can be seen as the start of IFSW’s European region. The Danish association reported that work was in progress towards

a Definition of Social Work Practice. Finland and Sweden had agreed to contribute in collecting and systematizing material from member organisations.

There was concern on the lack of recognition in the UN of the specific contributions professional social workers could make to social welfare development, and there was an impression that the UN was more concerned with supporting welfare workers in Asia and Africa who had little or no training.

The IFSW President, Litsa Alexandraki had been present at the Executive Committee of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) in Zurich in July, and reported that 305 schools in 43 countries now were in membership. Closer cooperation had been discussed in order to receive information on social work in countries not yet in IFSW membership.

While agreement was reached in Munich 1956 that the Secretary General should be appointed from the USA, the Executive Committee decided to revisit this agreement and investigate costs of establishing a secretariat in Europe.

A survey had been made in relation to possible membership for Brazil, including which of two social worker organisations in the country would be eligible for IFSW membership. Colombia was approved as member no. 28. Contacts had been made with Portugal and Spain to consider membership. The Secretary General was asked to obtain more information about the special conditions in Rhodesia in terms both of eligibility for membership and educational standards.

## **1966: First European seminar**

The first ever IFSW regional seminar was arranged in Strasbourg, France 19 – 22 May with 24 representatives from European social worker organisations present (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and UK). The main aims of the seminar were to give delegates a chance to get to know social work in other countries and to study the work of the Council of Europe, to which IFSW was granted consultative status 16 June 1966. A comparative study of the profession in Europe was elaborated. Three special study groups looked during the seminar on (1) the contributions of social work as a profession to the development of social services and legislation (2) the contribution of social work to social policy and planning and (3) the different fields in which the contribution of social work is sought.

Further surveys were made to investigate the costs of establishing a secretariat for IFSW in Europe. The Secretary-General, Margaret E. Adams estimated that the running costs for a Secretariat in the USA would be about US\$ 20,000 if IFSW were to take all costs. Until now, the National Association of Social Workers in the USA had covered almost all costs. The IFSW total budget for 1965 was in comparison around 25,000 Swiss francs or 5,800 US\$ at the rate of exchange of the year.

In 1966, the 13<sup>th</sup> International Social Work Conference was arranged in Washington, DC with the theme “Urban Development: Implications for Social Welfare”. IFSW arranged a special one-day session called “Expansion of Social Welfare: Challenge and Opportunity for the Social Work Profession”. The Israeli association had compiled a comprehensive report,

covering a number of countries. IFSW arranged its Executive Committee Meeting in New York and the Council Meeting in Washington, DC. Delegates from 19 countries took part in the Council Meeting.

Nelson C. Jackson from the USA was elected new Secretary General, and was the third to hold this position. He was Assistant Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers, and had held a number of leadership positions in social welfare in the USA, among them the National Urban League, a community service and civil rights group established in 1910. He was to keep this position until 1972.

## **1967: First regional conference for Asia**

IFSW arranged its first ever Regional Conference for Asia in Bangkok, Thailand 6–10 November with the theme “Action Programmes of Social Work Organizations in Meeting Present and Emerging Social Welfare Problems in Changing Asia”. The conference was attended by 33 social worker delegates from 11 countries in addition to 10 IFSW Executive Committee Officers and Members, representatives from the UN, ILO, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP and the Burmese and Chinese Embassies and a number of representatives of Thai ministries and organisations. The Deputy prime Minister, H.R.H. Krommun Narathip Bongsprabandh opened the conference and said that “The question to which social workers should address themselves is how best to prepare the community and the people for new attitudes, values, modern practices and patterns of relationship and behaviour”. The King and Queen of Thailand also received the IFSW delegates. The member organisations present had prepared a country paper highlighting social welfare problems that deserve the highest priority. Among the challenges mentioned were Vastness of population; low standard of living; increasing population; limited resources to social services; lack of clarity of objectives of social welfare services; limited facilities for social work training; uncoordinated social welfare administration between state and local government; lack of national research; limited coordination between government and voluntary sectors; urbanisation; emerging social problems in different age categories.

The Executive Committee meeting was also held in Bangkok. A proposal by Jane Hoey to merge IFSW, IASSW and ICSW led to intense discussion and it was finally general consensus to rather build a stronger IFSW before mergers were considered. From the USA it was reported that a person had been named to represent IFSW at UNICEF. The Hong Kong Social Workers Association (with 500 members) was approved as IFSW member no. 33, while Austria, Ireland, Norway and Rhodesia had joined as members No. 29-32 since the last Executive Committee Meeting.

## **1968: First World Conference**

IFSW's first international symposium (World Conference) was held in Otaniemi near Helsinki, Finland from 12-14 August with the theme “Social Work and Human Rights”, attended by 50 social workers from 18 countries (Argentina, Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Norway, Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and USA). The theme had been chosen to link up with the UN International Year of Human Rights and also related to ICSW's World Conference theme “Social Welfare and Human Rights”. Käthe Rawiel, IFSW's new President, noted that “the Symposium marked an important stage in the development of IFSW meetings as it provided

an international forum for the discussion of basic questions deeply related to the practice of social work. Social workers who are confronted with a great variety of problems concerning the individual, the family, the community and the nation must focus attention on opportunities of greater professional interaction, as well as they must try to achieve greater professional solidarity through discussions in which they exchange ideas and experiences on mutual problems”.

The closing session at the symposium agreed on a resolution on Human Rights, calling member associations and individual social workers worldwide to oppose all discrimination and denial of human rights based upon political, racial, ethnic, religious or other differences.

The Executive Committee meeting was held in Stockholm, Sweden 7 –8 August and the Permanent Council (General Meeting) in Helsinki 9-11 August. Käthe Rawiel from Germany was elected as IFSW’s third President, a post she were to keep until 1972. She worked as Executive Secretary at the Council of Social Agencies in Berlin.

In terms of membership, IFSW expanded to 38 member organisations with Argentina, Bermuda, Ecuador, Kenya, Mexico, and Spain joining as members No. 34-39. (Pakistan had been suspended in 1964, which explains the discrepancy in the figures).

## **1969: Student revolt coming to social work**

The Executive Committee Meeting was held in Bern, Switzerland 29-31 July, very close to what in 1999 became the IFSW Secretariat’s new permanent site. The meeting opened by noting IFSW officials who had passed away since the last meeting, among them Jane Hoey from USA, who left US\$ 25,000.00 to IFSW which became the basis of the Jane Hoey Development Fund, which is still in operation. Jane Hoey’s family contested her will for a while, and IFSW was prepared to go to court to defend the heritage, but at the end the donation was approved by the family.

In 1969, a system of annual reporting from member organisations was introduced, with organisations asked to report not only to IFSW but also to send copies to all the other members. A too ambitious project to collect social work terminology and present it in different languages was put on ice. The Executive Committee asked the Secretary General to work on drafting By-Laws for the Federation, as such did not exist and the present Constitution was a mixture of both. Sweden was asked to work with the other Scandinavian countries to present a plan for social work involvement in Biafra, a part of Nigeria where a separatist civil war was fought at the time with many casualties. There were reports of interest in membership from Algeria, Czechoslovakia, Morocco and New Guinea.

The late 1960’s student revolt also set its marks on IFSW. The President reported that she had been asked by social work students and young social workers what IFSW was doing to change a sick society, but also if they would be permitted to attend IFSW meetings. Both the American and German member organisations reported that students threatened to take over their national meetings. In the USA, a group of students took the podium at the opening of the National Assembly and would not let the leadership open the meeting. NASW had called in police to provide security. The students described the Association as “marshmallows”. The German association was also threatened by disruption of their meeting, but representatives sat

down together with the students ahead of the meeting and formulated a common resolution to the government about the students' concerns on changes in social work education.

## **1970: South Africa suspended from membership**

The Second World Conference of IFSW was held in Manila, the Philippines 24 –29 August, titled “Social Work Strategies and the Professional Associations in the ‘70s”. 344 participants were registered, among them 71 from abroad. Member organisations had been asked to prepare country papers in advance describing their national social and economic situation, the goals of the social work profession and strategies relevant to national needs. The reports provide a fascinating outlook on the perspectives for social work at the time.

Among the speakers were Whitney M. Young, President of NASW, USA and a prominent leader of the civil rights movement in the USA in the early 1960's. He talked in his speech about the world being in turmoil, and how social workers often had been “part and parcel of the apparatus used to insure domination over peoples our societies have labelled inferior. In situations crying for skilled surgery, we have too often been nurses wielding band aids and dispensing cough syrup; soothing, not healing, the wounds delivered by callous and repressive societies; and seeming in too many instances to accept as our role that of lessening the sufferings of the poor and despised, without materially altering their condition.”

In her report to the Permanent Council, the President Käthe Rawiel reflected social work becoming more political and wrote: That leads us again to the question, what is professional social work? The goals of social work? What are they? How are they determined? Some of our young colleagues are very impatient in finding an answer to that question, they are searching for it in the political field while they blame the “Establishment” for misusing social work for paternalistic and imperialistic goals. The trend to overemphasize the political content of social work seems to me not only dangerous but it seems to me also another urgent implication for the need of a new definition”.

In another part of her report she strongly recommended member organisations to form committees on international relations, and that regional conferences both in Asia and Europe had not materialized due to insufficient communication and finances.

The International Association of Schools of Social Work held their 15<sup>th</sup> International Congress in Manila immediately following IFSW's conference.

At the meeting of the Permanent Council (General Meeting), 32 representatives from 18 countries participated. Following a comprehensive report from the President, who had visited the country, the meeting decided to suspend the South African member organisation from membership for a two year period and send a letter to the South African government and the member association indicating that it is expected that a liaison committee for IFSW membership is established to represent South African social workers and that the committee should be composed of all racial groups. It had been noted in the President's report that while the leaders of the member association in South Africa did not object to forming a multiracial liaison committee; this could not be done without the permission of the government. If the requested changes should not occur for the Permanent Council meeting in 1972, the South

African member organisation will be expelled. Similar questions were raised on Rhodesia's membership, but no action was taken due to lack of reporting from the country.

Vietnam and Jamaica joined IFSW membership, which thereby increased to 40 countries. It was reported that there had been organisational changes in the Netherlands, where one national association had been formed, and that the United Kingdom had united 8 national associations into the British Association of Social Workers. Also Argentina had formed a national Federation, which took over IFSW membership from the former member representing only Buenos Aires.

Work was in progress to ensure that the bequest of 25,000.00 US\$ from Jane Hoey could be received. It had been stated in her bequest that \$25,000 shall be given to the following corporations..., and the amount for IFSW was withheld from the lawyer since IFSW at present was not formally a corporation.

## **1971: Preparing a Permanent Secretariat**

The Executive Committee met in Edinburgh, Scotland July 20-21. The only non-European member present was the Secretary General from the USA. The bequest from Jane Hoey had still not been received, and it was decided to bring the case to court if necessary. One of the main topics at the Executive Committee meeting was a report on establishing a Permanent IFSW Secretariat. The USA and Switzerland were the two most relevant alternatives, and both were seen to have advantages. The Committee decided to go for a Permanent Secretariat as soon as possible after the General Meeting in 1972, pointing at Switzerland as the most viable alternative. USA supported this, and noted that after having been the site of the Secretariat, though never seen as permanent, for 10 years, it could be time to move to another country. It was mentioned that it is hard to keep an idea of domination of the USA from the activities of IFSW, even if the operations had been independent.

South Africa had written a letter to all IFSW member organisations protesting its suspension in 1970. The President was asked to write to South Africa again and recommend that a multiracial liaison committee be established.

The Second European Regional Seminar was hosted by the British Association of Social Workers and held in Edinburgh July 21 and 22, with the theme "Social Policy: Its Formulation and Practical Application by Professional Social Workers". Among the main presenters were Megan Browne, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Social Administration at the University of Edinburgh and Morag Faulds, Director of Social Work in the Inverness County Council. At least 56 participants from 13 countries took part. It is interesting to note that the Regional Conferences at the time were seen as preparatory for the World Conferences, as pointed out by the IFSW President Käthe Rawiel in her inaugural address.

## **1972: First Non-European President**

The General Meeting was held in Noordwijkerhout, The Netherlands August 6-8. 24 national organisations were present with 68 representatives. The Latin American region was expanded to also include the Caribbean after Jamaica raised the question of where they fitted in the regional set-up. Uganda and Korea (South) were accepted as members no. 42 and 43, while Pakistan was reinstated in membership again after having been suspended in 1964 due to lack

of communication. Uganda's membership was a result of a seven-week trip taken by the Secretary General Nelson Jackson in April and May 1972 to seek to activate African social work links to IFSW. He visited Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Egypt and wrote a comprehensive report.

Much of the time at the General Meeting was used to discuss the membership situation for South Africa. The General meeting in 1970 had indicated that South Africa would be expelled if there was not established a liaison committee that represented both black, coloured and white social workers. A letter had been received in June 1972 with an application for changed South African membership in IFSW with an organisation called the Coordinating Agency for the Professional Associations of Social Workers in South Africa. The new agency had sent six representatives to the Netherlands, three from the white associations, two from the black (Bantu) and one from the coloured. All the South African associations present strongly recommended that the new agency was accepted. Sweden was worried about the fact that UNESCO had suspended IFSW as an NGO affiliate due to the links with South Africa. Norway together with one delegate from the United Kingdom and one delegate from Ireland voted in favour of excluding South Africa due to apartheid. At the end, it was accepted with 18 to 1 vote that the Coordinating Agency for the Professional Associations of Social Workers in South Africa be accepted provisionally. A detailed set of regulations on how the agency should function in order to fulfill a multiracial approach was set up.

Another main theme at the General Meeting was the establishment of a Permanent Secretariat. It was approved to set up a secretariat with paid staff as soon as possible, and a budget of 85,000.00 Swiss francs was adopted.

Teresita Silva from the Philippines was elected as new President, a post she were to keep until 1976. For the first time, IFSW had a non-European President. As new Secretary General was elected Catherine Chuard from Switzerland, the fourth to keep this position. She was at the Executive Committee meeting in the Hague the day following the General Meeting appointed as Executive Secretary as well and became as such the first paid staff person in the Federation. The new Permanent Secretariat were to be established in Basel, Switzerland and thereby moved from New York where it had been located since 1956 on a temporary basis.

IFSW's second Asia and Pacific Regional Seminar was held in Hong Kong July 31 – August 3 with 124 participants from 7 countries, the majority from the host country. Four plenary session were presented: "The Asian Concept of Social Work, Values and Philosophy", "Social Work in Asian Cities: Needs and Priorities, Methods and Practice", "Problems of National Associations in Achieving Recognition and Status", and "Potential and Actual Regional Co-operation in Social Work". The speaker on the Asian Concept of Social Work, Thomas C. Y. Lee, Deputy Director of Social Welfare, Hong Kong noted that 4 categories of values of importance to social work were 1) Belief in personal worth, 2) Belief in self-determination, 3) Belief in personality development, and 4) Belief in social responsibility. He went on to discuss how these four values applied to an Asian context, and noted in his conclusion that while these values are shared and cherished by social workers in the East, their applications may vary from culture to culture and that there was a need for more cross-cultural studies to give social workers more definitive knowledge in this particular field.

## **1973: Regional IFSW Offices in Focus**

The Executive Committee Meeting was arranged in Granada, Spain July 1-3. The new Secretary General Catherine Chuard reported about the establishment of the new Permanent Secretariat in Basel, Switzerland and the work that she and her Secretary, Mrs. Bieri, had taken on. She focused on the difficulties faced due to very limited financial resources and the increasing number of requests coming in. Catherine Chuard considered the work IFSW was confronted with as a three phase operation: 1) To establish a solid, well working secretariat, 2) To develop contacts with other organisations and provide a certain number of concrete services to membership and 3) To design concrete projects with appropriate funding, to make social work much better known in the public opinion and to have more influence in social work training and research.

The new President, Teresita Silva, expressed strong support for aiming at setting up regional IFSW offices of a very simple nature with a secretary-typist assisting the regional Vice President. Africa had succeeded in doing this in Kenya with funding from the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. The same foundation also provided support towards the World Conference scheduled for Nairobi in 1974.

The legacy from Jane Hoey was finally received in 1973 with the amount of 24,630.60 US Dollars, and at the end of the year it stood at 66,045.40 Swiss Francs. The exchange rate of the US Dollar was at an historical low in 1973, and the delay in transferring the amount had led to a considerable loss.

## **1974: Major Progress in Africa**

The Third World Conference of IFSW was held in Nairobi, Kenya 8 -13 July with nearly 600 participants including representatives of 19 African countries and the theme “The Changing Role of Social Workers in a Changing Society”. The sub-themes were ‘The Philosophical Concepts of Social Workers’, “The Goals, Objectives and Function of Social Work’, and “The Means to Achieve the Goals”. A number of case studies had been collected and an advanced model of working groups and open groups set up to facilitate the discussions. This included a division between ‘old’ and ‘new’ countries, with the established, industrialized countries categorized as old and the developing countries as new. This had the rather strange consequence that Egypt was considered a “new” country, while it is known throughout the world as ‘the Cradle of Civilization”.

The General Meeting was also held in Nairobi and gathered delegates from 20 member organizations. The Vice President for Africa, Martha Menya, reported that a first IFSW Pan-African Social Work Conference had been arranged in Nairobi between 25 February and 2 March, 1974 with more than 400 participants from Kenya and 30 from other African countries. She expected increased African interest in IFSW membership as a consequence of this event.

A record number of 13 new national organizations were approved for membership: Barbados, Dominica, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Surinam, and Venezuela. With these additions, IFSW had member organizations in 56 countries.

South Africa continued to be of concern, but it was decided to uphold the provisional membership and review it annually. Especially the British association of Social Workers

opposed further membership arrangements. Entry restrictions to Kenya for delegates from Rhodesia had made it impossible for anybody to come to Nairobi, but it was reported that the member organization had 49 members, of which 26 were black, one coloured and 22 white. The Chairman was white and the Vice-Chairman black.

The General Meeting also prepared for the 1975 UN Year of Women, and urged all member organisations to report back on discrimination against women in their countries.

The North American region argued for IFSW to develop policy statements on key social issues and to improve its programming and definition of tasks to be worked on. The General Meeting, listing tasks for the global IFSW, for the regional Vice-Presidents and for National associations, adopted a Work Programme for 1974-76. Chauncey Alexander, later to become IFSW President, was elected as new Treasurer.

Europe reported that an IFSW Liaison Committee by the 9 countries belonging to the European Union had been formed.

It was approved to hold the 1976 World Conference in Mexico.