



PRESS RELEASE CONCERNING WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY 2009

The general theme for the World Social Work Day 2009 is

"Social Work and Social Development: The Agenda".

In focus for the World Conference 2010 in Hong Kong is how we can build a social work and social development agenda for the upcoming decade that face the challenges the global society is confronted with and that makes sure that humanity can thrive despite the troubled times.

Key words for the conference are therefore:

Together we build the agenda
Together we face the challenges
Together we thrive

We live in troubled times with a global financial crisis unfolding and with serious food shortages in many parts of the developing world. Sustainability concerns are also becoming more pressing as we experience how environmental changes affect the daily and future life of people in a number of areas.

We all need to find new ways to cope with this. We as social workers believe it is crucial that societies ensure that the most vulnerable members of the community are in focus in this situation. We need to act in solidarity to make sure that resources are available for all.

The theme for the World Social Work Day reflects the global preparations for the major social work and social development event taking place in Hong Kong in June 2010 when thousands of professionals in the field from all over the world are expected to gather for a World Conference on Social work and Social Development. The conference is a joint cooperation between the international Association of Schools of Social Work, the International Council on Social Welfare and the International Federation of Social Workers with 8 professional Hong Kong partners.

Social Work has made and continues to make a significant contribution to the response to economic and social changes and to the support of vulnerable people and communities. Social work promotes the social welfare of individuals, groups and communities, facilitates social cohesion in periods of change and supports and protects the vulnerable members of the community, working in partnership with service users, consumers, communities and other professions.

Social workers assist individuals, families and communities who are disadvantaged to address challenges and positively impact changes in their lives. These are times of major social upheaval in all communities. The social work profession has always been flexible in the face of social change, says IFSW President David N Jones. Social workers make an essential contribution to the promotion of social cohesion, both through preventive work and their response to social problems. Social work is therefore an investment in the current and future welfare of our communities.

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) has since its original establishment in 1928 been the representative body of professional social workers globally. Today, IFSW represents social work associations in 90 countries with a total membership of more than 740 000 social workers. Special consultative status has been granted by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In addition, IFSW is working with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and others.

For more information and to read about activities around the world, visit: www.ifsw.org.