

Joint statement of the Presidents of International Association of the Schools of Social Work and International Council on Social Welfare

The tripartite meeting of partners, International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), was convened in Paris on September 5th of this year to finalize the selection of the host city for the 2020 Joint World Conference on Social Work, Education and Social Development.

Two cities were proposed to host the 2020 Joint World Conference, Calgary (Canada) and Rimini (Italy). At the tripartite meeting, representatives of the three organizations were not able to arrive at a consensus on the choice of the host city. The representatives of the IASSW and ICSW favored Rimini and the representative of IFSW strongly favored Calgary. The representatives from IFSW announced that IFSW had already, unilaterally, without consulting the other partners, signed a contract with the city of Calgary to hold the World Conference in 2020. The ICSW and IASSW found that the choice of Calgary did not follow established legal practice, which stipulates that World Conferences must be held in a city or country that is a member of all three partner organizations. Canada for the past several years has not been a member of ICSW.

Since Calgary does not satisfy all the established criteria for hosting a World Conference, the presidents of the two organizations made a decision to hold the 2020 Joint World Conference in Rimini. Both ICSW and IASSW very much regret the insistence of the IFSW to host a conference in Calgary, which does not meet the established criteria for hosting a Joint World Conference. With the IFSW decision, ICSW cannot be an official participant in a conference held in Calgary as it has no members in that country. IASSW and ICSW will continue their cooperation in organizing a successful Joint World Conference in Rimini.

We believe that this division among the partner organizations is indeed regrettable and we hope that unity can be restored as soon as possible. Our tripartite partnership has a long history. Our three organizations—IASSW, ICSW and IFSW grew from the same root and we will celebrate the first Conference on Social Work convened in Paris in 1928 with a 90th anniversary in Dublin next year. The interaction of the three partners at all levels has been synergetic, complimentary and mutually beneficial for many years. Besides our traditional cooperation on the convening of Joint World Conferences, we have worked together at the UN level and in the publication of the *International Social Work Journal* and in many regional ventures. We believe that unity based on shared values and mutual respect has proved to be invaluable for our activities, for our members.

The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development has also been one of our joint ventures since its inception. It benefited from the insights of the members of all partner organizations, and because of our cooperation we were able to establish global observatories and to prepare reports on the priority themes, which were issued at the Joint World Conferences in Melbourne and in Seoul. We intend to continue working together on a follow-up to the Global Agenda when it expires in 2020, and we will spare no efforts to do that in the atmosphere of competence, cordiality and mutual respect.

Signed: Annamaria Campanini

President, (IASSW)



Signed: Eva Holmberg-Herrström

President, (ICSW)

