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International Council on Social Welfare

February 2021

Working Together for a Better ICSW



***Professor Antonio López Peláez,
Executive Director of ICSW and Professor of Social Work
and Social Services at the National Distance Education
University (UNED) (Spain)***

Dear ICSW members, friends, and interested readers,

Welcome to the February 2021 issue of our newsletter. After 90 years of history, the ICSW continues to contribute to building a better world; a shared social welfare for all people across the planet. That is why we are an international organization with a key objective: improving social protection and welfare. And that is why we work collectively to address the various dimensions of social development and seek the best strategies to strengthen it.

We are doing so in very difficult times in which the COVID-19 pandemic is accentuating pre-existing inequalities between countries and inequalities within countries.

Challenges such as digital inclusion, the epidemic of unwanted loneliness, new forms of poverty, or the environmental crisis are being redefined in this situation of confinement. In this context, a new association has registered as a member of the ICSW, the SESC SP – Social Service of Commerce São Paulo. We warmly welcome them and firmly believe that they will be able to contribute to the future of ICSW in a significant way.

In this month of February, we have contributed to the public debate on social welfare and inclusion. We have organized two side events during the 59th session of the Commission for Social Development at the UN: “Building Roofs and Raising Floors Through Inclusive Digital Technologies and A Global Fund for Social Protection” co-sponsored by the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors (GCSPF), Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP), and the ICSW, and “Social Inclusion Through Digital Inclusion in the Context of Sustainable Development: Trends and Challenges” coordinated by Sergei Zelenev, ICSW special representative at UN, and sponsored by Korea National Council on Social Welfare (KNCSW) and the National Distance Education University (UNED). This year we will strongly and actively focus on knowledge creation, dissemination and policy dialogue.

With this issue, we are bringing a new dynamic to the ICSW Newsletter. Our colleagues from

each region will have the opportunity to publish their contributions, concerns, and good practices in one issue of the newsletter per year. And in this February issue, I would like to thank our colleagues from the European region for their contributions to the debate and the improvement of social welfare. And I would also like to thank our colleague Driss Guerraoui for his contribution related to digital rights.

We encourage all our members to participate in this new initiative. That is why our special representatives to the UN—Sergei Zelenev in New York and René Schegg in Geneva—are open and available for any proposal from our members. Likewise, the members of the Management Committee will be at your disposal.

Gratitude and remembrance are also called for. In that regard, I would like to thank all the past Presidents and Executive Directors for their outstanding work in the ICSW for more than 90 years, as well all those who have collaborated in the global office. For a worldwide organization such as the ICSW, the global coordination of its activities is always an honor, and at the same time a challenge. Over these last 20 years, we have been fortunate to have Roselyn Nakirya accompany us. I would like to thank her for her brilliant work for ICSW.

As of March 1, 2021, our Global Officer function will be performed by the KNSW staff member Ms. Yunji Kwon, to whom I wish every success in her new assignment. Her contact details are on the website. In these times of change, as in all organizations, the best way to overcome challenges is to work as a team. And that is why I am once again at everyone's disposal in this new chapter of the ICSW.

Take care of yourselves.

Make the Economy work towards Wellbeing for All – within ecological limits



Ronald Wiman - Member and Rapporteur of the Finnish Delegation to the UN CSocD 59th Session
President ICSW European Region
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“Wellbeing for all” was the ultimate goal of the first World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995. The neoliberal “Growth First” -era of the 1980 had shown that economic growth alone did not result in human development, that is: in increasing wellbeing for all people. Economic growth boosted by globalization has helped hundreds of millions to escape poverty. But growth alone did not: Social Policies, including the global Millennium Development Goals, facilitated the process by focusing policies and programmes to

poverty eradication – or at least poverty alleviation. But many were left behind. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have widened the perspective to address the three dimensions of sustainable development: the

economic, social and environmental policies – in this order.

The dimensions of sustainable development should be implemented in the right order: people first, environment then and economy as an instrument and ‘servant’. Furthermore, the dimensions are not that well connected in practice. Each tends to be handled by different Ministries. And the fourth dimension is often forgotten: it was originally the first one, the ethical one: *The Future We Want for All*-report¹ was based on three fundamental *ethical* principles: Human Rights, Equality, Sustainability. Agenda 2030 is a value-based, aspirational agenda, an agenda of equity within and between generations.

Economics tends to remain the *lingua franca*, the common language, of development talk and economic indicators the ‘gold standard’ for measuring development success. Social Policy and Environmental Policies have not always found an even ground in the dialogue. The recent new multidimensional conceptualizations of wellbeing may help connect the dots. It is necessary to look beyond economy and growth.

While economic growth is often, particularly in low-income contexts, a necessary condition to improvements in people’s wellbeing, it is not a sufficient condition. Social Policy is needed to make economy work for all people. Expenditure to sectors that directly strive for wellbeing (such as e.g. Social Protection) are often counted only as a cost factor from which to cut during economic downturn. Yes, Social Protection has a

price tag, but it is also an economically viable investment in human and social capital with a considerable rate of return in the long run.

Wellbeing for all as goal of the EU

The Treaty of European Union, article 3 states: “The Union aims to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its people”. It has been difficult to concretize the wellbeing goal in policy dialogues and practices.

The Wellbeing Economy – approach aims at building a bridge over the canyon between economic, social and environmental policies through showing the multiple two-way interrelationships between these domains. A balanced, integrated approach has the potential to create a virtuous cycle of development.

During its EU Presidency in 2019 Finland introduced the Economy of Wellbeing concept onto the EU agenda. The aim was to stimulate an open European debate on the Economy of Wellbeing and improve policy-level understanding of the fact that *wellbeing is a prerequisite for economic growth and for social and economic stability; on the other hand, economic growth also creates more opportunities to improve wellbeing of the population.*² The resulting Council Conclusions called for inclusion of the EoW horizontal approach across all sectors.³

The value and services of the ecosystem find their way to this picture because, in the long run, without ecological sustainability neither economy nor wellbeing will last. We need a socially equitable, environmentally sustainable,

¹

https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Post_2015_UNT_Report.pdf

² Finland’s EU Presidency Themes

<https://stm.fi/en/finlands-presidency-2019>

³ Council Conclusions

<https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13432-2019-INIT/en/pdf>

and economically feasible just transition to a more sustainable development path.

Is Wellbeing Economy relevant in other contexts?

This discussion has predominantly been going on between the high-income countries. With the aim of widening the discussion into other contexts, Finland arranged a Virtual Side Event at the UN Commission for Social Development (CSocD)

59th session in February 2021. The guest Panelists were Dr. Sania Nishtar, Federal Minister, Special Assistant on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Lefhoko Kesamang, Senior Social Welfare Officer from the Department of Social Affairs, African Union Commission (AUC), Ms. Amanda Janoo, Knowledge & Policy Lead, Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll), Ms. Jutta Urpilainen, Commissioner for international Partnerships, European Commission, and as Moderator Mr. Veli-Mikko Niemi, Director General, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland. ⁴

In the discussion it emerged that the multidimensional concept of wellbeing is a recognized development goal endorsed by the partners. It has facilitated the adoption of a more holistic and multisectoral approach to socio-economic development. The outcomes have not necessarily been called as Wellbeing Economy but the approaches are very similar. Very briefly, core messages were as follows:

- In Pakistan, the *Ehsaas programme*⁵

⁴ Video of the Panel and the Report of the Side Event I available at socialprotection.org and at the UN website

⁵ <https://www.pass.gov.pk/Detailfb86a9aa-0f81-4832-93af-7d19a8eff305>

integrates and coordinates the efforts of 34 ministries to produce better wellbeing outcomes to millions of people. Development of appropriate Social Protection systems needs leadership nationally and globally.

- In the African Union, the Pan-African domestication of the Agenda 2030, "*Agenda 2063- The Africa We Want*" ⁶ (2015) is supplemented by the "AU Social Agenda 2063" endorsed in 2019. It is an innovative multisectoral agenda based on the understanding that neither economic development alone nor the social sector alone can create social wellbeing for all. A coordinated Whole-of-Government -approach that includes social investments is needed.

- In the global NGO sector, *the WEAll*, *the Wellbeing Economy Alliance*⁷ is a global collaboration platform of about 200 organizations aiming at transforming *the economic system to make it serve better people and the planet*.

- *The EU and Finnish Government representatives* called for inclusion of social goals and values, social and gender equality, in all policies.

Putting people at the center of sustainable development

"Human beings are at the center of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with

⁶ Agenda 2063: the Africa We Want" <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>

⁷ <https://wellbeingeconomy.org/about>

nature".⁸ So reads the first paragraph of *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* of 1992.

The Wellbeing Economy -approach is a holistic and multisectoral policy orientation and governance approach that puts people and their wellbeing at the center of development goals as beneficiaries and as agents of action – 'in harmony with nature'. We need comprehensive social policies to guide a fair transition towards better wellbeing for all -with the understanding that "there is no Planet B".⁹ Thus, while setting material dimension goals, we must ask first: how much is enough?

P.S. Finland joined the Alliance Government Network (WEGo) in December 2020. The WEGo is the network of Governmental members in the Alliance. It includes Iceland, Scotland, New Zealand and Wales and now also Finland. ICSW Finnish Member SOSTE,¹⁰ Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health, has been member in the WEAll since 2019. SOSTE actually introduced the Economy of Wellbeing concept and approach to the Finnish Government a few years ago.¹¹

⁸ The Rio Declaration, 1992
https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_CONF.151_26_Vol.I_Declaration.pdf

⁹ UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon at People's Climate March held in New York City, 2014

The Recovery and Resilience Facility of the European Union



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For a year now, the Corona pandemic has kept the world on tenterhooks.

In the beginning the EU and its member states did not find common solutions on common problems: Borders were closed; the leaders were focused on their national problems. Fortunately, they quickly turned their attention back to the community within the EU. The heads of states and governments of the EU member states met in July 2020 to discuss the finances for the years to come and they also discussed the "Recovery and Resilience Facility" (RRF). The RRF is providing loans and grants totaling EUR 672.5 billion to support reforms and investments by EU member states. This is linked to the goals of making Europe's economy and society more sustainable and resilient to crises, and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of environmental as well as digital change.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/09/477962-feature-no-plan-b-climate-action-there-no-planet-b-says-un-chief>

¹⁰ <https://www.soste.fi/soste-in-english/>

¹¹ [Wellbeing economy as cornerstone of future of Europe - SOSTE](#)

To get the money, the 27 members will need to prepare national recovery and resilience plans that will focus on the green transition, digital transformation, economic cohesion and competitiveness, as well as on social and territorial cohesion, all while respecting the rule of law and the EU's fundamental values. The deadline for submission of the Recovery and Resilience plans is 30 April 2021.

At the moment there are only drafts of the national plans. But these drafts show how different they will be: In Germany the focus is on digitalization and green mobility and housing, in Spain and Italy social services are important parts of the drafts. We will continue to keep an eye on the plans and how effective the implementation will be.

You can find more information on the website of the **EU-Commission**:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en

Quo Vadis? Civil Society in the time of the "great reset".



Vadim

Moldovan, PhD NGO Project Casa Mare (Rep. of Moldova) (in association with the National Association of Social Workers in Moldova, VRC Moldova, and Ghiocel Moldova. Director, Master's of Social Work Program, Free International University in Moldova. Professor of Social Work, York College of the City University of New York Fulbright Scholar 2014-2015, 2018-2019

Upholding dignity of all...is a paramount driver of our activities.

(ICSW: Vision) The reduction of hardship and vulnerability, especially amongst disadvantaged sectors of the population is the priority concern of ICSW. Representing tens of thousands of community organizations working directly with people facing poverty and serious deprivation, our network helps vulnerable groups to cope with risks and challenges of life. As a contemporary umbrella organization ICSW works to empower its members to participate fully in society as responsible citizens, with a greater civic voice and capacity to achieve meaningful results.)

World peace and prosperity is a lofty humanistic aspiration that is ever elusive and remains a mirage to this day. The history of mankind is scarred by incessant calamities – wars, famines, and plagues. Relative socio-economic stability is a luxury that is occasionally enjoyed in some

regions of world, for a period of time, e.g., in Western Europe and North America since the WWII.

Presently, however, the West is sharing a disaster with the rest of the world. Human civilization, as we knew it in its manifold manifestations, was paused, as socialization, employment, entertainment, education, and human rights were suspended through lockdowns, social distancing, and digital simulation. A full year into the “pandemic”, a gradual relief from restrictions and return to normality was expected. Instead, in many regions of the world social control is tightening despite a decrease in infections, hospitalizations, and death rates. The hope for return to normal life is being supplanted by the concepts of a “new normal” and the “great reset”.

The emerging world is being ushered in through governmental fiat with no input from the population. “Shelter-in-place”, curfew, and lockdowns are wartime emergency measures. Ordinarily, the population would consent to such measures because people would have a direct evidence of the calamity. This time around, people are being frightened into submission to wartime regulations mostly through the media. We are bombarded by large numbers with many zeros on TV and computer screens. The appropriately chosen backgrounds and music add to the sense of impending doom. The draconian restrictions on the world population are driven by the epidemiological necessity, or so we are repeatedly told by the state and medical establishment through mass media. The shape and character of the new normalcy are opaque, but we are beginning to discern its central features:

- The increasing power of the state to

surveil, control, and coerce the population

- The accelerating replacement of human-to-human interactions by electronic simulations (in education, employment, and socialization)
- The continuing shift in economic power in favor of global corporate giants
- The ongoing information wars, systematic disinformation, secrecy, and censorship
- The growing influence of the medical establishment
- The unilateral renegotiation of the compact between the state and the people with the diminution of human rights (e.g., employment, socialization, travel) and economic dependency on relief giveaways.

The world has turned quite suddenly, but in the direction of the pivot was determined by the global neoliberal agenda way before the present crisis. Sadly, the civil society, one of the few leverages that can counterbalance the oppressive and exploitative character of the corporatocracy, remains silent in the course of the “great reset”. In the troubled times fundamental societal transformations, such venerable civil society organizations, as the International Council on Social Welfare have a heightened responsibility to uphold the mission and reevaluated the goals.

The lofty ICSW objectives from the Global Programme 2020-2024 deserve a quick review

for the current relevance (selected were the first three objectives):

1. Promote forms of social and economic development which aim **to improve human well-being, reduce poverty, hardship and vulnerability, and build up effective empowerment and resilience**, especially amongst disadvantaged sectors of the population;

2. Strive, in a spirit of **solidarity and dignity, for recognition and realization of all human rights**, including fundamental rights to employment, income, food, shelter, education, health care social protection;

3. Promote **equality of opportunity, freedom of expression, freedom of association, participation** and access to human services, and oppose discrimination, stigmatization and prejudice of any kind.

Highlighted were the goals set by the ICSW that are of particular import at the present time when human well-being, empowerment, and resilience are on a decrease, and poverty, hardship, and vulnerability are increasing; when solidarity, dignity, human rights are severely undermined; when freedoms of expression, association, and participation are curtailed.

It is imperative that the ICSW acts in integrity and rises to its mission and responsibility in the global civil society. We deem the following three items essential for the expeditious organization-wide dialogue and the first step in realigning the organization with its core values and challenges of the contemporary world.

1. The ICSW **autonomy** vis-à-vis other world organizations and national governments. Is the ICSW capable of its own perceptions, understandings, and attitudes toward global events or the organization is fully beholden to global politico-economic powers?

2. The ability to build organizational capacity through **recruiting new member organizations**. How can the ICSW remain effective and relevant to sustain current membership and attract new organizations?

3. The **capacity to exert influence** as a civil society force for the benefit of the people. What are the methodologies of such influence? How does the ICSW practice what it preaches?

This call for action emanates from what is probably the smallest and poorest countries in the ICSW roster, from the region that is mostly untapped by the ICSW. However, the social problems in Moldova are the microcosm of the problems suffered by larger states, and under the circumstances, the plight of the Moldovan people is that of a canary in a mine shaft.

The global "great reset" is guided by the medical establishment, promoted by the mass media, legislated by governments, and largely defined by global corporate interests. As such, it deserves a great deal of scrutiny from civil society – the "third sector" of humanity that is distinct from governments and businesses. As a member organization, we trust that the International Council on Social Welfare can assume leadership in the quest for human rights, dignity, and welfare.

The Digital Right - A new challenge for Social Development



By Driss GUERRAOUI, President of the Association for Development Studies and Research (AERED), President of the International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) MENA Region

The acute global health crisis, triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic, has indistinctly affected every continent since January 2020, and cast a universal glance at the state of the world, imbued with a generalised conviction that human societies have entered a new era marked by uncertainties, hazards and major risks of all strips. These risks have affected all aspects of daily social life of the entire population living in the North and the South, thus threatening global human safety as a whole.

The same crisis revealed that the global system is undergoing the emergence of a new generation of insecurities and wars, manifested noticeably in wars of food, water, energy, drugs, and plant and animal genetic engineering. They also take the most devastating and pernicious forms that are associated with biological warfare on the one hand, and with wars related to knowledge, learning, artificial intelligence, information, image, space and digital technology, on the other.

Furthermore, the lack of coordinated, shared, responsive and united global governance, to manage the above-mentioned pandemic, illustrates the exorbitant costs of this crisis, which caused socio-economic, human, and psychological repercussions on the world's poor class, vulnerable wage-earners and workers, and "business project leaders" working in the so-called informal sector. The activities, carried out in this sector, constitutes the main source of income for these leaders, especially for women, young people and abandoned children in rural and suburban areas, in particular.

- Intervention pronounced by the author during the 59th session of the United Nation Commission for Social Development, , 9 February 2021 , in Priority theme: Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all

In fact, it is not only concerned with a crisis in the system as a whole, but rather with a real disaster that affected the economic, social and political system. In addition, the emergence of new generations of poverty, unemployment, precariousness, social violence, diseases and migration are just noticeable forms caused by the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Addressing such crises, therefore, does not require classical reforms, but rather substantial changes and essential innovations to guarantee the efficient running of the system as a whole.

Socially speaking, implementing these changes and innovations requires adopting a new social development model, which focuses

on two core values and a new generation of human rights, referred to as “digital rights”.

I- The core values of the new social development model

The fact that the 2020 global pandemic is leaving behind human distress, despair and misery, in a way that calls to mind or even exceeds the 1929 Great Depression, is the reason why the development of the Post-covid-19 new social development model must centre around two core values: dignity and the value of human beings. Hence, future public policy makers and UN international and regional agencies must take into account these two values when designing social action and solidarity programmes.

Dignity refers to a state of the human being measured by the satisfaction of all the population’s basic needs in a given society, based on effective access to fundamental human rights and without discrimination because of sex, age, social status, place of residence, and physical and social-health conditions.

Effective access to fundamental rights includes:

- ✓ The right to education and training,
- ✓ The right to health, a minimum basic income, and decent employment,
- ✓ The right to food and decent housing,
- ✓ The right to retirement, basic health care, family and old age benefits,
- ✓ The right to disability support and economic equal opportunities and treatment,
- ✓ The right to fair justice and freedom of expression and worship,
- ✓ The right to geographic mobility and participation to city management,

- ✓ The right to safety, culture, entertainment and living in a healthy and eco-friendly environment.

Dignity also means the respect of rights to social basic services whether concerned with drinkable water, electricity, sanitation or means of transport. Put differently, dignity is a global and general state of human conditions in a given society at a given moment in its history. It denotes, in fine, the highest and fullest form of citizenship.

As far as the **value of human beings** within society is concerned, it depends on the implementation of three simultaneous actions, including recognition, consideration and involvement in decision-making and city management. In this context, participative democracy, merit, skills, accountability, equity, justice, and equality as well as social, cultural and professional inclusion constitute the basic parameters of this value.

Translating these two core values into social development plans requires the adoption of a new model whose founding principles encompass extending universal social protection basics, establishing a basic income for all, adopting new methods to tackle poverty and unemployment, restructuring social solidarity funding and governance system, and changing radically the current mainstream that governs social dialogue.

These principles cannot, however, be carried out unless the states, civil society organisations, businesses, territorial authorities, and international organisations take into account the new realities driven by the digital revolution and their impacts on sustainable and inclusive human development.

II- The digital right: a new generation of human rights

The digital revolution is generating new forms of gap and injustice, caused by the emergence and development of a growing phenomenon within society, and which can be described as “**digital illiteracy**”.

The latter is best demonstrated in the wide-reaching inequalities in terms of using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in various regions of the world.

The state of inequalities in using ICT by every region worldwide in 2018

Region	Proportion of population using the internet	Landline phone subscription for every 100 inhabitants	Mobile phone subscription for every 100 inhabitants
Sub-Saharan Africa	25	1	76
South Asia	30	2	87
East Asia and the Pacific	57	15	120
North Africa and the Middle-East	60	15	107
Latin America and the Caribbean	64	16	104
Europe and Central Asia	78	30	124
Member States of the OECD	83	35	120
Eurozone	84	44	123
North America	88	36	120
The rest of the World	51	13	104

Source: The World Bank

The most direct consequences of digital inequalities include increased difficulties experienced by the world's poor populations in accessing basic social services. The fact that everything evolves within the economies and societies of the 21st century is the reason why dignity and the value of human beings, as defined before, currently depends on every citizen's ability to absorb the tools of digital revolution at all aspects of economic, social and cultural life.

In fact, the tools and mechanisms for access to education, employment, health, housing, family benefits, severance pay, different social benefits or microfinance credits have currently been transformed into distance learning, teleworking, e-filing and e-payment.

All these digital devices require a digitised e-registration in digitized local, regional and national registers, from which the poor could be excluded, who not only belong to the new generations of illiterate people, but also lack the conditions for a fair and controlled use of these devices.

Therefore, extending digital technology has become a real and necessary step and a sine qua non for any policy that seeks to enable the poor to benefit from better access to the basic needs and services.

Moreover, the Nation-States, regional and international organisations, specialised in social action and solidarity must endeavour to elevate the digital right and transform it into a basic human right. Helping the poor and vulnerable population's master digital technology should also be a major focus area of their new social development strategies.

III- Suggestions for a better future

Given the afore-mentioned challenges, the International Community must develop and adopt a Global Plan to build the digital capacities of poor populations. This Plan, which focuses on the following major areas, must be carried out in tune with the United Nations 2030 Agenda:

- ❖ Undertaking a global international programme for education and training in terms of new good digital practices, which aims at strengthening the poor's capacities in priority areas and enlarging their access to basic social services to facilitate their socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-institutional integration;

- ❖ Promoting the development of digital infrastructures by supporting the formulation and implementation of national programmes that seek to reduce the digital divide worldwide and target vulnerable, disadvantaged and outlying zones in rural areas, mountainous and desert regions;

- ❖ Facilitating the poor's access to internet via innovative financial support mechanisms for the purchase of digital tools,

- ❖ Increasing connectivity in a way that reduces the digital divide worldwide in vulnerable, disadvantaged and outlying zones in rural areas, mountainous and desert regions,

- ❖ Enhancing public-private-civil society partnerships that aim to update and familiarise the poor and vulnerable populations with innovative projects pertaining to digital economy jobs, especially in sectors specialised in social and solidarity-based economy,

- ❖ Organising, under the auspices of the

UNDP, the UNESCO and the ICSW a information and awareness-raising campaigns on digital technology good practices in the 9 regions of ICSW in order to enhance social development for the benefit of the poor and the vulnerable populations living in these 9 regions;

❖ Finally, for my country, The Kingdom of Morocco, I recommend that this perspective of social development will be integrated in the new future programs of The National Initiative for Human Development (NIHD), headed since 2005 by **His Royal Majesty King Mohammed VI**.

My Vision and Goals as the Special Representative of ICSW to the UN Office in Geneva and the Specialized Agencies in Geneva



René Schegg – ICSW's Special Representative for UN in Geneva.

Dear Members and Friends,

It is my pleasure to introduce my goals and visions as the new ICSW Special UN Representative in Geneva. My main objective is to bring the topic of social welfare and social protection on the floor of various UN agencies. As an ECOSOC accredited NGO, I trust in the many opportunities to influence the discussions and debates. I will conduct this in various ways:

- ✓ giving visibility to and raising support

for the need of social protection by conducting advocacy and outreach at the Human Rights Council, addressing the issue with the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, advocating for the UN Global Fund for Social Protection, making oral interventions and organizing panels on various subjects driven by the priorities of our member organisations

- ✓ helping our members work with their

government on improving the lives of the most vulnerable in the country in the frame of the Universal Periodic Review with a particular emphasis on universality as a fundamental principle and an essential modality of Social Protection systems

- ✓ engaging with the UN Special

Procedures to ensure the attention of governments for the need of a fair and equal society

- ✓ continuing playing and active role as

a founding and core group member of the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors by the Global Coalition's technical assistance to civil society partners regarding the actions they undertake at national level

- ✓ playing an active part at the

Commission for Social Development to provide analysis and recommendations for social welfare

- ✓ advocating for strengthening and

reforming the multilateral system to ensure global governance committed to social welfare, social justice and social development.

✓ promoting the dignity and rights of workers with the International Labour Organization

I consider my role both in bringing awareness at the UN in Geneva and its agencies by the instruments described above and to the media that are reporting on these activities.

Therefore, I intend to establish a media partnership. The momentum is ideal as there is an increasing interest in the topics of social protection and equal access to health care as part of the COVID-19 crisis.

I intend also to organize (virtual) events with members of the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors to strengthen synergies and cooperation as well as UN side events. In my perspective, institutional partnerships are the keys to make our voices heard.

I will report regularly to member organization and to listen to how to bring your voices to the United Nations. I also welcome the cooperation among the Special Representatives in Geneva and New York.

I am looking forward to starting my work with all the energy and motivation I have to fostering and strengthening social welfare, social justice and social development.

More Activity at ICSW - Save the Date!

The World Social Work Day

37th Annual Social Work Day at the UN - Responses to COVID - 19: Standing Together Makes Us Stronger

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

<https://fordham.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMtdu2hpzwrG9zLKXLQEF6JgaEDf9ORwKIL>

Social Work Students

SOCIAL WORK DAY AT THE UN STUDENT CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH ADVERSITIES DURING COVID-19

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/world-social-work-day-student-conference-tickets-142981440337>

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Contributions to the newsletter are welcome!