

Joint statement by International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW)

The tripartite meeting of International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) partners to finalize the selection of the host city for the 2020 Joint World Conference on Social Work, Education and Social Development was convened in Paris on September 5th of this year. Two cities have been proposed to host the 2020 Joint World Conference, namely, Calgary (Canada) and Rimini (Italy). However, the meeting was unable to reach a consensus on the choice of host city. The representatives of the International Association of the Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Council on Social Welfare were in favor of Rimini, but the representative of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) strongly favored Calgary and announced, in fact, that the Federation had already, without consulting the other partners, gone ahead and signed a bilateral contract with the city of Calgary to hold the World Conference in 2020. The other two partners found that the choice of Calgary went against years of established legal practice, which stipulates that World Conferences must be held in a city of a state that is a member of all three partner organizations, which Canada, for the past several years, has not been.

Since Calgary does not satisfy all the established criteria for hosting a World Conference, the heads of the two organizations favoring Rimini will take a decision to hold the 2020 Joint World Conference in Rimini, since Rimini, of the two candidates, is the only one that meets all the established criteria. They very much regret the insistence of the IFSW to host a conference in Calgary, a city which cannot, for the above-mentioned legal reasons, be the host of Joint World Conference. The ICSW cannot, therefore, be an official participant in a conference held in Calgary. We reiterate that International Association of the Schools of Social Work and the International Council on Social Welfare will continue their cooperation in organizing the Joint World Conference in Rimini, and to make it a success on all counts.

This division in our ranks is very regrettable, and we hope that unity can be restored as soon as possible. Our tripartite partnership has a long history. Our three organizations—International Association of the Schools of Social Work, International Council on Social Welfare and International Federation of Social Workers grew up from the same root, and we will celebrate the birth of the first Conference on Social Work convened in Paris in 1928, and the 90th anniversary of that Conference in Dublin next year. The interaction of the three partners at all levels has been synergetic, complimentary and mutually beneficial. 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.



Annamaria Campanini
President, (IASSW)



Eva Holmberg-Herrström,
President, (ICSW)