

National Association of Social Workers

# PEACE POLICY **TOOLKIT**



National Association of Social Workers

# PEACE POLICY TOOLKIT 2007

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# INTRODUCTION

*Anne Anderson, LICSW and Moya Atkinson, MSW*

Since its founding, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has prided itself on its involvement concerning social justice and peace. NASW has fought for the rights of all peoples regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical disability. The most devastating causes of oppression, injustice and violation of human rights throughout time have been war and other violent conflicts.

With the publication of this Peace Policy Toolkit, NASW continues an important component of social work practice, since it directly addresses the need for social workers to be involved in the public discourse about current wars, advocating for policies that build a more peaceful world. Dr. Elizabeth Clark, Executive Director of NASW, when talking about the historical roles of social workers as peacemakers in her remarks at "Social Work at the UN Day" on March 23, 2007 (See Toolkit), invoked the names of Jane Addams and Jeannette Rankin. Addams, one of the founders of social work, is credited with contributing to the founding of the United Nations, and was the first woman from the United States to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. Jeannette Rankin was the first woman elected to the US Congress and voted against entering World Wars I and II. Other social workers have also been active in the anti-war and pacifist movements, including Lillian Wald, the founder of the Henry Street Settlement and the Visiting Nurses Association. Wald not only helped organize activities against World War I, she also opposed U.S. intervention in Central America and the Philippines. Chandler Owen and E. Franklin Frazier were two African American social workers who opposed World War I; Inabel Lindsay, Dean of Howard University School of Social Work, spoke out against the nuclear arms race after World War II. Bertha Capen Reynolds, another of our social work foremothers active in the peace and social justice movements, asked, "How does the world conflict touch us, as social workers, and what do we propose to do about it? It is not only as citizens, but as an organized professional group that we are challenged to take our place in the movement of today" (Van Soest, 1997, p. 338). Bringing this fine legacy to the 21st

Century, social worker and Congresswoman Barbara Lee cast the sole dissenting vote in Congress against authorizing President Bush to use "all necessary and appropriate force" against anyone associated with the terrorist attacks of September 11 (See Toolkit).

Given the complexities of these difficult times, it is important to be clear about our definitions. Peace, according to the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), "is more than the absence of organized conflict. It is the goal of achieving harmony with self and with others. Social workers are committed to the pursuit of non-violence" (See Toolkit). Another useful definition of peace is the following: "...peace can be defined ideally as the dynamic processes that lead to the relative conditions of the absence of direct and indirect violence, plus the presence of freedom, equality, economic and social justice, cooperation, and harmony" (Sponsel, 1996, p. 98).

Just as peace is more than the absence of conflict, war involves more than armed conflict. War also involves the militarization of the economy and society, the misdistribution of societal resources, the destruction of the physical environment, the erosion of civil liberties and the impact of trauma faced by military families as a result of soldiers' injuries or death.

This *Peace Policy Toolkit* has been developed to provide NASW members, chapters, and other entities with policy information and tools to promote the competency of social workers in peace endeavors. NASW's positions on peace are grounded in the value and principles stated in our *Code of Ethics* and in its public and social policy statements in *Social Work Speaks*, NASW's policy manual developed by its Delegate Assembly. For instance, "Social workers have consistently advocated for a just and peaceful world. Social justice is central to the profession's values and specifically emphasized in the *Code of Ethics*..." (*Social Work Speaks*, 7th Edition, p. 282, included in Toolkit).

The NASW policy on "Peace and Social Justice" highlights the interlocking processes of war and social injustice around the world. Adopted in 1990, and revised by the NASW Delegate Assembly in August, 2002, it discusses the "multidimensional paradigm shift in public thinking" post-September 11, and notes the many ways that social workers can contribute to building a more peaceful world, even in the face of terrorist attacks. Included are issues of economic and social justice, calls for international nonviolent cooperation and peace building, calls for arms reductions both overseas and domestically with gun control legislation, attending to the use of violence in our language, addressing the special problems of social justice for women and racial and ethnic minorities, caring for our military and returning veterans, and other topics.

The “Peace and Social Justice” policy also highlights working with other organizations, such as the International Federation of Social Workers. IFSW’s “International Statement on Peace and Social Justice,” (adopted in 2000) and “International Policy on Human Rights” are included in the Toolkit. IFSW notes that: “For social workers, the issues of peace and social justice are interlinked...Each day social workers engage with the consequences of conflict — sometimes between two individuals, sometimes between groups and communities, and sometimes at national and international levels. They know the destructive power of conflict and its capacity to bring heartache and despair in its wake...” IFSW also “calls upon member associations to press their national governments to pledge: a) a reduction in arms expenditure, b) an increase in social development expenditure, c) renewed commitment to conflict resolution through the United Nations.”

Furthermore, in 2005, our professional association, with seven social work organizations adopted 12 Imperatives at the Social Work Congress on March 18, (a day before the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq). One is to “mobilize the social work profession to actively engage in politics, policy and social action, emphasizing the strategic use of power;” and a similar one to “strengthen social work’s ability to influence the corporate and political landscape at the federal, state and local levels” (Clark, et al, 2006, p. 4).

We in the United States have particular issues to address. As citizens of the world’s preeminent power, our actions take on additional weight in relation to the rest of the world. As social workers we note our *Code of Ethics*, which states that we “should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully.” Most often we find ourselves advocating for an individual or particular population. As Terry Mizrahi notes, in her April, 2003 article, *A Legacy of Peace: The Role of the Social Work Profession*: “Social workers can speak out because they are on the front lines working with people, groups and communities who directly or indirectly are adversely affected by violence, trauma and disaster, whether natural or human caused. Social workers put a human face on all conflicts and raise issues of costs and consequences.” Dorothy Van Soest urges: “The greatest and most important challenge for social workers is to become global professionals who understand the deeply embedded and submerged structural foundation of violence, which feeds violence at the institutional and individual levels in an increasingly interdependent world...to reclaim our professional roots in community activism, peacemaking and internationalism” (Van Soest, 1997, p. 345).

In this Toolkit one will find examples of letters, statements and articles published by NASW. They address many issues, including the weakening of civil rights and liberties, torture of detainees, opposition to unilateral, preemptive military action by the US against Iraq, to name a few. The Toolkit also includes alerts, information on specific topics, and a bill to establish a Department of Peace and Nonviolence, co-sponsored by social worker Representatives Susan Davis and Barbara Lee, in line with NASW's values: to hold peace as an organizing principle; to endeavor to promote justice and democratic principles; to expand human rights; and to develop policies that promote national and international conflict prevention, nonviolent intervention, mediation, peaceful resolution of conflict, and structured mediation of conflict. Please use these materials as a springboard to consider what aspect of working for peace you want to pursue. Maybe you are already doing it as a citizen — claim the legacy of peace as a social worker, too. In the Foreword to an NASW publication, *The Global Crisis of Violence: Common Problems, Universal Causes, Shared Solutions* (Van Soest, 1997), Josephine Nieves, former Executive Director of NASW, makes the following points: "People acting as a strong, cohesive community can achieve more than individuals. When people work together in community, strategies for change that are sustainable are possible." As so aptly stated in *Social Work Speaks*, "Building on the profession's activist tradition is one of the most powerful ways to carry the message of peace and social justice and help make it a reality."

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# NASW CODE OF ETHICS

The *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers addresses the need to respect individuals and their rights. The sections of the *Code* that follow are an important guide when working to promote peace. For the complete text of the *NASW Code of Ethics* please visit NASW's Web site at: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

# NASW CODE OF ETHICS

## 1.05 CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND SOCIAL DIVERSITY

- (c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, and mental or physical disability.

## 6.01 SOCIAL WELFARE

Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.

## 6.04 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTION

- (a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.
- (b) Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.
- (c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people.
- (d) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical disability.

# NASW POLICY STATEMENTS

*Social Work Speaks* is the publication of the National Association of Social Workers that includes all its public social policy statements (of which there are approximately 64). We have included two here, the "Peace and Social Justice" statement and the "International Policy on Human Rights". These statements guide the work of the Association in promoting peace.

# PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

## BACKGROUND

The terrorist events on U.S. soil on September 11, 2001, have led to a multidimensional paradigm shift in public thinking, which relates in important ways to any policy about peace and social justice.

Although the version of this policy approved by the NASW Delegate Assembly in August 1993 focused on the end of the cold war, consideration must now be given to a new type of war on U.S. soil, fought by the United States and others around the world.

### **The Role of the Military and a “New Kind of War”**

Between 1989 and 2001 the U.S. government cut defense spending by closing bases; cutting troop strength; and eliminating numbers of planes, missiles, and ships (Cooper, 2001). Even so, in 1995 military expenses continued to represent 35 percent of this country’s total expenditures (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000) during the same year that social welfare expenditures under public programs accounted for only 20.9 percent of the gross domestic product (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Furthermore, in 2001, before the September terrorist attacks, President Bush was focusing future military spending on his request for \$8.3 billion in 2002 alone to fund a missile defense program (Cooper, 2001). After September 11 the military budget obviously soared in new ways not experienced since the Gulf War of 1991.

### **Economic Struggles and Justice**

The United States plays a huge part in economic policy around the world. As the major player in global capitalism — through our dominant role in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization — we must bear responsibility for the social justice travesties that our policies create. Our corporate practices clearly disrupt rather than support justice in some emerging economies, and “there’s no point denying that multinationals have contributed to labor, environmental, and human-rights abuses” (Danaher, 2001, p. 14). Many countries spend more on repaying foreign debt than on health care and other basic needs. For example, social services represent only 34.5 percent of Brazil’s government expenditures in contrast to debt repayments that consumed 75.6 percent of the

government's revenue. In India social services are only 11.9 percent of government expenditures, but India pays 33.6 percent of revenues in debt repayment (CQ Researcher, 2001). Other countries with different types of government and economies need to be supported to find their own ways rather than necessarily conforming to ours. This can be encouraged by equitable negotiations about debt relief and programs that support appropriate, more localized responses to economic problems. "Foreign countries with entirely different legal, economic, and political systems do not need the International Monetary Fund to forcibly impose on them what is a dubious form of capitalism even in the United States" (Johnson, 2000, p. 225).

## The Use of Violence

The United States continues to be one of the most violent nations in the world. We have much disagreement about the role of guns in our society, with the percentage of people feeling it is more important to control gun ownership growing from 57 percent in 1993 to 65 percent in 1999. At the same time among others in the same study, those feeling it is most important, instead, to protect the rights of gun owners decreased from 34 percent in 1993 to 30 percent in 1999 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999). When participants were asked about the primary causes of gun violence in the United States in a 2000 study, there was a distinct gender difference. Only 18 percent of men laid blame on the availability of guns compared with 24 percent of women. The way that parents raise children was seen as the cause of gun violence by 51 percent of the men but only 38 percent of the women, and the influence of popular culture was identified as the reason for gun violence by 23 percent of men and 29 percent of women.

In contrast with much of the rest of the world, a majority of Americans (71 percent) in 1999 believed in the death penalty. Again this varies by gender and race: 66 percent of women favor this punishment compared with 75 percent of men, whereas a more dramatic 39 percent of black people were in agreement compared with 77 percent of white people (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999). A more even split exists between those who feel that using the death penalty for those who have committed murder will deter others from the same crime: 47 percent opt for deterring and 49 percent feel that it does not have much effect (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999).

The number of prisoners executed in the United States grew steadily from 23 in 1990 to 56 in 1995; there was a large jump in 1999 to 98 individuals (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Some of our violence is explicitly directed toward children, women, immigrants, and, after September 11, Muslims and people from the Middle East. Clearly, both terrorism and state-supported violence affect people worldwide in negative ways that perpetuate the opposite of peace and social justice.

## International Cooperation

Although the terrorist attacks of September 11 have led to unprecedented outreach for international cooperation, this has not been done primarily through the United Nations, which represents the most appropriate format.

Poverty, violence, racism, sexism, homophobia, and environmental degradation are problems throughout the world. Patterns of consumption in the United States directly relate to many of these problems, and, as a country, we need to take responsibility for the results of our lifestyle. We must accept “the fact that the economic situation we enjoy and the privileges it gives us are at the expense of two-thirds of the people of the world. Our world has finite resources, and what we have is related to the fact that the majority of people do not have enough” (Isasi-Diaz, 1999, p. 220).

## ISSUE STATEMENT

Beyond the destruction and trauma of war is the continual drain on human and material resources — the diversion of energies and goods and services to meet military needs while the social welfare of millions of people in the United States and abroad goes unmet. Wars also sap the nation’s resources, resulting in the pollution of the earth and the atmosphere and posing a threat to the world’s public health. Already we are faced with epidemic-scale international health threats associated with AIDS and starvation. Groups at high risk of threats to health and survival, such as children, elderly people, people with disabilities, and women, inevitably suffer most from war and violence. In addition to the physical, social, and economic consequences, the arms race, the introduction of chemical and biological warfare, and the threat of nuclear war pose unique psychological consequences worldwide.

In a world economy with a single nation more powerful than all the others, military approaches predictably run the risk of increasing violence rather than paving the way for peace. Although the strengths and weaknesses of U.S. culture are highly visible and broadcast around the world, resentments inevitably are created by the wide discrepancies in basic needs such as food, shelter, and a livable wage. This, in turn, creates a dramatic risk for all of us, regardless of ideology or politics. “Given its wealth and power, the United States will be a prime recipient in the foreseeable future of all of the more expectable forms of blowback, particularly terrorist attacks against Americans in and out of the armed forces anywhere on earth, including within the United States” (Johnson, 2000, p. 223). Of course responding to terrorism, especially against civilians and on our own shores, in ways that do not maim and kill is a tremendous challenge, but it appears to be a vital step for establishing and maintaining peace.

Issues of social justice have special meaning for women, particularly in a world in which education, the vote, work outside the home, and rights within marriage and the family are not assured for significant numbers of women. Women in many countries, though, including those countries in which the roles of women are strictly limited, tend to have a strong interest in working for peace, especially through nonviolent strategies, because of their “concern for human life, especially for children, but also for themselves and other women” (Brock-Utne, 1985, p. 37). It is imperative that the United States ratify the Convention to End Discrimination of All Women (CEDAW). Because social work historically has been a female-dominated profession, in terms of the majority of both workers and clients, it is not surprising that members of this profession feel passionately about peace and social justice.

Racism, negative attitudes toward immigrants, and generalizations about members of certain ethnic and religious groups are not new to the United States. Indigenous people within the United States and Africans who were brought here under slavery also suffered immensely. Violence, persecution, and discrimination, both historic and present, are realities experienced by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender populations, as well as by women, children, and other disenfranchised populations. Chinese people were excluded from our shores for many years, people of Japanese descent were put in internment camps at the beginning of World War II, European Jews were denied entry as refugees from fascism, and Haitian refugees were accepted and then sent back during the 1970s and 1980s. The events of September 11 have opened up a new and similarly intolerable series of acts against Muslims and people of Middle Eastern descent that require diligence and determination to bring to an end. True peace and social justice can never be attained for one group without applying it to everyone.

## POLICY STATEMENT

In spite of the challenges of terrorism, we need to reduce the use of violence in our language and as a solution to domestic and international problems. Waging “drug wars” that do not include real treatment and carrying out the “war on crime” with its increased and inequitable use of lengthy incarceration and increased capital punishment — which have not been shown to reduce crime and are meted out disproportionately against certain racial and ethnic groups — are both counterproductive to peace and social justice.

### **Economic and Military Issues**

Although we have recently gone through a new military buildup and actions against terrorist groups and the countries that harbor them, the United States needs to emphasize economic support rather than Western dominance in its foreign policy language and actions. The welfare of all people and the balanced economic and social development of nations should be the goals of U.S. foreign policy.

Whenever possible, the United States must foster cooperation in its foreign policy rather than unilateral military action. A long-range goal should be reduction of military spending and diversion of the subsequent savings to social needs. At such a time, it will be important that the government support economic conversion from war production to peaceful pursuits, with special assistance for personnel moving from military to civilian life.

In addition, the United States should work through peaceful efforts for the abolition of nuclear testing by all nations and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide. Similarly, this country needs to support the abolition of all chemical and biological warfare, urge all countries to cease production of such compounds and to destroy any existing stockpiles, and support a U.N.-sponsored multinational treaty calling for strong sanctions against any countries that possess biochemical weapons.

### **International Cooperation**

Even in the face of overt terrorist attacks on the United States, it is still vital that we work in creative ways with other nations and international organizations to reduce violence against innocent civilians. Indeed, finding constructive and nonviolent means to deal with international conflicts must be a priority.

Full participation with such organizations as the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the World Court are critical first steps in such an effort. In addition, the United States should endeavor to decrease the numbers of refugees by providing economic and social assistance rather than military shipments to other nations. Refugees must be granted asylum if they are faced with violence and death.

By recognizing the equal worth of all humans and the equal loss in terms of the death of any innocent person, concepts such as asylum should not be based on race, ethnicity, or country of origin. The United States should ratify and support implementation of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related U.N. treaties. This declaration states that each person has the right to a standard of living that is adequate for his or her health and well-being. "Human rights principles hold up the vision of a free, just, and peaceful world and set minimum standards for how individuals and institutions everywhere should treat people" (Mittal & Rosset, 1999, p. 164).

The United States should support each country's right to political and economic self-determination, in compliance with international law and U.N. conventions on human rights; to nonintervention; and to control over its own natural resources. In considering the tragic and growing phenomena of world poverty and hunger, internationally coordinated

efforts must include redistribution of global resources (such as technology transfer, reduction of Third World debt burden, and reduction of overconsumption patterns of the West), improvement of women's status, and population stabilization.

The United States needs to stimulate and support the use of government funds, free of military or political purposes, to promote social and economic development and protection of the environment and to meet basic human needs in education, housing, health, and welfare services. Whenever possible such programs should be funded and coordinated through the United Nations and emphasize human values and their contribution to human welfare.

## Social Work's Role

Social workers have consistently advocated for a just and peaceful world. Social justice is central to the profession's values and specifically emphasized in its *Code of Ethics* as social work professionals are instructed to "promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people" (NASW, 1999, p. 7). Social workers similarly are encouraged to learn other languages, become informed about all aspects of other cultures, and apply the profession's values to work with clients of all races, ethnicities, and sexual orientations.

On more macro levels, social workers frequently work with existing organizations with a world focus, such as the United Nations, as well as participate in grassroots organizations that address peace, human rights, freedom, environmental issues, participation, human diversity, and the special needs of children and women. Furthermore, as a global profession, social work promotes internships, travel, and international work opportunities that allow practitioners to join with others in the struggle for a more peaceful and equitable world. It is critical for social workers to hold social welfare positions in multilateral and bilateral programs of technical assistance such as community development. Additional training needs to be provided to prepare qualified social workers for international service. NASW's International Committee should be strong and active, and NASW should build strong connections with the International Federation of Social Workers.

The United States needs to continue using qualified professional social workers to serve the armed forces and military dependents to ensure that a high priority is given to human values and social welfare needs in those settings. The profession's domestic peace and justice agenda needs to include gun control legislation and the stopping of illegal weapons trade. To prevent violence that turns U.S. communities into war zones, social workers must promote early and ongoing intervention through economic revitalization and

educational and employment opportunities to give young people hope and direction. In addition, social workers need to address the role of the media and other institutions in the glorification of violence and the use of weapons.

Finally, it is appropriate for the issue of peace and world justice to permeate social work education on all levels. Teaching the connections between direct client services and the larger sociopolitical context and providing avenues for students to learn and practice social action skills will bring social work back to its roots. Building on the profession's activist tradition is one of the most powerful ways to carry the message of peace and social justice and help make it a reality.

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(Source: *Social Work Speaks*, National Association of Social Workers Policy Statements, Seventh Edition, 2006-2009)

Policy statement approved by the NASW Delegate Assembly, August 2002. This statement supersedes the policy statement on Peace and Social Justice approved by the Delegate Assembly in 1990 and reconfirmed by the Delegate Assembly in 1993. For further information, contact the National Association of Social Workers, 750 First Street, NE, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20002-4241. Telephone: 202-408-8600; e-mail: [press@naswdc.org](mailto:press@naswdc.org)

# INTERNATIONAL POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS

## BACKGROUND

### History of Human Rights

From the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi (1750 B.C.E.) to the present, there is written evidence of humanity's struggle to protect the rights of vulnerable people from exploitation by more powerful individuals, groups, or the state itself. Social justice concepts appeared in the writings of Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.) and the ancient Greeks (4th century B.C.E.). The Romans recognized the need to protect individuals from the potential abuses of political authority; and from its origins in the 7th century, Islam valued the sanctity of human life and the right to seek justice. Closer to our roots in the Western world, the Hebrew and Christian scriptures spoke of the inherent dignity and worth of the person and equality under the law. Great Britain's Magna Carta (1215) referred to the values of human dignity and justice, while affirming the notion that a ruler has an obligation to serve society. The 17th and 18th centuries gave birth to notions of natural rights, the social contract, the limitations of state powers, and the rights of people to rebel if their rights were trampled (Laqueur & Rubin, 1979; McKinney & Park-Cunningham, 1997; Wronka, 1995, 1998).

The U.S. Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen clearly articulated a set of political rights, including the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; freedom of speech, the press, and religion; property rights; and the right to a trial by jury (Falk, 1998). During the 19th century, women's rights and the rights of ethnic and cultural minority groups were developed (Laqueur & Rubin, 1979). The human rights perspective thus has roots in the religious, political, and intellectual traditions

of many cultures. Crossing cultural boundaries, human rights identifies the essential qualities of life for all people everywhere that must be valued and protected.

The events of the 20th century (for example, wars, genocide, and ethnic cleansing; discrimination and social exclusion based on race, ethnicity, or religious identity; gender inequality, battering, rape, the sale of women; sweatshops and child labor, slavery; and suppression of the rights of women, children, ethnic and cultural minority groups, immigrants and refugees, older people, and disabled individuals) demonstrate that the struggle for human rights goes on.

In response to the horrors of the Holocaust, under the leadership of Eleanor Roosevelt, representatives of the nations of the world came together to find a way to prevent such an event from ever happening again. The first step was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was presented in 1948 (see the Addendum at the end of this statement) to the U.N. General Assembly and the world as a foundation document upon which an edifice of protections for human rights could be built. This document has become the standard reference for all subsequent United Nations human rights efforts. It has heralded the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of both male and female adults and children as members of the human family. Human rights were defined from the start to include the universal right to a standard of living that is adequate for the health and well-being of individuals and their families. The document spells out the essential resources to meet such a standard — food, clothing, housing, and medical care. It calls for the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other circumstances beyond one's control. And it calls for "necessary social services" (United Nations, 1948, Article 25, 1).

The Declaration is distinctive in that it gave the world, for the first time in history, the right to ask of sovereign nations questions that were previously considered to be their internal affairs. By 1990 the document had become customary international law. Now even nonmember nations, however reluctantly, recognize the fact that the world will not turn its back on social and humanitarian concerns within their borders (Wetzel, 1993, 1998).

Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was developed, about 60 major U.N. human rights instruments have been ratified, providing an even stronger legal mandate to protect human rights and fulfill human needs. The most fundamental and general U.N. human rights instruments include:

- the Charter of the United Nations (1945)
- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- the two Covenants on Human Rights (1966)

- (1) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (the right to life, liberty, and security; the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, or punishment; prohibition of slavery; and the right not to be detained arbitrarily)
- (2) the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the right to work, right to social security, right to protection of the family, and the right to an adequate standard of living).

There are also a number of U.N. human rights instruments (United Nations, 1994) that address the needs of specific groups, among them: the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1996); and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990).

The United States ratified the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1966, but it has never ratified the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, a fact that explains much about the absence of support for social legislation in this country. For example, education, housing, health care, income maintenance, and child care are not considered human rights in the United States. Neither has the United States ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women or the Convention on the Rights of the Child, two documents that call into question the most recent erosion of economic support and social services. These documents are essential to the human development and quality of life of people in the United States, as well as in other nations.

### **Link with Social Work**

When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was ratified, human rights concerns had been the bedrock of the social work profession in the United States for more than 50 years. Discrimination and social exclusion based on racial and religious intolerance; gender inequality and violence; the rights of women and children, refugees, and older people — all are social justice issues that long have concerned social work (Wetzel, 1993, 1998; Wronka, 1995, 1998). Social workers know that civil and political rights must be supplemented by economic, social, and cultural rights. Social work, with its person-in-environment perspective, is vividly aware of the deleterious effects of human rights violations on the growth and development of the individual. Social workers, on whatever level they practice, advocate for people's rights to have paid employment, adequate food, education, shelter, health care, as well as the right to freedom from violence and freedom to pursue their dreams (Hokenstad & Midgley, 1997; United Nations, 1995b; Wetzel, 1993).

But the realization of social work's professional social justice goals and aspirations, like the United Nation's, is in evolution. Although individual social workers, the International Federation of Social Workers, the International Association of Schools of Social Work (United Nations, 1993), and NASW's 1990 International Policy on Human Rights have all acknowledged the importance of a global human rights perspective, the fact is the profession does not fully use human rights as a criterion with which to evaluate social work policies, practice, research, and program priorities.

## ISSUE STATEMENT

### Introduction

Human rights violations are pandemic throughout the world, including the United States. Refugees and immigrants are fleeing their countries in record numbers. Women everywhere continue to be treated as second-class citizens and subjected to violence in epidemic proportions. The social situation of children and elderly people alike is of grave concern the world over and appears to be deteriorating. There has been a resurgence of violence and oppression against ethnic and racial minorities in many regions of our globe, and poverty is endemic, fueling the fires of unrest and making a sham of the very concept of human rights. Because the United States is the most powerful nation on earth, its policies and practices influence and affect not only its own people but those in developed and developing countries. The National Association of Social Workers is the most influential professional social work body in the world. Its effectiveness in the 21st century will depend on the extension of its social justice values within the context of global human rights.

### Common Values and Mission

"Human rights condenses into two words the struggle for dignity and fundamental freedoms which allow the full development of human potential" (International Federation of Social Workers, 1996). The human rights value base, which has been articulated throughout history in religious texts and legal documents, in political writings and those of philosophers and social activists, parallels the values put forth in the 1996 NASW Code of Ethics (especially social justice and dignity and worth of the person), and the ethical principles that flow from those values. The aim of the human rights edifice created during the past half century, which includes U.N. declarations and treaties; U.N. administrative bodies; and regional, government, and nongovernment organizations; is to root out oppression and to establish conditions in which human beings can meet their needs, develop their humanity, and flourish. This aim is closely akin to social work's mission.

Social work can be proud of its heritage. It is the only profession imbued with social justice as its fundamental value and concern. But social justice is a fairness doctrine that provides civil and political leeway in deciding what is just and unjust. Human rights, on the other hand, encompasses social justice, but transcends civil and political customs, in consideration of the basic life-sustaining needs of all human beings, without distinction.

## Common Roles in Society

The human rights movement was formally sanctioned by the global community to identify barriers to the protection of human rights and to set up policies and procedures to abolish such barriers and thereby guarantee that human dignity and essential freedoms are protected for every person. Similarly, social work is sanctioned by society to address the needs of people who are vulnerable to the vicissitudes of life, while working toward establishment of a more just society.

The U.N. declarations, conventions, and treaties provide a human rights template. Social work can provide a biopsychosocial, perhaps spiritual, body of knowledge gleaned from more than 100 years of experience to bring life to such a plan, grounding human rights in the everyday lives of the people (Wetzel, 1998).

## POLICY STATEMENT

According to the Preamble to the NASW Code of Ethics (1996), “the primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (p. 1). The Council on Social Work Education’s Curriculum Policy Statement (1994) echoes this mission statement in its articulation of the central purposes for social work practice, which include:

- the planning, formulation, and implementation of social policies, services, resources, and programs needed to meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities
- the pursuit of policies, services, resources, and programs through organizational and administrative advocacy and social or political action, so as to empower groups at risk and promote social and economic justice.

Human rights and social work are natural allies. Social workers need to be aware of this conceptual link and the power of working in concert with human rights organizations and activists throughout the world. The International Policy on Human Rights helps both to create this awareness and further its proclaimed mission.

Human rights violations are pandemic throughout the world, including the United States. NASW endorses the fundamental principles set forth in the human rights documents of the United Nations. These include, *inter alia*, those expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: the right to a standard of living that is adequate for the health and well-being of all people and their families, without exception, and the essential resources to meet such a standard; the right to adequate food and nourishment; the right to adequate clothing; the right to adequate housing; the right to basic health care; the right to an education; the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood beyond one's control; the right to necessary social services; and the right not to be subjected to dehumanizing punishment (United Nations, 1948).

NASW supports the two fundamental Covenants of the United Nations, established in 1966, which confirm the civil and political rights of all people, including indigenous populations, as well as their economic, social, and cultural rights (United Nations, 1995b). The profession also endorses the treaties and conventions as they have evolved that establish that the rights of people take precedence over social customs when those customs infringe on human rights. Ritual genital mutilation is a case in point. NASW endorses the U.N. resolution that women's rights are human rights, no longer simply to be considered civil and political rights (Tessitore & Woolfson, 1997; United Nations, 1993, 1995a, 1995b).

NASW supports the adoption of human rights as a foundation principle upon which all of social work theory and applied knowledge rests (Asamoah, Healy, & Mayadas, 1997; Wetzel, 1993, 1998). In a world where increasingly there is a serious questioning of the responsibility of society to ensure that peoples' civil, political, cultural, social, and economic needs are met, social workers should be absolutely clear about where they stand.

NASW must speak out against inhumane treatment of people in whatever form it exists. As social work practitioners and advocates of human rights:

- NASW should promote U.S ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; critical U.N. treaties such as the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1981); and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1996).
- Social workers must be especially vigilant about human rights violations related to children's rights and exploitation such as child labor, child prostitution, and other crimes of abuse and take leadership in developing public and professional awareness regarding these issues.
- Social workers must advocate for the rights of vulnerable people and must condemn policies, practices, and attitudes of bigotry, intolerance, and hate that put any person's

human rights in grave jeopardy — the violation of human rights based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, immigration status, or religion are a few examples.

- NASW should publicize its opposition to the death penalty and work toward its abolition, recognizing that the death penalty has not been found to be a deterrent to violent crime and that it provides inhumane and degrading punishment.
- When entitlements are nonexistent or inadequately implemented, social workers must work in collaboration with governmental and nongovernmental organizations and other groups of people in the community and become a leading force for the health and welfare of all people, including the world's most vulnerable.
- Social workers must become partners with the United Nations in advancing human development and human rights, including economic human rights, and closing the economic gap.
- In all fields of social work practice, whether with individuals or families, with groups, communities, domestic institutions, or nations, social work must be grounded in human rights.
- Recognizing that social workers who advocate on behalf of human rights can become subject to reprisal, NASW should ensure that social workers who are threatened are given the full support of the profession.

The appalling prevalence of wars, genocide, ethnic cleansing; discrimination and social exclusion, gender inequality, battering, rape, and the sale of women; sweatshops, child labor, and enslavement; and the suppression of human rights, demonstrates that the struggle for human rights remains a high priority for the social work profession in the 21st century.

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## ADDENDUM

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the full text of which follows. Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories."

### Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### Article 1.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

### Article 2.

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

### Article 3.

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

### Article 4.

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

### Article 5.

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

### Article 6.

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

### Article 7.

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

### Article 8.

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

### Article 9.

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

### Article 10.

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

### Article 11.

- (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.
- (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

### **Article 12.**

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

### **Article 13.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
- (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

### **Article 14.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
- (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

### **Article 15.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

### **Article 16.**

- (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
- (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
- (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

### **Article 17.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

### **Article 18.**

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

### **Article 19.**

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

### **Article 20.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
- (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

### **Article 21.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
- (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

### **Article 22.**

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

### **Article 23.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

- (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

### **Article 24.**

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

### **Article 25.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

### **Article 26.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

### **Article 27.**

- (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

## Article 28.

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

## Article 29.

- (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
- (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
- (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

## Article 30.

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

(Source: *Social Work Speaks*, National Association of Social Workers Policy Statements, Seventh Edition, 2006-2009)

Policy statement passed by the NASW Delegate Assembly, August 1999. This policy statement supersedes the policy statement on International Policy and Human Rights approved by the Delegate Assembly in 1981 and reconfirmed by the Delegate Assembly in 1990. For further information, contact the National Association of Social Workers, 750 First Street, NE, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20002-4241. Telephone: 202-408-8600; e-mail: [press@naswdc.org](mailto:press@naswdc.org)

The background of the entire page is a solid olive green color. Overlaid on this background is a large, stylized graphic of white wings. The wings are composed of numerous curved, feather-like shapes that fan out from the center towards the bottom and sides, creating a sense of movement and peace.

# LETTERS FOR PEACE

Following are a series of letters sent from NASW to various members of the US Administration since the war in Iraq began. The Association is a constant and reasoned voice for peace.

# PRESIDENT ELVIRA CRAIG de SILVA TO SENATOR ROCKEFELLER



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Carolyn I. Pflowy, JD

October 9, 2007

The Honorable John Rockefeller  
United States Senate  
531 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Rockefeller:

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has repeatedly written to Congress and to President Bush about the critical importance of humane treatment of detainees and prisoners. We are deeply concerned that now, in October of 2007, it appears that the administration has for the last two years justified continuation of the most severe treatment of detainees and has explicitly authorized a combination of physical and psychological interrogation practices that are extreme, inclusive of water boarding in combination with other measures.

Secret memoranda justifying the use of torture contradict public assurances by both the White House and the Justice Department that "abhorrent" torture methods would not be used on terror suspects. These memos seem to be an apparent attempt to protect interrogators from criminal charges, as well as to justify the continuation of the severe interrogation practices.

We call on you to require a complete disavowal of these practices, and a discontinuation of any interrogation or detention practices that are not consistent with United Nations definitions and standards with regard to the interpretation of the Geneva Conventions. We further request that you hold hearings to investigate those responsible for facilitating detainee abuses. We can not turn a blind eye to these events. The country and the world need thoughtful and committed action on the part of the US Congress to correct and contain these egregious violations of human rights and inhumane practices. We rely on your leadership to help make this happen.

Sincerely,

Elvira Craig de Silva, DSW, ACSW  
President  
National Association of Social Workers

Cc: Senator Christopher Bond

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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. ELIZABETH CLARK TO CONGRESS ON TORTURE



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#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH

#### GENERAL COUNSEL

Carolyn I. Polowy, JD

September 15, 2006

Dear Senator,

On behalf of 150,000 members of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), I am writing to state that the recent proposals by our Administration on prisoner interrogation, detention, and surveillance are alarming. The legislation President Bush prefers, S. 3861, would narrow this country's legal interpretation of the Geneva Conventions and abandon long respected principles of humane treatment. Any such move is unacceptable. I ask that you support S. 3901 that was approved by the Senate Armed Services Committee on September 14, 2006.

A secret detention system cannot be allowed to continue. Nor can we tolerate alternative interrogation procedures which violate U.S. and international law. The Administration's move to simply change U.S. law is not mindful of larger consequences.

Secret detentions using secret interrogation techniques invite abuse of suspects and detainees for which no one can be held accountable. Further, the proposed military commission legislation announced by President Bush would permit the use of evidence obtained through cruel and degrading treatment of prisoners.

While experts may debate the legal meanings of torture and coercion, we as a nation must insist on a minimum of fair trial and humane treatment standards. Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, which currently requires these minimums, must be honored and must continue to apply in all wars, including our fight against terrorism.

Our standing as a leading world nation, indeed our respect for ourselves, would be diminished if we change our laws to justify humiliating and degrading those held in custody. Respect for human rights and human dignity are essential to building long-term security for those in this country and elsewhere.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH  
Executive Director

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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. ELIZABETH CLARK TO PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH



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#### GENERAL COUNSEL

Carolyn I. Palow, JD

March 7, 2006

President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

You have stated that the United States is committed to the prevention of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of prisoners and detainees. Your leadership in this area makes a tremendous difference around the world.

In the last several weeks, as you may know, there have been radio broadcasts, town hall meetings, demonstrations against torture and the release of reports on detainees tortured while in U.S. custody. The National Association of Social Workers continues to be very concerned about this issue, as do many individuals across our country. Your voice must be clear on this subject.

Holding individuals indefinitely, incommunicado and without charges at undisclosed locations is inhumane. The "rendition" or sending of prisoners to countries in which torture can be conducted without accountability is not consistent with our principles.

It has been clear over the last six months that these practices have taken place under the auspices of the United States of America. The public and Congress clearly oppose any continuation of such practices. We were very encouraged that you signed the McCain Act into law. Yet, without your leadership and continued public statements clarifying the importance of human rights and affirming an opposition to torture, these despicable practices will continue. The likely impact of precipitating widespread similar mistreatment of captured American military personnel is frightening.

There can be no doubt that the United States is not immune to an increase in terrorist activity around the world. These are dangerous times. We ask that you take a principled stand in support of our American values by clearly renouncing torture during your administration. We need your leadership now more than ever. It is essential that you affirm that no one under your administration will authorize or be permitted to engage in torture.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH  
Executive Director

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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. ELIZABETH CLARK TO CONGRESS



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##### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH

##### GENERAL COUNSEL

Carolyn T. Palow, JD

December 15, 2005

Dear Sirs:

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) represents more than 152,000 social workers in this nation who practice in a wide range of areas, including human rights and international affairs. Social workers and NASW have long been advocates of human rights and civil liberties, and we are fully committed to the defense and security of this nation and the freedom it has come to represent. We have watched the progression of the debate on legalizing torture and providing protections for covert operatives, and abandoning the protections of the Geneva Convention with concern.

In consideration of the conditions of wartime and the need to promote humane treatment of individuals, both soldiers and others caught up in conflicts, NASW stands firmly opposed to the use of torture of any kind. Even in those circumstances in which covert operatives might have what they consider to be meaningful leads, there can be no permission to use torture as a tool if the larger objectives of freedom and democracy are to be achieved. Demanding fair, and humane conditions, and rejecting the use of torture are essential. There can be no exceptions. Detentions when necessary must be conducted with transparent and legal processes. Delivering suspect individuals to foreign operatives or hiring contractors for the purpose of torture is completely intolerable. Allowing prisoners and detainees access to take their cases to civilian courts is critical as well. The United States must not condone torture, deny due process, or create loopholes in our laws and regulations that would have similar impact.

The decisions you make on the matter of detainee abuse and torture in HR 2863 will have significant impact on the United States and the nations of the world for years to come. Social workers involved in human rights and international affairs look to the United States to speak out morally and strongly on these issues. We call on you to stand for fairness and justice and support the provisions offered by Senator McCain. To do otherwise would diminish us all.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH  
Executive Director

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# NASW PAST PRESIDENT GARY BAILEY TO SENATOR WARNER



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Carolyn T. Paloway, JD

May 14, 2004

The Honorable John W. Warner,  
Chair, Senate Armed Services Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Warner:

It is time for the United States Congress to take an unequivocal position on the abuse of the prisoners of war in Iraq. It is time for Congress to take leadership, and to demonstrate that the United States is a country of laws, ethics, decency and principles. It is time to rise above partisan politics and to demonstrate those principles.

The leaders of the U.S. Congress have the power and obligation to correct the circumstances that allowed this abuse and torture. Holding prisoners incommunicado and without hearings to determine their status, cannot be permitted to continue. In addition the conditions of imprisonment must be humane and must be monitored.

The war in Iraq opened a gulf between the United States and the people of the world. The prevalent image of our nation abroad is that of the "arrogant aggressor," and each new revelation lends credence to that view. The international conventions against torture and affirming human rights cannot be ignored without damage to the international standing of the United States. Creating allies requires leaders who are trusted and admired, rather than feared and hated. Healthy economies can only prosper in times of peace, and in the absence of terror.

In October 2004, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) will meet other social work organizations from 78 countries in Adelaide, Australia, where we will join efforts to seek diplomatic solutions to international conflict. I hope that with your actions and those of other Congressional leaders, we can say that the United States does not condone torture. Decisive steps must be taken to stop prisoner abuse and hold the perpetrators accountable.

Sincerely,

Gary Bailey, MSW  
President, NASW

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# NASW PAST PRESIDENT GARY BAILEY TO REPRESENTATIVE SENSENBRENNER



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##### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH

##### GENERAL COUNSEL

Carolyn I. Paloway, JD

October 2, 2003

The Honorable James Sensenbrenner, Jr.  
United States House of Representatives  
2449 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Sensenbrenner:

On behalf of the 150,000 members of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), I am writing to encourage you to welcome bipartisan legislation aimed at correcting some of the egregious provisions of the USA Patriot Act, as well as other controversial measures associated with September 11, 2001. NASW strongly supports Congressional objectives that morally safeguard America from heinous acts of terrorism.

NASW firmly believes that the "Benjamin Franklin Patriot Act" (H.R.3171) would provide appropriate review pertaining to acts of terrorism and, significantly, would provide a balance between security and civil liberties. H.R. 3171 would also ensure that America remains safe and liberated. Further, the Association contends that H.R.3171 revisits and ameliorates contentious Patriot Act provisions including: Section 213, which permits "sneak and peak" delayed notification search warrants; Section 215, which gives law enforcement access to a wide array of personal records, including library, medical, and educational records; and Section 415, which allows for the indefinite detention of non-citizens certified by the Attorney General as terrorists, bypassing judicial review.

H.R.3171 would retard other policies adopted post 9/11, including: the ability of the Department of Justice to monitor privileged attorney-client conversations; guidelines permitting FBI agents to monitor houses of worship; legal opinions that would permit local law enforcement to enforce civil immigration law and exemptions to the Freedom of Information Act; and enabling companies to maintain secret flaws in their infrastructure by sharing that data with the Homeland Security Department.

Introduction of H.R. 3171 comes at a period when President Bush has exhorted Congress to further expand powers of law enforcement. NASW has acute concerns with these measures, specifically since most are not germane to terrorism-related offenses. Republications and Democrats have also articulated hesitation for any further expansion of power. Moreover, in July, the House of Representatives adopted a measure sponsored by Rep. C.L. Otter (RI), which prohibits the implementation of section 213, on a vote of 309 to 118, with 113 Republicans voting in favor. Across America, sentiment is growing to restore abridge civil liberties.

NASW asserts that legislation inhibiting terrorism and its aftermath is a worthy contribution to the promotion of peace and harmony during these arduous times. Social workers maintain an abiding faith in the rights and liberties guaranteed by the founding covenants of our nation. We urge you to carefully examine H.R. 3171, and help us promote the intrinsic values of tolerance and respect that form the core essence of our political system.

Sincerely,

Gail Bailey, MSW

President

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# NASW PAST PRESIDENT DR. TERRY MIZRAHI TO PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH



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Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH

##### GENERAL COUNSEL

Carolyn I. Paloway, JD

October 7, 2002

President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush:

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) opposes unilateral, preemptive military action by the United States against Iraq. The human, social, and economic costs of war are immense. Such action should be undertaken only under imminent and immediate threat to our country, and with the sanction of the United Nations and support of our allies.

NASW policies have long advocated the abolition of all chemical, biological, and nuclear warfare. We support U.N.-sponsored multinational efforts to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, as well as efforts by countries to cease production of, and destroy any stockpiles of such weapons. We strongly urge the non-violent resolution of international conflicts.

NASW policies also support the premise that the welfare of all people, and balanced economic and social development of all nations, should be the goals of U.S. foreign policy. Social workers, who work with immigrants and refugees, are acutely aware of the frequent connection between war and poverty. We know that those who are already poor and powerless are further victimized in violent confrontations. Therefore, NASW calls for the United States to foster cooperation and collaboration with allies and international bodies in all its foreign policy initiatives.

Jane Addams, the 1931 co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and a pioneer social worker, said, "We believe that war, seeking its end through coercion, not only interrupts but fatally reverses the process of cooperating good will, which if it has a chance, would eventually include the human family itself." We urge you to oppose any pre-emptive or unilateral military action against other countries, including Iraq.

Sincerely,

Terry Mizrahi, PhD, MSW  
President

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# ARTICLES

The articles that follow address social workers' legacy of peace, opposition to war, violence and the erosion of human rights. The initial piece sets the context with statistics on the war in Iraq. The subsequent articles are written by leaders in the social work profession.

# CONGRESS VOTES FOR MORE WAR FUNDING

With Congress' recent vote for an additional \$100 billion in war spending, the total spent or allocated for the Iraq War alone rises to nearly half a trillion dollars.<sup>1</sup>

- 3,513 U.S. soldiers dead
  - 25,950 U.S. soldiers wounded
- Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis dead
  - 1.7 million Iraqis displaced in Iraq
- 2 million Iraqi refugees in other countries

In the lead up to the war, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget stated that the Iraq War would cost only between \$50-\$60 billion. The White House discounted its own economic advisor when he suggested that the war could cost between \$100-\$200 billion.

The half a trillion dollar price tag does not even begin to cover future costs. The war is deficit-financed, and future spending on veterans' health care and disability payments will be substantial. One estimate that included the future budgetary and economic costs exceeded \$2 trillion.<sup>3</sup>

---

The cost to American taxpayers is \$456 billion so far. If that money were spent locally, the following could have been provided.<sup>4</sup>

- 5.7 million people could have been provided with health care coverage each year since the war began; AND
- 1 million affordable housing units could have been built; AND
- 430,000 school teacher could have been hired since the war began; AND
- 4.7 million students could have received tuition and fees for four years at a state university.

---

(Source: "National Priorities Project," June 2007)

Notes: <sup>1</sup>NPP's estimate of the cost of the Iraq War includes only incremental budgetary costs, not interest costs or future costs. The number is based on the analysis of legislation appropriating funding for the Iraq War and Congressional Research Service reports and includes \$78 billion of the \$100 billion in additional war spending. State breakdowns are based on the share of taxes paid by each state into the federal funds budget according to IRS data. <sup>2</sup>Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, Dept. of Defense Directorate of Information Operations and reports, The Lancet, and UNHCR. <sup>3</sup>L. Bilmes and J. Stiglitz, "Encore," The Milken Institute Review, 4th Quarter 2006; includes economic and future budgetary costs. <sup>4</sup>City breakdowns are based on population and relative income and state breakdowns; trade-offs are based on state averages.

# A UNITED FRONT ON IMMIGRATION

*Elvira Craig de Silva, DSW, ACSW*

As a country, we tend to be very proud of the heritage provided by the various waves of immigration. However, we also tend to become protectionists when the economic and cultural scales get unbalanced and we perceive the newcomers as a threat to our financial status and way of life. When this is the case, immigrants are seen more as invaders than as contributors. The generosity of the past gets trampled by the fears of the present.

In December 2005, the U.S. House of Representatives passed border control legislation that includes enlisting the help of local law enforcement authorities to stop the entrance of undocumented immigrants; requiring all U.S. employers to verify legal status of their workers; and building a fence along part of the U.S.-Mexico border. In addition, a related proposal was submitted in January 2005 to require hospitals that want to continue receiving government subsidies to ask emergency room patients about their immigration status.

The topic of immigration creates feelings of ambivalence among most people in our country. However, for a nation historically defined by the struggles and accomplishments of immigrants, these recent actions should greatly concern all social workers committed to the profession's core values of human rights and social justice.

Throughout history, social workers have been instrumental in helping newcomers of all descriptions make the transition into American society. Social workers have also worked with communities that receive immigrants, preparing them for increased diversity and new complexity in cultural dynamics. But this legacy will be tarnished if we watch idly as years of progress disintegrate into a pile of questionable political motives and re-energized fears of foreign "invaders."

Immigrants are a significant portion of the U.S. population. In many cases, they leave their countries out of desperation. They may become vulnerable to prostitution, human trafficking, substandard living conditions, job abuses, detrimental health conditions, extreme safety issues. Whatever the situation, immigrants face a series of stress-producing events that result in the need for assistance and support.

NASW's policy statement on immigrants and refugees states that "the plight of refugees and immigrants [must] be considered on the basis of human values and needs, rather than on the basis of an ideological struggle related to foreign policy."

The current political context of immigration makes the job of social workers much harder and more perilous. It endangers human rights and civil liberties of immigrants, refugees and social service workers.

As social workers, we must present a politically active, united front to stem the disappearance of services and resources and ensure equal protection from discrimination for all immigrants, refugees and undocumented individuals who come to live in the U.S. To do nothing is to ignore the core of who we are and what our profession stands for.

Social workers must continue to be part of ó and in some instances lead ó discussions where decisions about immigration status and rights are being made. Social workers can push for the development and implementation of fair and humane domestic immigration laws, knowing that healthy families will result.

We have done it before. When a proposal was made in the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act to help hospitals defray the cost of providing emergency services to undocumented and uninsured patients, social workers made the case that trying to obtain immigrant-status information from families would place social service workers in the role of de facto immigration investigators.

As many families are composed of both documented and undocumented immigrants, this type of interrogation would prevent individuals from seeking and using necessary services due to fear of prison or deportation. It would also severely hinder the patient/provider relationship.

NASW's advocacy with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services during this debate explained the negative consequences on the health of patients, their families and the public and helped get the provision withdrawn. Now, as social service agencies ó religious and secular ó as well as immigration groups have begun to rally against new measures passed in the Border Security Bill, it is time again for social work to be alert and get more involved.

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# THE USA PATRIOT ACT AND THE EROSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: A VITAL ISSUE FOR THE PROFESSION

*Beth Lewis, DSW*

The USA Patriot Act was passed shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, purportedly to ease the apprehension of terrorists. It gives government agencies sweeping powers, including the ability to conduct secret searches, have increased access to classified records, and order prolonged detentions. Particularly affected are immigrants, refugees, and minorities who, under the Act's provisions, can be detained for extended periods without notice of the charges against them (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights [LCHR], 2003).

It is important that members of the social work profession are knowledgeable about the erosion of basic human rights as afforded by United States law and policy. The provisions of the Patriot Act could potentially be applied to social workers who are currently, or have at any time, engaged in social change efforts to promote social justice with and on behalf of clients; as one commentator has described, these efforts "could be interpreted by the administration as endangering domestic security" (Chang, 2001). Social workers who provide services to immigrants, refugees, and other communities targeted for surveillance and detention should be aware of the potential impact of the Act on these groups, and should join other community-based efforts to address the portions of the Act that deny individuals basic human rights.

This article summarizes components of the Patriot Act, and provides information about avenues for social action through which members may add their voices. Such efforts are aimed at restoring civil liberties and basic human rights, and scaling back the changes brought about by the Act that give increased executive authority in matters of domestic surveillance.

## COMPONENTS OF THE USA PATRIOT ACT

### Personal privacy

Some of the most glaring encroachments on civil liberties include the Patriot Act's provision for the United States government to obtain the personal records of anyone related to a terrorism investigation. Under the Act, the FBI may secretly access Americans' personal information — such as library, medical, Internet, telephone, education, and financial records — without having to show that the person targeted for this surveillance has any involvement with terrorism or espionage. The FBI can search and even seize someone's property, without notifying him or her of either the search or the seizure for up to two weeks, and can tap into a suspect's electronic communications — from cell phones and computers, to personal digital assistants — allowing for some of this to be done under search warrants issued by a secret court. Further, the Patriot Act makes it a crime to reveal that the FBI has conducted any such search. For example, a librarian who speaks out against having to participate in such a search can be subject to prosecution (LCHR, 2003).

### Immigrants, refugees, and minorities

According to a comprehensive report issued by the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, the impact of the Patriot Act has occurred in five general areas: government openness, personal privacy, immigration, security-related detention, and the effect of U.S. actions on human rights standards around the world (LCHR, 2003). While all of these are areas of concern, the treatment of immigrants and refugees is particularly deserving of our attention.

The USA Patriot Act conflates immigrant status with terrorist status (Chang, 2001), with immigrants now being viewed as a primary threat to national security. Under the Act, non-citizens may be detained for seven days without charges. Arab, Muslim, and South Asian minorities have been particularly singled out for detention sweeps, although — importantly — these efforts have not appeared to ensure further safety. Of the 1,200 people detained in connection with the 9/11 investigations, 762 were detained solely on the basis of civil immigration violations (LCHR, 2003). Under the provisions of the Act, such individuals could have no recourse to any independent civilian court, and instead will have their fate decided by military personnel who report directly to the president, depending on whether they have been determined to be an "enemy combatant," or are designated as another type of criminal suspect.

According to the LCHR report:

There is no pretense of the U.S. duty to adhere to international law, including the Geneva Convention protection for prisoners of war in these cases. The expansive wording of the decision raises concerns that the administration may seek to deny broader categories of immigration detainees any individualized assessment of whether their detention is necessary whenever the executive contends that national security interests are implicated (LCHR, 2003).

The LCHR report points out that the U.S. program to resettle refugees has “long been a model for states all over the world, a reminder of the country’s founding as a haven for the persecuted. But in the immediate aftermath of September 11, the program was shut down. Now, from an average of 90,000 refugees resettled annually before September 11, 2001, the United States anticipates 27,000 resettlements in 2003” (LCHR, 2003).

## The United States and International Human Rights

The continuing erosion of human rights and civil liberties under the USA Patriot Act must also be viewed in the context of international human rights practice. On the international level, there are a number of areas where U.S. human rights practice trails other countries (Gershman, 2002). The following is a partial list of failings in U.S. human rights policy, drawn from a more detailed discussion in a recent Amnesty International report, *United States of America: Human Rights v. public relations*:

- In 2002 the Bush administration has approached governments requesting them to enter into agreements that they will not surrender U.S. nationals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes to the new International Criminal Court.
- The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has criticized the Bush administration’s handling of immigrants detained in post-9/11 sweeps and has called upon the administration to “take the urgent measures necessary to have the legal status of the detainees at Guantánamo Bay determined by a competent tribunal.” More than 600 detainees held in the U.S. Naval Base in Guantánamo Bay remain in legal limbo, without access to the courts or lawyers. Some have been held for almost a year, with no prospect of release or trial.
- The U.S. has failed to ratify the American Convention on Human Rights, which it signed 25 years ago.

- The U.S. is one of only 23 countries not to have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. While initially supporting ratification of the Convention, the administration has recently backpedaled on its support due to opposition from right-wing anti-choice activists.
- Although 145 countries have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the U.S. has not, 25 years after signing it.
- The Bush administration has opposed the adoption of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture, which aimed at providing a system of unannounced visits to places of detention, such as police stations and prisons, and was approved by UN General Assembly's Third Committee in early November 2002 despite U.S. opposition.
- In May 2002, Somalia signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child and indicated its intention to ratify it. Once it does so, becoming the 192nd state party to the Convention, the U.S. will be the only country not to have ratified this fundamental treaty. (Gershman, 2002).

### Efforts to increase and expand provisions of the USA Patriot Act

Efforts continue to expand government authority in matters of domestic surveillance. The proposed Patriot Act II ("Domestic Security Enhancement Bill of 2003") met with bipartisan opposition, and was ultimately never introduced as a piece of legislation. However, portions of the bill have been broken off and incorporated into other bills — most recently in the signing into law of the "Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004" (Martin, 2003). This proposed act would expand law enforcement and intelligence gathering authority, reduce or eliminate judicial oversight over spying, authorize secret arrests and detentions, create a DNA database for "suspicious" persons, apply the death penalty in new situations, and allow the Administration to strip citizenship by mere inference of the individual's association with terrorists. It would also have expanded the FBI's power to seize records from banks and credit unions to securities dealers, currency exchanges, travel agencies, car dealers, post offices, casinos, pawnbrokers, and any other businesses that, according to the government, have a "high degree of usefulness in criminal, tax or regulatory matters." Such seizures could be carried out with the approval of the judicial branch of government (Lobe, 2003).

## TAKING ACTION

NASW has taken steps to alert members of the importance of this legislation regarding their work, and encourages interested individuals and chapters to contact their local ACLU offices to get involved in or to stimulate development of resolutions in their state or local governments. For example, many communities across the country are adopting sweeping resolutions protesting federal measures that violate civil liberties. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) provides information and assistance to individuals interested in attending town meetings on the issue, carrying out work on an existing campaign, or in taking on a leadership role in campaigning for the passage of a resolution in their community.

According to the American Civil Liberties Union, resolutions have been passed in 178 communities in 32 states, including three statewide resolutions in Hawaii, Alaska, and Vermont. Many of these resolutions call for a restoration of civil liberties lost since 9/11. These communities represent approximately 21 million people who oppose sections of the USA Patriot Act (NASW, 2003).

Central to social action on the local level is the view that the USA Patriot Act emphasizes “safety” over freedom. A key component of the resolution movement is the effort to ensure that our government balances our civil rights with our safety, making sure that they’re equal and important.

### Support for H.R. 3171

NASW President Gary Bailey wrote a letter to Rep. James Sensenbrenner, urging support of the “Benjamin Franklin True Patriot Act” (H.R.3171), introduced by U.S. Rep. Dennis Kucinich (NASW, 2003). This Act, currently referred to committee, would repeal major portions of the Patriot Act, including secret property seizures, expanded grounds for deportation of terrorist suspects, and a broadened definition of domestic terrorism. According to Gregory T. Nojeim, associate director and chief legislative counsel of the ACLU Washington Legislative Office, “These controversial measures [of the USA Patriot Act] addressed by the Kucinich-Paul Bill may not necessarily make us safer, but they definitely make us less free” (ACLU, 2003).

The bill also seeks to mandate a review period before Congress can enact new sections of the 2001 Act, and challenges federal policies calling for local law authorities to enforce immigration law (Kaplan, 2003). In addition to NASW, H.R. 3171 is supported by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), and the Religious Action Center of Reformed Judaism; it also has 20 congressional co-sponsors.

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[Source: *NASW Poverty & Social Justice Section Connection*, Spring 2004]

# SOCIAL WORKERS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

*Sherri Morgan, JD, MSW, LDF Associate Counsel*

*Carolyn I. Polowy, JD, NASW General Counsel*

## INTRODUCTION

On January 14, 2004, NASW's Legal Defense Fund (LDF) joined in a Supreme Court challenge to the continued detention of "unlawful combatants" at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Acting as an amicus curiae ("friend of the court"), NASW's LDF joined with other civil rights and social justice organizations to file a brief arguing for basic civil rights for the detainees, most of whom were captured on the battlefields of Afghanistan following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. This article reviews the connection between human rights concerns and the social work profession, as viewed through the lens of NASW's participation in *Rasul v. Bush* and *Al Odah v. United States* (collectively, the Guantanamo Bay cases), and based on NASW's policy statements and the *NASW Code of Ethics*.

## CASE SUMMARY

More than 600 combatants, primarily from the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan in 2001 and 2002, have been held — without access to any legal process — by the United States government at Guantanamo Bay. Housed in wire cages with little protection from the elements or vermin, most of these inmates have no legal counsel, and have been detained with no right to a review of their legal status and no ability to contact family members. Sixteen of the detainees are attempting, through legal challenges, to gain the right to a review of the legality of their continued detention through the U.S. legal system. The petitioners' lawsuit is based on the habeas corpus statute (habeas corpus literally means "bring forth the body") and the right

to a basic judicial review of the legality of one's detention. If successful, their lawsuit could pave the way for judicial review of the remaining detainees' legal status.

The U.S. government and the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit (which issued an opinion in 2002), assert that U.S. courts have no jurisdiction to hear the claims of these non-citizens, who were captured on enemy soil and are being held offshore. In addition, the U.S. Department of Defense has maintained that the protections of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (GPW), 6 U.S.T. 3316, 75 U.N.T.S. 135, are inapplicable. Thus, the government argues that the Guantanamo Bay detainees may be held indefinitely with no access to even the most basic protections of due process.

## NASW'S INVOLVEMENT AS AMICUS

In the Guantanamo Bay cases, the NASW LDF brief argues that the Geneva Conventions for the treatment of prisoners of war apply with the force of law to the United States as a treaty ratified by the U.S. The brief also indicates that it is disingenuous for the United States to claim that there is no legal jurisdiction in a naval base under its control since 1903 simply because it is not on U.S. ground. Violation of a U.S. treaty is accepted as grounds for a non-frivolous habeas corpus request, 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(3).

NASW's participation as amicus curiae in any given case involves an evaluation of several factors, including the significance of the legal decision to be rendered, the connection to a published policy or the Association's Code of Ethics, and the availability of a well-written brief supported by likeminded organizations. The *NASW Code of Ethics* provides a broad mandate for participation in cases protecting human rights and dignity. Standard 6.01, *NASW Code of Ethics*, states, "Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments...and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice" (NASW, 1999).

Although social workers have long been involved in promoting human rights, many members of the profession lack a clear understanding of this issue, and of NASW's policy statement on this topic. In the United States, many rights have become well established, such as the right to fair wages, humane treatment of the mentally ill, protection of children from exploitation, and civil rights for persons of all races and genders. At each stage in the battle for these rights, social workers have been involved; in some cases, such as Jane Addams' work for women's suffrage and Florence Kelly's operation of the Consumers' League in the national campaign against child labor, these advocacy efforts became the birthing ground for the creation of the professional social worker.

According to the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), “Human rights condenses into two words the struggle for dignity and fundamental freedoms which allow the full development of human potential” (NASW, 2003). NASW's policy statement, “International Policy Human Rights,” points out the parallel between human beings' fundamental rights and the values articulated in the *NASW Code of Ethics*, recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of each person. International organizations, such as the United Nations, have formulated a set of common legal standards basic to life in a civil society. The assertion and eventual recognition of rights is key to the transformation of vulnerable populations, within the United States and internationally.

NASW's “International Policy on Human Rights” was adopted by the NASW Delegate Assembly in 1999, and superceded the human rights statements approved in 1981 and 1990. The policy states, NASW endorses the fundamental principles set forth in the human rights documents of the United Nations”. These principles include the right not to be arbitrarily detained and the right to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal in the determination of an individual's rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him, as specified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. NASW policy “supports the adoption of human rights as a foundation principle upon which all of social work theory and applied knowledge rests” (NASW, 2003).

On this basis, NASW heartily supports the Guantanamo Bay detainees' rights to have access to basic due process protections. NASW must speak out against inhumane treatment of people in whatever form it exists (NASW, 2003).

The basic protections of our legal system, such as the right to court review for denial of liberties and freedoms, form the bedrock of our society. Without the assumptions that there is equal access to the law, that laws will be applied fairly, and that police functions are separate from judicial and legislative functions, social workers' ability to support individuals in their environment would be severely hampered.

Social workers in community organizing roles are well aware of the connection between group consciousness of legal rights and the ability to organize a neighborhood or population to make significant change. In the international sphere, the lack of recognition and support for human rights presents a similar opportunity for social workers to advocate for humane standards of treatment for all people.

## CONCLUSION

Social workers may all-too-easily forget that we live in a global community where many freedoms and legal protections that we, in the U.S., take for granted are unavailable and seemingly unattainable to other peoples — particularly those in third world and developing nations. Regardless of political orientation, it is essential for social workers to understand that, for our liberties and those of our clients to be protected, laws must be applied fairly and rationally, with access to justice for all people. Increasingly we are challenged to stand up for the rights and liberties of the unpopular, so that rights and protections will remain available for all, and in recognition of our common humanity.

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(Source: Retrieved from [www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org), October 9 2007)

# WE OPPOSE THE CONTINUING US - LED WAR AGAINST IRAQ: A STATEMENT FROM NATIVE UNIVERSITY AND TRIBAL COLLEGE PROFESSORS

*Michael Yellow Bird, PhD*

A group of more than 40 Native university and tribal college professors joined together to compose, sign and distribute a statement that opposes the US-led war against Iraq. An excerpt of that statement is included below. The full text with signatures is posted on the Poverty and Social Justice Section online forum — available at [www.socialworkers.org/sections](http://www.socialworkers.org/sections). Click on Poverty and Social Justice and go to the online forum page.

"We Native professors, from many different tribal nations, educational institutions, and academic disciplines, unequivocally oppose the continuing U.S.- led invasion and occupation of Iraq. As Indigenous academics, we believe that one of our major responsibilities is to contribute to the intellectual conscience of our tribal nations, and the world community, by providing honest and intelligent assessments of what is truthful and just, and what is not.

We find no plausible moral or political justifications for this U.S.- led war and join millions of people of conscience worldwide who stand with courage in opposition to this illegal, unprovoked, and inhumane attack upon a sovereign nation."

" ... We believe that the United States has engaged in an illegal and brutal war against innocent Iraqi Peoples. Iraq has done nothing to the United States and this is a war of choice not necessity. It is an unprovoked attack that is causing untold suffering. Many throughout the world, and here at home, continue to strongly condemn the U.S. invasion

and occupation of Iraq. Feelings of mistrust, hatred, and fear of the United States continue to rise as the U.S. has claimed the right to “preemptively strike” at anyone who is suspected of being a threat to American security or interests. Moreover there are strong concerns about the possibility of U.S. pre-emptive aggressions toward Syria, Iran, Libya, and North Korea.

As the children of Indigenous Peoples who survived, and continue to face, the oppressive policies of the United States, we have much to teach this nation about the horrors of war, racism, hatred, and inhumanity. We are courageous peoples who have provided proportionally more military service to this nation than any other group. We are also peaceful peoples whose ancestors created some of the most sophisticated and effective forms of peace-making and peace-keeping the world has ever known. We have much to teach this nation and the world about peace, acceptance of differences, and justice. As people of conscience, and people who have been on the receiving end of American imperialism, we call for the end of the U.S.- led aggression and occupation of Iraq, along with immediate humanitarian and rebuilding efforts. We ask our tribal nations to join us in condemning and resisting all unjust, illegal wars and aggressions and instead use the wisdom of our tribal traditions to promote policies of peace and diplomacy throughout the world.”

(Source: *NASW Poverty & Social Justice Section Connection* July, 2003)

# SOCIAL WORK AND HUMAN RIGHTS

*Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH*

Social work and the United Nations have long been linked philosophically. We agree that human rights are universal and apply to all persons without discrimination. In fact, the first sentence of the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that respect for human rights and human dignity "is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." Similarly, respect for human rights and human dignity forms the foundation of social work theory, values, ethics and practice.

Because of our philosophical ties with the U.N., I was particularly shocked and saddened when I heard that the United Nations' Baghdad headquarters were bombed on Aug. 19. United Nations Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello and 22 others were killed, tragically and senselessly. Earlier in the year, Vieira de Mello had been named the U.N.'s high commissioner for human rights; he had devoted his life to building peace and advocacy.

"Human rights" is a term used the world over, conveying a focus on equal rights as well as on social justice. It blends components of equity, civil rights and social justice, with both national and international applications. This was the philosophy upon which Vieira de Mello and so many others who perished with him based their lifelong work — work that will be carried on by social workers throughout the world.

As part of the continuing effort to increase NASW's effectiveness in this critical realm, we created the Human Rights and International Affairs Department. The department will house areas of the association's work that cut across organizational, geographic and specialty boundaries, including cultural competence; women's issues; discrimination; affirmative action; racial and ethnic diversity; and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.

The Human Rights and International Affairs Department will be responsible for addressing, both nationally and internationally, issues related to the fundamental freedoms that are grounded in law, tradition or nature, such as freedom of association and freedom from persecution and fear, as well as the rights to privacy, economic security and access to education and health care. The department will also address the right to participate in the process of building civil societies and good governance.

Many areas, such as inclusion, equity and cultural competency, have long been part of the association's work at the national, state and local levels. The new department's mandate allows for a progressive and timely pursuit of international issues within the boundaries of NASW's goals and objectives.

This will also enable us to more effectively meet our responsibilities as the largest member of the International Federation of Social Workers and to emphasize our support for the principles set forth by the United Nations. NASW is a member of the United Nations Association's Council of Organizations-Washington, D.C., and in June cosponsored the National Forum on the United Nations. We also proudly participate each year in Social Work Day at the United Nations in New York City.

The Department of Human Rights and International Affairs, headed by Luisa Lopez, will work in conjunction with our International Committee, headed by Robin Mama, and our Poverty and Social Justice Section, chaired by Ramon Salcido. We plan to work closely with the Council on Social Work Education, the International Federation of Social Workers, the International Council on Social Welfare and the International Association of Schools of Social Work to achieve our goals of enhancing the safe and effective functioning and well-being of individuals, families and communities at home and abroad.

In this spirit of collaboration, we will strive to honor the memory and work of Sergio Vieira de Mello as well as countless others whose contributions and sacrifices have not received media attention but who make their contributions anonymously while risking their lives to build a better world.

(Source: From October 2003 *NASW News*. © 2003 National Association of Social Workers.)

# A LEGACY OF PEACE

## THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

*Terry Mizrahi, MSW, PhD*

As I write on March 10, President Bush seems intent on going to war with Iraq. Regardless of opposition at home and abroad, regardless of setting the dangerous precedent of preemptive strikes, regardless of whether the U.N. Security Council approves, regardless of whether the case has been made that the U.S. is in imminent danger, regardless of the uncertainty of the outcome or the aftermath, regardless of the increasing hostilities that are likely to be engendered toward this country, regardless of whether thousands of Iraqi citizens (inside and outside the military) are killed, regardless of whether U.S. and other soldiers lose their lives, regardless of the economic, fiscal and social costs to our country in the form of deficits and downsizing of our domestic programs, this administration is steering our country on a violent course — all in the name of creating peace and democracy.

Why has the NASW Board of Directors taken a position against a war with Iraq? Why does NASW support this position in spite of a divided country and some division within our own profession?

NASW is speaking out because it has a long and noble history of advocating the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction — chemical, biological and nuclear, including this country's arsenal — and advocating the nonviolent resolution of conflicts at all levels — family, community, intergroup, national and international.

Our elected Delegate Assembly has passed several policies including, in 2002, a revised "Peace and Social Justice" policy and, in 1999, the "International Policy on Human Rights" that speak to our vision of a just world and the means of getting there.

We have maintained a consistent antiviolence stand in other policies, such as those on “School Violence,” “Disasters,” “Immigrants and Refugees,” “Capital Punishment and the Death Penalty” and “Cultural Competence.” NASW worked on an antiviolence campaign with funds from the United States Agency for International Development in the 1990s that produced a range of materials promoting alternative dispute-resolution and related programs.

NASW’s International Committee and its representation on the steering committee of the International Federation of Social Workers give us an integral connection to colleagues in 76 other countries and to the use of international bodies, including the U.N., to maintain peace and help prevent intra- and inter-country violence.

Social workers can speak out because they are on the front lines working with people, groups and communities who directly or indirectly are adversely affected by violence, trauma and disaster, whether natural or human-caused. Social workers put a human face on all conflicts and raise issues of costs and consequences. Social workers recognize the complexities of racial, religious, ethnic and class differences, the commitment that must be made by all sides in order to negotiate differences and manage conflicts, and the competence needed to engage in nonviolent negotiations of differences.

Social workers must resist intimidation by those who equate a pro-peace agenda with weakness or a lack of patriotism. Calling for nonviolence doesn’t mean supporting Saddam Hussein; there are other methods to contain, isolate and persuade him without wreaking havoc on the Iraqi people.

With the aggressive statements and actions by the Bush administration and its supporters come a range of related concerns. A social work colleague recently told a group that you can’t have homeland security if you don’t have safe homes and secure hometowns.

Social workers understand that safety and security mean more than extra police, border patrols or the National Guard. We are concerned that actions by the president and Congress to prevent and stop terrorism will result in a substantial loss of civil liberties, the harassment of Arab and Muslim communities within and outside the U.S., the curtailing of individual freedoms and privacy rights and the self-censorship of the media that would limit healthy debate. In doing these things, we may lose the essence of democracy and sacrifice that this country has stood for since the Constitution with its Bill of Rights was adopted more than 200 years ago.

Jane Addams, the 1931 co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and a pioneer social worker, said, "We believe that war, seeking its end through coercion, not only interrupts but fatally reverses the process of cooperating good will, which if it has a chance, would eventually include the human family itself."

I heard former President Clinton give a talk to a Hunter College audience in June 2002 on globalization and the future. He said that the world is already connected. There is no possibility for isolation or retreat, but there are two different trajectories for the future — one moving toward chaos and conflict and the other toward cooperation and consensus. Our obligation is to promote and contribute our knowledge, skill and values to the latter direction and build a legacy of peace.

(Source: From October 2003 *NASW News*. © 2003 National Association of Social Workers.)

# NASW MEMBER PLAYS KEY PART IN PEACEBUILDING

## REFUGEES TO HELP REBUILD RAVAGED LAND

"TO RETURN, PEOPLE NEEDED TO KNOW HOW TO PREPARE,"  
ROSS-SHERIFF SAYS.

*Lyn Stoesen*

As a group of 28 returning refugees were being trained as community caseworkers in Kabul, they were becoming the first cadre of Afghan paraprofessionals to deal with the needs of their war-ravaged country.

Fariyal Ross-Sheriff played a key part in the process. During her most recent trip to Afghanistan, in September, she helped train the caseworkers and prepare them for the challenging, important work ahead.

Ross-Sheriff has long been involved in addressing refugee concerns. Raised in India, she earned degrees in Michigan and Maryland. She has taught at Howard University's School of Social Work in Washington, D.C., for 16 years, specializing in displaced populations at both the national and international levels. She also has expertise in research methodology, Muslim families in America and special populations including women, the elderly and youth. She served on the NASW Press Social Work Research editorial board from 1998 to 2001.

Preparing for the future. Ross-Sheriff also has a long history of working with Afghan populations. She traveled to Pakistan in 1989 to work with Afghans in refugee camps and those who had self-settled. In 1998, she returned with the organization Focus Humanitarian Assistance, a nongovernmental emergency relief agency, to assess the needs of refugees.

During the 1998 trip, she developed focus groups with Afghan leaders as well as representatives from special population groups, such as women and the elderly, to explore the resources they required. As a social worker, Ross-Sheriff said, her goal was to "empower Afghan leadership and support them."

Several months after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, Ross-Sheriff said, "there was a feeling that Afghanistan will be liberated." In late December 2001, Afghan representatives met in Bonn, and an agreement for a new government was formed. At that time, Ross-Sheriff and others conducted further focus groups with refugees "to find out their hopes, expectations and aspirations."

In January 2002, Afghanistan's interim government was in place. Ross-Sheriff returned to Afghanistan to begin developing a plan for repatriation. "We had to make sure repatriation was voluntary," she said. "People needed to be prepared to return home and have a sense of safety and security." After more than 20 years of war, much of the country has been destroyed, she explained. "There has been a lot of suffering. People who have undergone pain and suffering need to have some sense of security."

Focus Humanitarian Assistance had developed a strategy to assist Afghan refugees. The organization's goals were to make sure those returning were legally and physically safe, with an adequate supply of food and other provisions. A second goal was to promote dignity for those returning; returnees must be treated with respect and without violence, be assured that their rights would be recognized and be given enough time to return without the fear of being separated from their families. Finally, Focus Humanitarian Assistance made a goal of assuring returnees that they would have future prospects for social and economic development.

"To return, people needed to know how to prepare," Ross-Sheriff said.

Developing a framework. Ross-Sheriff explained that the term "displaced populations" encompasses people in many circumstances. Displaced populations in the United States include homeless people and people who have suffered from disasters, such as earthquakes or hurricanes. On the international level, she has worked on the concerns of refugees, the internally displaced, immigrants and migrant or seasonal workers.

With colleague Richard English, Ross-Sheriff has developed a framework for addressing issues of displacement. "Displacement doesn't occur overnight," she explained. "There are warning signs."

The framework has four stages. The first stage, "pre-uprooting," occurs when the people affected become aware that they will be displaced. This stage can be lengthy or very brief, but "even in a natural disaster," Ross-Sheriff explained, there is usually a period of being aware that an uprooting is coming.

The second stage, uprooting, occurs when people are moved from their home. This can be involuntary, such as an eviction or being otherwise forced to leave, or voluntary, such as planning to fly to a new place.

The third stage is the transition period, during which the displaced people live in refugee camps or similar nonpermanent housing.

The final stage is when the people are repatriated or resettled. These final stages can take months or years.

Ross-Sheriff said that her framework identifies six elements necessary for resettlement to be successful. Those resettling must be assured of their safety and security. They must have some means of earning ó lands must be free of mines for farming, urban areas must have employment opportunities. Those resettling must have shelter; if they are returning to homes that have been destroyed, they must be rebuilt, or the people must have access to other housing. Schools and educational opportunities must be available for children. Resettlers must have access to health services. And, finally, they must have social support ó a community of family, friends and neighbors and a government that can provide assistance.

"In resettlement," Ross-Sheriff said, "rebuilding community is critical."

It is this community-building that Ross-Sheriff is most adamant about. "As a social work professional, I am concerned about that part. Social workers can play a critical role in community development, social support and rebuilding lives."

Rebuilding Afghanistan. With 3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan, 800,000 were originally estimated to return to Afghanistan in 2002. But by September 2002, 1.45 million had returned, with a great stress placed on the capital city, Kabul.

Focus Humanitarian Assistance had some 60,000 refugees under its jurisdiction and began making preparations to assist those who wanted to return. They registered the population and helped them with reentry papers, transportation, food and shelter.

During Ross-Sheriff's trip to Afghanistan in September, she and others worked on two programs. One was a research project on the role of women in the repatriation project; the other was training the caseworkers.

The research project involved gathering demographic information on the living conditions, employment, health and education of 60 women. Ross-Sheriff said she used the framework she and English developed for assessing displaced populations when gathering information. As she led the women through the interview, she asked them to think back to 10 years before they were uprooted, then six months before, then the day they left, through their uprooting and then into the transitional period. She assessed the social support the women received as they returned to Afghanistan and the current conditions they lived in and their aspirations for the future.

The second program trained 24 caseworkers and four supervisors. The system of teaching Afghans to provide the caseworker services was crucial, Ross-Sheriff noted. "Afghans will rebuild Afghanistan," she said.

The goals of the program were to provide a local capacity for social services for returning refugees, to develop a system that could be replicated in other areas of the country and to help the trainees understand what resources and services are available from governmental and nongovernmental organizations. The program was also intended to provide resettlement support services for at-risk refugees.

"I have taught about uprooting for many years," Ross-Sheriff said, and in many ways, "teaching Afghans was easier" because they had experienced displacement personally. She used the displacement framework to explore the trainees' own experiences, which were often painful. "Many cried, and I cried with them," she said.

But Ross-Sheriff said she found it very gratifying to teach the Afghans. The training, she said, "helped them realize the potential for positive outcomes of repatriation and the role service providers and refugees can take."

The caseworkers were all returning refugees. The background required to qualify for the training included a high-school-level education; experience as a service professional, such as being a teacher or a nurse; a level of previous involvement in a service capacity; and a commitment to attend all the training sessions and continue working a minimum of 12 months. Those trained as supervisors also had past leadership experience. Of the four chosen to train as supervisors, Ross-Sheriff said, two were physicians, one was a lawyer, and one was a local community leader.

Ross-Sheriff noted that the women involved in the training were very active and an important part of the program, which belies many assumptions people have about the role of women in Afghanistan. Many of the caseworkers and two of the supervisors involved in the training were women.

The caseworker training was conducted in five segments. First, a six-day series of sessions addressed uprooting and the challenges displaced populations face. The training also dealt with the responsibilities of service providers, personal styles of communication and leadership, professional behavior and ethics and the need to be aware of the cultural contexts in which services are provided.

In the second segment of the training, caseworkers learned how to conduct needs and resources analyses for families, including interviewing skills. The trainees were then divided into 12 pairs for their first field internship. The pairs conducted interviews with returning refugees. Those being trained as supervisors were assigned three pairs of caseworkers and met with them at the end of each day. The caseworkers and supervisors assessed their interviews in the third segment of the training, discussing ways of using the information they had gathered.

The fourth segment consisted of a workshop on at-risk populations among Afghan refugees. Such groups included widows, disabled people, the elderly and others who had no source of income. The fifth segment was a workshop on ethics and values in service provision, with a focus on skills for case management. After this, the caseworkers conducted their second field internship. They returned to the families they had visited previously and determined whether their perception of the families' needs was the same as the family's assessment.

During their internships, the caseworker trainees realized that they did not have enough information on available resources and began developing a directory of services available in Kabul. Ross-Sheriff said extra training sessions were held with the four supervisors, to help them develop the skills they needed to oversee the caseworkers. The supervisors also were trained to conduct and implement the workshops.

The people of Afghanistan face many challenges in the task of strengthening their country. While projects such as repairing roads and rebuilding homes are crucial, the development of national resources for providing social services and rebuilding a sense of community is just as vital.

The Afghans "are a very hardworking, very resilient people," Ross-Sheriff said. "Their desire is to rebuild their nation."

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# DEVELOPING A GLOBAL PROFESSIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON VIOLENCE

AN EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK, *THE GLOBAL CRISIS OF VIOLENCE: COMMON PROBLEMS, UNIVERSAL CASES, SHARED SOLUTIONS* BY DOROTHY VAN SOEST, NASW PRESS, 1997.

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Everyone wishes to live in peace, but it is not achieved by merely talking or thinking about it, nor by waiting for someone else to do something about it. We each have to take responsibility as best we can within our own sphere of activity. (Dalai Lama, 1994, p. x)

The purpose of this book has been to expand the frame of professional social work discourse within which violence is defined, its contexts analyzed, and its prevention and amelioration explored. To that end, the definition of violence has been broadened and links drawn among violence and individual, social, and economic development. Parallel conditions and causes of violence in the United States and in countries of the global South have been examined in relation to poverty, gender violence, violence against children, ethnviolence, and drug-related violence. Just as common problems and universal causes of violence have been explored, shared solutions have been proposed. Throughout the book, stories were showcased that reveal how people around the globe are finding an antidote to violence in the development of their communities by using strategies of sustainable human development. Part 6 examines and summarizes processes of healing from violence-related trauma that are underway around the world.

Some of the ideas have admittedly been bold and have exceeded the boundaries of traditional social work considerations. Skeptics may be quick to point out the limitations of thinking in such comprehensive, global terms. Rethinking our conception of violence to include what is unseen on institutional and structural levels could leave social workers feeling even more powerless than they already do. Critics might say that the concept of sustainable human development — although everyone might quickly agree with its tenets — is too broad and nebulous to be of any practical use in social work practice. They might also say that problems of violence — as well as poverty — will always be a reality no matter what idealistic standards we might embrace. They also might say that addressing issues of violence from a global perspective is far beyond the scope of the social worker's role.

It is indeed tempting to be pessimistic after wading through the many examples of different types of violence documented in this book. However, the good news — also documented in the stories shared throughout each chapter — is that grassroots community groups throughout the world are finding their voices and solutions to violence by resisting top-down models of development. Thus, the question is not whether the book's perspective on violence is too broad but whether the book's proposals, considered as a system, have any potential to produce better results than we have been able to achieve so far.

This final chapter summarizes the book's central theme about the global interdependence of violence and about the lessons offered by communities using sustainable human development strategies. It then discusses the need for the social work profession to develop a global perspective on violence and proposes a paradigmatic shift in the profession's consciousness about violence and our place in the global order. Such a shift implies that when social workers address violence prevention and reduction, they do so with an understanding of the relationship between violence and oppression inherent in social and economic injustice and a recognition of the need for community responses.

## LESSONS WITHOUT BORDERS: GLOBAL LINKS AND COMPARATIVE INSIGHTS

By studying social problems in other countries, social workers can learn how these countries identify and define needs, and this knowledge can increase their awareness of social problems in their own societies. . . . American social workers have gained greater insights into their society's social problems by studying similar problems elsewhere. (Midgley, 1992, p. 14)

Violence as conceptualized in this book occurs on three distinct yet interrelated levels — individual, institutional, and structural and cultural — and takes different forms. The violence we see on the individual level is usually illegitimate, overt, and physical. The violence at the institutional and structural and cultural levels is often legitimate, covert, and may take nonphysical forms and thus is less readily seen. Included in this concept of violence, then, is poverty as a form

of violence that does not destroy life with a single blow as does direct physical violence, but which blocks the full development of the life potential of millions of people. Also included are patterns of exploitation and inequity, a form of institutional violence based on racist, sexist, and other oppressive ideologies not usually recognized or acknowledged.

Such broadly conceived patterns of violence are displayed worldwide and are often accompanied by maldevelopment, chronic poverty, and unfulfilled potential. As this book makes clear, neither violence prevention nor amelioration is likely to be achieved or sustained without understanding that maldevelopment is a major part of the problem and that sustainable human development is a necessary ingredient for solution. Making connections between violence in the United States and in the global South within the context of development is an approach to shared solutions that derives from “lessons without borders?” The reality of global interdependence means that we are so closely tied to events overseas that virtually every decision, however local it may seem, has an international facet. Social workers are particularly linked to the global South — where the vast majority of the world’s people live-by common manifestations of violence, specifically oppression and poverty. Three questions concerning links between violence and development in the United States and the global South were addressed throughout this book: (1) How do violence-related problems in the global South affect the United States and vice versa? (2) How are social problems in the United States similar to those in the global South, and how do they differ? and (3) What lessons can we learn from efforts of other countries to solve problems similar to ours? Table 14-1 illustrates some of the connections among poverty, violence against women and children, ethnoviolence, drug-related violence, and trauma that were discussed throughout the book in response to those questions.

## CHALLENGES FOR THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

Many social work authors have written clearly and eloquently about ways in which social work practitioners and academicians can reorient themselves to engage with problems of violence from a global perspective (see, for example, Billups, 1990, 1994; Elliott, 1993; Estes, 1992; Healy, 1988; Hoff & McNutt, 1994; Hokenstad, Khinduka, & Midgley, 1992; Lloyd, 1982; Midgley, 1990; Paiva, 1977; Spergel, 1977, 1982). Nevertheless, serious incorporation of a global consciousness into our professional identity remains an elusive goal and education for social development a marginalized effort. Similarly, although much has been written about social work concerns with violence—primarily domestic violence — the profession has been ambivalent and uncharacteristically taciturn about other issues such as the widespread use of firearms, the global arms race, war and peace, and most forms of institutional and structural violence (Bryant, 1993; Van Soest & Bryant, 1995).

**Table 14-1: Summary of Observations Concerning Violence**

Form of Violence	Global Linkages <sup>a</sup>	Comparative Insights <sup>b</sup>	Best Practices <sup>c</sup>
Poverty-related violence	Poverty-related diseases in the global South spread to United States and vice versa (e.g., vaccination against smallpox in global South saves United States hundreds of millions of dollars)	Poverty stacks the odds against normal development of children in United States and global South; poor children more likely to die from infectious diseases, suffer from all physical maladies; vaccination rates in United States compared with some countries in global South	Grassroots level strategies increase vaccination rate in global South; oral rehydration therapy used in global South is a practical, low-cost and painless alternative to treating hundreds of children hospitalized by diarrhea each year in United States
	U.S. industry jobs decrease because production is moved to global South	Worker exploitation compared; “sweat-shop” working conditions of garment workers—mostly young women and girls—in maquiladoras (factories built in part with U.S. funds in free-trade zones that receive breaks on taxes and tariffs) similar to “sweat-shop” conditions of garment workers in United States	Grassroots micro-enterprise, credit, and self-employment projects worldwide; trade union solidarity across borders; fair trade organizations
	International search for better opportunities, migration and hyper-urbanization	Family homelessness and street children, squatter settlements and floating populations	Self-help housing, Habitat for Humanity approaches, cooperatives; participatory projects
	Export of U.S. weapons to the global South fuels violence and drains resources for meeting human needs	Military expenditures are disproportionate to expenditures for social needs in both United States and the global South	Forums for disarmament, regulating the arms trade, UN mediation in conflicts, reducing military spending

**Table 14-1: Summary of Observations Concerning Violence (continued)**

Form of Violence	Global Linkages <sup>a</sup>	Comparative Insights <sup>b</sup>	Best Practices <sup>c</sup>
Gender violence and violence against children	Globalized media images of family norms and values reinforce subordination of females and children; increasingly insecure household ties; wars and militaristic values promote ideology of superiority	Comparative impacts of economic pressures and women's incomes in different types of traditional family structures; sex tourism industry exploits women and children in global South compared with sexual violation in United States	Women's self-help projects emphasizing struggle efforts and development efforts (e.g., SEWA, Grameen Bank); women's community-based education and pressure campaigns; empowerment approaches to development
Ethnoviolence	Dominant patterns of global economic development leads to unequal distribution of resources and power, repression of ethnic populations; environmental degradation leads to intensified ethnic conflict	Migration tensions; hate crimes and ethnic tensions in United States compared with ethnic clashes in the global South; pressures encouraging ethnocentric political appeals; affirmative action policy disputes	Issue-specific cross-ethnic self-help organizations; developing web of NGOs and movements that empower citizens to solve their own problems (vibrant civil societies); projects to preserve ethnic cultures; dialogue and conflict resolution groups
Drug-related violence	Global drug networks become part of global economy, evade enforcement through migration and expansion into new territories	Poverty leads poor farmers in the global South into drug production while poverty leads poor people in United States into drug consumption; gang-related informal governance compared with corruption of formal governments and businesses; traditional use of drugs compared with uncontrolled abuse	Combination of strategies related to factors such as poverty and motivation; viable alternatives to production in the global South; politicized community mobilization and mutual aid models, based on empowerment ideologies and intense peer support; holistic community processes involving prevention, coalitions, treatment

**Table 14-1: Summary of Observations Concerning Violence (continued)**

Form of Violence	Global Linkages <sup>a</sup>	Comparative Insights <sup>b</sup>	Best Practices <sup>c</sup>
Violence-related trauma	Ethnic conflict, civil unrest, and mass migration; breakdown of governance; wholesale abandonment of uncompetitive local economic sectors	Family and community breakdown in traumatized areas compared to similar issues in economically devastated U.S. towns and neighborhoods; unresolved trauma perpetuates cycle of violence worldwide	Cultural activities for healing, with grief work to mourn losses, plus self-expression in art, storytelling, drama with music and dance as metaphors for trauma, survival and spiritual rebirth

<sup>a</sup>Problems in global South affect problems in United States and vice versa

<sup>b</sup>Observations of similarities and differences here and in global South

<sup>c</sup>Lessons from experience addressing similar problems in the global South and the United States.

## A PROFESSIONAL PEACE CONSCIOUSNESS

If we are to expand the context within which social workers address social problems to include a global understanding of the relationship between violence and development, there must be a paradigmatic shift in our professional consciousness. Such a shift in consciousness calls for the social work profession to incorporate within its education and practice a fundamental and comprehensive philosophy of and commitment to peace. A professional peace consciousness for social work would be based on a positive peace concept, one that goes beyond the notion of peace as the absence of war (Boulding, 1977) to include an understanding that violence is present whenever people are not allowed to reach their full potential (Galtung, 1969). Thus, peace is inextricably linked to issues of justice, human rights, and development (Sanders & Matsuoka, 1989). Serron (1980) articulated the links thus: "Justice involves . . . a question of development: the development of a population raised to its full creative potential.... Justice in this sense is not only the development of the full potential of all that is included under the term human: it also involves the establishment of institutions which are human toward human life itself" (p. 239).

Given the reality that global problems of violence plague the lives of millions of people worldwide, adherence to a peace philosophy would inevitably mean a redirection of professional energies toward people-centered development, empowerment, development of sustainable communities, and commitment to social justice and nonviolence. All situations that threaten human life and well-being would be within the boundaries of social work concerns, including the struggles of underdeveloped communities anywhere in the world. By understanding how different levels of violence fuel each other, social workers would come to

see in a broader context the causes of—and thus expanded solutions to — violence. Equipped with an overarching framework for understanding global problems of violence, the profession could reclaim its roots in community activism and internationalism.

Several facts argue for the feasibility of bringing about such a professional peace consciousness. First, the idea is not new to social work and we have role models from whom to learn. Many of our foremothers understood global interdependence and the interrelatedness of peace and justice and were active leaders in the pursuit of social justice. Some of them, for example, proposed in 1915 not only to demand the right to vote but to transform international relations, end the war, and bring about a new world order (Bowen, 1988). Jane Addams in particular discerned the need for community development informed by knowledge and understanding of international struggles in her work at the Hull-House in Chicago. Addams expressed moral indignation about the many forms of violence worldwide that victimize primarily poor and powerless people. The message of Bertha Reynolds (1986), another of our social work foremothers who was active in the peace and social justice movements, still eloquently admonishes us:

How does the world conflict touch us, as social workers, and what do we propose to do about it? . . . Perhaps we recognize that the welfare of people is our business, but accept responsibility for only such portions of it as we can reach with our special professional skills. Beyond that, we say we can do no more than any other citizen, and national and international affairs are not in our range of competence. Nevertheless, we are affected, and deeply, by what is going on in our world. . . . It is not only as citizens, but as an organized professional group that we are challenged to take our place in the movement of today. (p. 90)

Second, social workers are in a position to understand, from first-hand experience, the consequences of violence at the structural and institutional levels. In most countries, most of their clients are poor, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised people. Wherever they practice around the globe, they do so as peacemakers already:

In all countries, social workers see themselves as agents of social change and institutional reform. In emerging nations, the social work role is cast in terms of the challenge of nation building; in divided communities social workers are expected to be agents of reconciliation.... They organize at the grassroots level and engage in advocacy and community action... they share a commitment to the values of promoting human dignity and social justice, empowering poor and vulnerable people, and encouraging intergroup harmony and goodwill. (Hokenstad et al., 1992, p. 182)

Third, the goal of peace educators and activists is essentially the goal of social work practice, that is, conceiving, gestating, and nurturing those conditions in which all can develop their capacity to be fully human (Reardon, 1988). Courage is often required in the service of such a goal, particularly when injustices create barriers to its achievement. Special courage is called for when the injustices are found within the social worker's own work environment (that is, at the institutional level of violence), because future career goals may be jeopardized. Courage was one of the characteristics of Gandhi — one of the

world's greatest peacemakers — who taught that the failure to act or demand justice, in the face of truth, can never be justified and that both individual and societal transformation are necessary for self-realization. Gandhi's ideas could be the foundation for a new professional peace consciousness for social work (Walz, Sharma, & Birnbaum, 1988).

Fourth, the central values of social work (as manifested in practice and articulated in our professional code of ethics, policy statements, and curriculum standards) emphasize social justice, equity, self-determination, and human rights. The premises that the profession accepts are, in fact, the antithesis of militaristic values that are embedded in the structural and cultural level of violence and feed violence at other levels. Crane (1986) pointed out that war and militarism are based on premises about human behavior that are inconsistent with elementary social work principles, knowledge, and skills. Table 14-2 shows some of these inconsistencies (Crane, 1986; Van Soest, 1992).

Finally, social workers are inherently well-suited for the primary role of peacemaking and community activism. In fact, the personal qualities and skills required to be effective social workers are parallel to those needed for peacemaking. Essential for peacemakers and social workers alike are human qualities such as empathy, compassion, a strong sense of self, independent identity, and critical loyalty (which makes it possible to say no to authority instead of just following orders in the face of inhumane demands), strong personal values, generosity, tolerance, the ability to perceive and forgive human weakness, imagination, and self-criticism (Keefe & Roberts, 1991).

### Table 14-2: Social Work and Peace

Social Work Values in Approaches to Change	Assumptions of War and Militarism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• humanistic/holistic</li><li>• rational, spiritual, and emotional</li><li>• interdependence</li><li>• recognition of mutual vulnerability; empowerment of others</li><li>• win-win strategies</li><li>• peace as justice and benevolence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• technological fix</li><li>• rational solutions</li><li>• independence</li><li>• control; coercion; power over others</li><li>• win-lose strategies</li><li>• peace as absence of violence or war</li></ul>

## IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Education is one of society's institutions that can stimulate positive change for the human condition and reduce global violence. The social work profession — students, faculty, and practitioners — is primed for peace education by virtue of its training, employment, and value orientation. People who are attracted to the profession have a broad concern for society and the world. Educators need to find ways to translate that concern into a more profound understanding of global peace issues and prepare future social workers to be community activists and peacemakers.

### Growing Support for Curriculum Development

There is growing support for curriculum development in this area. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), which sets the standards for social work education, recognizes that effective social work education programs must convey the concept of interdependence among nations and the need for worldwide professional cooperation. The 1994 *CSWE Handbook on Accreditation Standards and Procedures* emphasized the importance of principles of social and economic justice — social work programs are required to include in their curricula information about the consequences of oppression and about those who have been affected by social, economic, and legal bias or oppression.

In addition to support from accreditation standards, several curriculum materials were developed in the 1990s to assist social work educators. Healy's (1992) curriculum manual provides ideas and resources that help social work educators incorporate international development content in their courses, with an emphasis on issues relevant to child and family well-being and the global South. Estes' (1992) guide to resources for internationalizing social work education gives information on a broad range of issues rooted in social work, social welfare, and social development; the guide also provides models of international education that can be used in social work education and ideas about how to incorporate an international perspective in the curriculum. Van Soest's (1992) manual offers curriculum materials and suggestions about how to incorporate peace and social justice in social work education. A curriculum module developed for the Violence and Development Project of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) presents more global content in social work education concerning issues of violence and is an excellent accompaniment for faculty use in conjunction with this book (Van Soest & Crosby, 1996). Several of the curriculum manuals provide specific ideas and resources about the foundations of social work educational programs: human behavior in the social environment; social work practice; and social welfare policy, research, and field practicum.

International and peace emphases have also been fostered within the profession by collaborative practice and education-based projects of the National Association of Social Workers and CSWE. A Child and Family Well-Being Development Education Project, for example, developed curriculum materials and facilitated partnerships between some state NASW chapters and groups of social workers in the global South (Healy, 1992). A violence and development project expanded professional capacities for community building and global learning through a massive out-reach and education effort (out of which came a national teach-in week on campuses of schools of social work); produced two ground-breaking satellite videoconferences hosted by Charles Kuralt; and developed educational resources for students and educators (Van Soest & Crosby, 1996). NASW and CSWE have undertaken a follow-up initiative to further expand capacities for community building and global learning; this one will create model programs for preparing social workers to adopt and use a community and global peace perspective in their work.

## Guiding Principles for Curriculum Development

The process of socializing future social workers into a professional peace consciousness could be guided by the following principles:

**Development:** Community development is based on tapping into and building the integrity and leadership of the members of the community.... Breaking the cycle of violence is a development process that local people must direct and ultimately sustain. No imported scheme can substitute for bottom-up ingenuity.

**Participation:** If violence is an expression of powerlessness, isolation, and exclusion, then participatory community development must seek to counter it. Sustainable development must have the participation of community members. Successful participation calls for engaging people, unleashing their creativity, building their capacities, and giving them a sense of ownership.

**Reciprocity:** Successful development calls for an equitable relationship between “the givers of help” and “the recipients of help” and a blurring of who receives from whom. Assisting a community requires one to become involved with it, to learn from it, be influenced and changed by it in a sense to join it. Home-grown strategies to address violence must be retrieved and exchanged, and new methods must be devised to share learning about what works and why.

**Innovation:** As budget cuts and managed care change the face of social service delivery, U.S. social workers must become innovative. . . . As in resource-poor developing countries, accomplishing more with less and pooling re-sources to achieve otherwise impossible goals become increasingly important. The infusion of more community-wide approaches to treating societal is-sues must become part of the day-to-day jobs of social workers. Innovation demands that social workers review the root causes of problems so that they can begin to institute positive change for more people at less cost.

**Global learning:** The gap between home and abroad, between “them and us” is rapidly shrinking. Not only do so-called Third World conditions exist in neighborhoods across America, but the globalization of the economy, immigrant flows, environmental degradation, and a host of other factors all combine to make interdependency a fact of life. Armed with a more sophisticated knowledge base to analyze and understand current situations and policies, social workers can enhance their effectiveness. The search for solutions to societal problems should not be limited to U.S. communities and policies. (NASW, 1996, pp. 6-8)

## Suggested Curriculum Goals

Development of a curriculum model designed to assist future social workers in acquiring a professional peace consciousness might include the following overall goals (NASW, 1996, p. 4):

- To inspire a return to social work's roots in community activism, peacemaking, and internationalism
- To expand the context within which social workers address social problems to include a global understanding of the relationship between violence and development
- To increase the number of social workers who are comfortable crossing boundaries of culture, race, and class and who are well-versed in the historical roots and current struggles of underdeveloped communities
- To integrate the individual/group/therapeutic and macro perspectives and interventions by applying a simultaneous dual focus to situations involving violence and development issues (Billups, 1990; Hokenstad et al., 1992).

## Suggested Learning Objectives

- The following student learning objectives (Van Soest & Crosby, 1996) are suggested for curricula designed to encourage a professional peace consciousness in future social workers:
- Students will be able to describe parallel conditions of violence in the United States and in less economically advantaged nations.
- Students will demonstrate a broadened understanding of violence and the role of the social work profession in solving the problem on a global scale.
- Students will demonstrate an increased interest in learning from successful interventions by human services workers in countries in the global South and the United States.
- Students will demonstrate an awareness of social work's commitment to social justice and peace by describing how violence and oppression affect vulnerable populations throughout the world.

## Teaching and Learning Processes

Development of educational goals and objectives for a professional peace consciousness is very important and necessary, but it is not sufficient to produce that consciousness. The processes of teaching and learning are as important as the content. Two broad areas require special attention (Klein, 1987). The first is that of faculty-student relations: The educational process itself must help students learn to be nonviolent in their orientation toward, and work with, clients and communities. The second area concerns the social work practice methods that are taught in the classroom: In short, they must emphasize respect for clients' humanity, identity, and abilities. The characteristics in both areas that are listed in Table 14-3 can be summarized thus: To teach peace, nonviolence, and community activism, teaching and practice methods must be consistent with the learning objectives.

## CONCLUSION

The social work profession must find ways to address more adequately the deterioration of communities and the violence that increasingly afflicts them. The greatest and most important challenge for social workers is to become global professionals who understand the deeply embedded and submerged structural foundation of violence, which feeds violence at the institutional and individual levels in an increasingly interdependent world. A paradigmatic shift in consciousness is required if we are to understand the different layers of violence that plague our world and to reclaim our professional roots in community activism, peacemaking, and internationalism. Since the time of Jane Addams and others of her era who worked with and learned from new immigrants to the United States,

We have come full circle. . . . Our communities are once again being transformed by a worldwide demographic revolution. Driven by influences beyond our borders, people from many shores arrive here looking for a new start. The United States in general, and the social work profession in particular, are not prepared for this dramatic change. Social workers should be ahead of the national learning curve on how to build hospitable communities, and recognizing the interdependence of nations. As brokers between the old and the new, in assisting people to adjust to change, and in helping communities redefine themselves and build on their strengths, social workers need to be astute global thinkers. (NASW, 1996, p. 6)

**Table 14-3: Teaching and Practice Methodologies for Professional Peace Consciousness**

Area of Attention	Characteristic
Faculty-student relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safe classroom environment</li> </ul>
Social work practice methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sense of equality</li> <li>• active listening</li> <li>• dialogue rather than debate</li> <li>• shared problem solving and decision making</li> <li>• affirming and supporting students</li> <li>• encouraging critical thinking</li> <li>• asking for feedback</li> <li>• providing direct personal experiences</li> <li>• modeling concepts</li> <li>• removing as much of the power differential as possible</li> <li>• engaging in community development projects and experiences together</li> <li>• egalitarian in nature</li> <li>• client and community self-determination and freedom of action</li> <li>• empowerment vs. social control of clients</li> <li>• positive influence efforts vs. forms of coercion</li> <li>• community building through participatory development projects</li> <li>• reciprocal strategies</li> <li>• humanizing social institutions</li> <li>• consciousness-raising processes</li> <li>• use of cultural activities and processes</li> <li>• emphasis on interdependence</li> <li>• bottom-up social and economic development strategies</li> <li>• conflict resolution strategies</li> </ul>

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# SPEECHES

We have collected here speeches by social work leaders that address opposition to war, poverty reduction and the importance of focusing on women in international development. Each in its own way is related to promoting peace.

# US REPRESENTATIVE BARBARA LEE'S SPEECH TO CONGRESS

Representative Barbara Lee was elected to Congress in 1998 and represents California's ninth district. She received her MSW from the University of California, Berkeley. She was the only member of Congress to vote against giving President Bush war powers after the September 11, attacks. Here is the text of her statement given on the floor of the House of Representatives, September 14, 2001:

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart, one that is filled with sorrow for the families and loved ones who were killed and injured in New York, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Only the most foolish or the most callous would not understand the grief that has gripped the American people and millions across the world.

This unspeakable attack on the United States has forced me to rely on my moral compass, my conscience, and my God for direction.

September 11 changed the world. Our deepest fears now haunt us. Yet I am convinced that military action will not prevent further acts of international terrorism against the United States.

I know that this use-of-force resolution will pass although we all know that the President can wage a war even without this resolution. However difficult this vote may be, some of us must urge the use of restraint. There must be some of us who say, let's step back for a moment and think through the implications of our actions today-let us more fully understand its consequences.

We are not dealing with a conventional war. We cannot respond in a conventional manner. I do not want to see this spiral out of control. This crisis involves issues of national security, foreign policy, public safety, intelligence gathering, economics, and murder. Our response must be equally multi-faceted.

We must not rush to judgment. Far too many innocent people have already died. Our country is in mourning. If we rush to launch a counterattack, we run too great a risk that women, children, and other non-combatants will be caught in the crossfire.

Nor can we let our justified anger over these outrageous acts by vicious murderers inflame prejudice against all Arab Americans, Muslims, Southeast Asians, or any other people because of their race, religion, or ethnicity.

Finally, we must be careful not to embark on an open-ended war with neither an exit strategy nor a focused target. We cannot repeat past mistakes.

In 1964, Congress gave President Lyndon Johnson the power to “take all necessary measures” to repel attacks and prevent further aggression. In so doing, this House abandoned its own constitutional responsibilities and launched our country into years of undeclared war in Vietnam.

At that time, Senator Wayne Morse, one of two lonely votes against the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, declared, “I believe that history will record that we have made a grave mistake in subverting and circumventing the Constitution of the United States.... I believe that within the next century, future generations will look with dismay and great disappointment upon a Congress which is now about to make such a historic mistake.”

Senator Morse was correct, and I fear we make the same mistake today. And I fear the consequences.

I have agonized over this vote. But I came to grips with it in the very painful yet beautiful memorial service today at the National Cathedral. As a member of the clergy so eloquently said, “As we act, let us not become the evil that we deplore.”

# WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT: BEST PRACTICES

## SOCIAL WORK DAY AT THE UNITED NATIONS MARCH 23, 2007

*Remarks by NASW Executive Director Elizabeth J. Clark*

Dr. Clark was an invited speaker for the 24th Annual Social Work Day at the United Nations on March 23, 2007. The day is sponsored by the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work. Dr. Clark was the closing speaker for the program.

It's a privilege to be here today. NASW is always pleased to be a part of Social Work Day at the UN.

I want to begin today with a quote from a recent editorial in *The Washington Post*...

Accompanied by dogs and a helicopter swooping overhead, hundreds of Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents charged into Michael Bianco Inc., a leather-goods factory in New Bedford, Mass., that makes backpacks, ammunition pouches and other gear for GIs.

When the dust settled, the agents had arrested some 360 illegal immigrant employees at the plant, many of them women from Guatemala and other Central American nations. The workers had toiled in sweatshop conditions that allegedly included draconian restrictions on bathroom breaks, toilet paper supply, and snacking and talking at their workstations. They were seized, handcuffed, questioned and, in about 200 cases, whisked away to detention centers in New Mexico and Texas without regard to their roots in the community, their spouses or their children, including American-born children who are U.S. citizens.

The title of this editorial was "Hypocrisy on Immigration." It's a shocking editorial about life in the USA today.

Recognizing the impact of immigration on women's development, equity and safety, NASW has taken an active role in immigration issues. In 2005, the NASW-USA Delegate Assembly updated and affirmed its policy on Immigrants and Refugees, first adopted in 1996. The policy concludes:

Although daunting, the challenges of working toward fair and just immigration and refugee policies are appropriate for the profession of social work. Social workers must promote greater education and awareness of the dynamics of global migration and of the impact of US and other countries' immigration and foreign policies on human well-being and world peace and stability.

A nation that promotes family reunification, sanctuary from persecution, openness to reasonable immigration, and human rights and due process for all will be a stronger nation in the era of globalization. (NASW. (2006).

In April 2006, our President, Elvira Craig de Silva, who is with us today, spoke at the National Capitol Immigration Coalition press conference, opposing the Sensenbrenner bill. President de Silva urged opposition to the bill, exposing how it would endanger the human rights and civil liberties of immigrants, as well as making the jobs of social workers perilous by criminalizing any service to undocumented immigrants.

In 2000, the United Nations adopted The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Every social worker should know the "Millennium Development Goals". I wanted to highlight Goal 3, "Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women." Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM has stressed that gender equality is the key to achieving The Millennium Development Goals. Without progress toward gender equality and the empowerment of women, none of the MDGs will be achieved. She also said, "The issue is not lack of good practices or effective strategies. We know how change happens. The issue is how to implement strategies on a scale that is large enough to turn the tide for gender equality and women's rights and achieve national development goals."

In the United States, social workers have long been involved in advocating for and promoting gender equality. For instance, in 2004, NASW was a partner in the March for Women's Lives, the largest march ever held on the mall in Washington DC. The focus of the march was on the importance of women's health issues. Women's health issues continue to be of concern. Recently the Center for Health and Gender Equity reported that approximately 120 million individuals and couples would like to delay their next pregnancy or have no more children but don't have access to modern contraception. Additionally, over half a million women will die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth during this year, most of them from developing countries.

A large-scale approach is needed for lasting change. Social work has facilitated and continues to facilitate such change. Several years ago, NASW became a member of InterAction. InterAction is the largest alliance of U.S.-based international development and humanitarian nongovernmental organizations. With more than 160 members operating in every developing country, they work to overcome poverty, exclusion and suffering by advancing social justice and basic dignity for all.

NASW has also partnered with the People to People International Program, which is based on the idea that if people could visit each others' homes, attend their schools, and see their places of worship, then the misunderstandings, misperceptions, and resulting suspicions — which contribute to making war a viable option — would disappear. Our most recent trip was a social work conference in China, and we are now planning a similar trip to Cambodia. At NASW we continue to seek ways to connect excellent best practice in partnership with our international sister associations.

Social workers have long understood that the foundation of worldwide development involves world peace. Social workers have historically been at the forefront of peacemaking, and working for justice and human rights locally or internationally.

The founder of social work, Jane Addams, opposed World War I, and convened an International Congress of Women in 1915 at The Hague. Her efforts contributed to the founding of the League of Nations and later to the founding of this very United Nations. She remained active in peace organizations, such as the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace and the Women's Peace Party. She was the first woman from the United States to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.

Jane Addams' work was confirmed by social worker Jeannette Rankin, the first woman elected to the US Congress, who rose to oppose the United State's entrance into World War One. Just four days after taking office, she voted and broke protocol by speaking during the roll call vote, announcing, "I want to stand by my country, but I cannot vote for war." In 1929, she emphasized, "There can be no compromise with war; it cannot be reformed or controlled; cannot be disciplined into decency or codified into common sense...."

And on September 15, 2001, social worker and Congresswoman Barbara Lee furthered our peace and women's development legacy when she was the *only* member of Congress to vote against authorizing President Bush to use "all necessary and appropriate force" against anyone associated with the terrorist attacks of September 11. On the floor of the House she said, "I am convinced that military action will not prevent further acts of

international terrorism against the United States. There must be some of us who say, 'Let's step back for a moment and think through the implications of our actions today — let us more fully understand the consequences.'

Again on October 7, 2002, then NASW President, Terry Mizrahi, emphasized social work's longstanding history for peace. President Mizrahi wrote: "Dear President Bush: The National Association of Social Workers opposes unilateral, preemptive military action by the United States against Iraq. The human, social, and economic costs of war are immense. Such action should be undertaken only under imminent and immediate threat to our country, and with the sanction of the United Nations and support of our allies..."

How can there be women's development when there is no peace? No nation can prosper if it is at war and its resources are depleted in the pursuit of its own defense, amidst ethnic strife, pursuing genocide, or seeking to enhance its power over its own neighbors. Women and children are most vulnerable when displaced by war, unable to maintain basic nutritional needs. Therefore, NASW, in partnership with the International Federation of Social Workers, continued the legacy of the profession and peacebuilding when it supported United Nations' resolutions 1645 and 1646. These resolutions, adopted in December of 2005, created the Peacebuilding Commission in the United Nations as a way to recognize "the need for a dedicated institutional mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction and to assist them in laying the foundation for sustainable development..." In a letter to the Secretary General of the UN, IFSW advocated for the inclusion of social workers in the Peace Building Teams that would work on post conflict recovery and further urged that these social workers come primarily from the countries involved and that social workers also be part of the teams sent by the United Nations to craft the reconstruction and to assist in its implementation.

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) has declared this coming Tuesday as World Social Work Day. This is the first one and the theme is "Making a World of Difference." On that day, take the opportunity to think about the difference you make in the world as a social worker and about the differences that social work must make in the world.

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Note: Speech was written by Elizabeth Clark and Rebecca Meyers.

# POVERTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## SOCIAL WORK DAY AT THE UNITED NATIONS APRIL 3, 2006

*Remarks by NASW President Elvira Craig de Silva*

Millions of people die each year from absolute poverty. Could this be changed?  
Millions more children do not have access to education. Who will change this fact?  
More than 20 million people have died of AIDS since 1981. Could this have been avoided?

And more than half a million women die each year from complications brought on by pregnancy and childbirth. Who are the advocates for change? The ONE Campaign is dedicated to ending extreme poverty and all of the ills that go with it. Because of our training, education and experience as social workers we know that all of these statistics can be changed.

Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was first issued on December 10, 1948, about 60 major U.N. human rights instruments have been ratified, providing an even stronger legal mandate to protect human rights and fulfill human needs.

The most fundamental and general U.N. human rights instruments include:

- the 1945 Charter of the United Nations
  - the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights
  - the two Covenants on Human Rights from 1966
- (1) the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (including the right to life, liberty, and security
  - (2) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (which includes, the right to work, the right to social security, the right to protection of the family, and the right to an adequate standard of living).

In defense of the basic human rights to shelter, healthcare and access to food and water the National Association of Social Workers has become a partner with the ONE Campaign to alleviate extreme poverty. The Campaign is recruiting and inspiring individuals and groups to

join and to become actively engaged in ending extreme poverty. We want you to join us, and the millions around the world in support of the UN Millennium Development Goals!

We want to:

- Strengthen our capacity to engage in citizen advocacy on issues of global hunger, poverty and disease.
- Advocate for significant policies related to strengthening aid, trade and debt relief.

I am aware that you know what the UN MDGs are; however, I am an educator so I believe in reinforcement. The MDGs are to:

1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty
2. Increase Universal Primary Education
3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
4. Reduce Child Mortality
5. Improve Maternal Health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, & Other Diseases
7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability and
8. Increase Global Partnerships for Development

When leaders gathered in Mexico in 2001, 191 countries committed to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals. The goal to alleviate extreme poverty and the belief that it can be done are justified by economic studies, which show that the costs are affordable.

What can we do to continue to increase awareness of the UN Millennium Development Goals and therefore help the ONE campaign to succeed ?

- Bookmark and frequently visit the ONE Campaign website [www.ONE.org](http://www.ONE.org).
- Support International Women's Day March 8th every year.
- Participate in World Health Day April 7th every year.
- Write a letter to the Editor or an Op-Ed piece to your local newspaper.
- Submit an announcement for your school or church bulletin or civic organization.
- Watch for Advocacy Alerts from NASW and participate
- Take the opportunity to generate public awareness about the consequences of extreme poverty.

Of course we do not mean to say these are the only actions that we can take. Because each community is unique, this short list is to help inspire creativity as you return to your home communities. Become a part of the NASW-ONE Campaign Work to eradicate extreme poverty!

The background is a solid olive green color. Overlaid on this background are several large, stylized white wings, resembling those of a dove, which are spread out across the page. The wings are composed of multiple layers of feathers, creating a sense of depth and movement.

# PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Recognition of basic human rights is the necessary foundation for peace. Defending human rights is an obligation that social work embraces. Following are alerts, editorials and letters addressing human rights and opposing inhumane treatment.

# HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR DETAINEES

NASW signs on to *Amicus Brief* with other human rights organizations.

Washington — Upholding the profession of social work’s commitment to human rights and social justice, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) supports the ability of Guantanamo detainees to challenge their detention through our Constitutional system of government checks and balances.

The cases, *Boumediene v. Bush* and *Al Odah v. U.S.*, represent a clear violation of the rights of these detainees to gain access to the courts and to question the legality of their detention. The cases do not directly address the innocence or guilt of the detainees, but rather the circumstances in which they are being held and their access to independent judicial review.

“Social workers uphold the key tenets of the profession — social justice and human rights — by taking a stand against the unchecked use of power by the executive branch,” said Dr. Elvira Craig de Silva, NASW president. “We serve as advocates so that everyone may have access to justice and basic legal rights under our Constitutional system of government.”

The *NASW Code of Ethics* notes that one of the core values of the profession is social justice. To achieve social justice, governments must be able to guarantee access to due process of law.

Habeas corpus is one of the fundamental elements of the U.S. legal system. To strip courts of jurisdiction to review the legality of the detention overrides the detainees’ human rights. Social workers’ abiding concern for social justice and human rights underlies our vision of equal access to justice for all people, regardless of where they are detained and for what reason.

The *Amicus Brief* was filed by The Constitution Project, Human Rights First, Human Rights Watch and The Rutherford Institute through the efforts of a pro bono legal team from Fulbright & Jaworski in Washington, DC. NASW, along with a coalition of other non-governmental organizations, signed on to the brief, which was filed August 24, 2007.

For more information about this and other briefs that NASW files on behalf of the social work profession, please visit the NASW Legal Defense Fund at [www.socialworkers.org/ldf](http://www.socialworkers.org/ldf).

# BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE CONSULTING TEAMS — ACTION ALERT

*Luisa Lopez, MSW*

The National Association of Social Workers affirms its commitment to basic principles of ethical treatment and human rights. Our *NASW Code of Ethics* provides a broad mandate to protect human rights and dignity. Social Workers have a responsibility to speak out against inhumane treatment of people in whatever form it exists no matter what the pretext. NASW endorses the fundamental principles set forth in the human rights documents of the United Nations. These include "...the right not to be subjected to dehumanizing punishment (United Nations, 1948)", and the International Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984).

On September 15, 2006, NASW sent a letter to all members of the US Senate opposing our nation's secret detention system and insisting on the continued application of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions to all detainees.

While Senators and President Bush have come to a negotiated agreement banning most controversial tactics there is still a need to be vigilant and continue advocating for ethical treatment. The past efforts to weaken the legal protection against psychological torture by distinguishing it from physical abuse, a move condemned by the UN Committee Against Torture, have serious implications for social workers and all mental health professionals. The tentative agreement would still propose new legislation that:\*

- Allows hearsay evidence.
- Makes note of presidential authority to interpret the meaning and application of the Geneva Conventions
- Prohibits only grave breaches of the Geneva Convention defining grave breaches as acts such as torture, rape, biological experiments, and cruel and inhuman treatment.

- Allows coerced testimony if the statement was acquired before a 2005 ban on cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and a judge finds it to be reliable.
- Bars individuals from protesting violations of Geneva Convention standards in court.

In affirming our commitment to human rights, humane treatment and our code of ethics, NASW opposes the above provisions. Further, its members shall not violate the *NASW Code of Ethics* in collaborating on "Behavioral Science Consulting Teams" ("BSCT's") by designing or implementing psychologically abusive environments and techniques aimed at detainees. We join with our colleagues in the American Psychiatric Association, Physicians for Human Rights and other health professions in rejecting inhumane interrogation tactics and dehumanizing punishments.

Call your Senators and ask that this Congress do the same and reject any legislation that promotes inhumane interrogation tactics and dehumanizing punishment.

\*Retrieved from *LA Times* online, September 22, 2006; Bush bows to Senators on Detainees

# NASW PAST PRESIDENT GARY BAILEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS



...the power of social work

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March 4, 2004

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais Wilson  
52, rue des Paquis  
CH-1202 Geneva  
Switzerland

Honorable Commissioner:

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) of the United States fully supports passage of the Resolution on Non-Discrimination on Any Grounds, Including Sexual Orientation. We urge your support for the passage of this very important resolution in the 2004 session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission to be held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Hate crimes, torture, and blatant discrimination perpetuated on persons because of their sexual orientation are far too common in this world today. It is time for the United Nations Human Rights Commission to make it known to the world that discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation is a violation of human rights. Passage of the resolution will signal to the world that discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation is wrong and will encourage governments to provide adequate protection to this vulnerable population. The moral weight of this declaration will add support to the many social justice organizations that actively work to aid and protect lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgendered individuals and their families.

NASW is a member of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and is proud to endorse and support IFSW's representations on this issue.

Respectfully,

Gary Bailey, MSW  
President, NASW

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**STATEMENT**  
**of the**  
**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS**  
International Non-Governmental Organization  
in Special Consultative Status  
with the UN Economic and Social Council  
  
**to the**  
**60th Session of the**  
**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**  
  
**Agenda item 6**

Mr. Chairman,

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), a federation of 77 national associations of social workers representing a total of over 470,000 individual social workers living and working on all continents of the world wishes to lend its strong support to the resolution tabled by Brazil concerning the need to address the question of discrimination against persons and groups on account of their sexual orientation.

While the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed and adopted 56 years ago states in its Article 2 that 'Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration without distinction of any kind' ..., there is still a long way to go until discrimination in many areas is overcome. The area of sexual orientation is a case in point, and although it often arouses strong emotions, it must be addressed in a rational way based on the United Nations principle of the inalienable human rights for all.

Over past decades, many forms of discrimination have been overcome in national and international legislation, and the time has come to address also the upholding of

rights in matters of sexual orientation. One sign that the time is ripe for such consideration is the repeated reference to the issue in reports of human rights monitoring mechanisms, in documents of the III World Conference against Racism and in the Durban Declaration.

Social workers everywhere are conscious of gender issues and are trained to respect their individual or group clients irrespective of their nationality, race, religion, creed, opinion, sexual orientation and their social, financial, health or other status. The international federation that represents them hopes that the human rights of all people will ultimately be respected in all national and international legislation and custom. We therefore consider that the resolution proposed by Brazil to address the matter of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation to be a major step towards this goal, and hope that the 60th

session of the Commission on Human Rights will accept it. Finally, we would like to believe that future work on this issue will pave the way towards an end of discrimination and serious human rights violations based on sexual orientation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

# INTERNATIONAL **PERSPECTIVE**

In this section we have provided important information on initiatives, declarations, policies, and research from the United Nations, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the working group that created the Global Peace Index.

# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

September 21

The International Day of Peace is a day set aside to bring attention to the problems of violent conflict in human society. The goal of this observance is to raise awareness of peace building, conflict prevention, and other factors that contribute to peace.

The concept of an International Day of Peace has existed since 1981, but not until 2001 was there a specific day appointed to celebrate peace and to cease fire. The United Nations proclaimed the 21st of September as the International Day of Peace in 2001 through UN resolution 55/282. This day brings global awareness of the importance of peace. It also offers an opportunity to increase pressure on policy makers, governments and international organizations around the world to actively work for peace.

Peace and the message of peace is a complex matter and cannot be ensured by one entity on its own. The message is stronger if we work together with others in the U.S. and across the world to turn the International Day of Peace into a bigger strategy for awareness raising.

Visit [www.peoplebuildingpeace.org](http://www.peoplebuildingpeace.org). Stories of events taking place during the International Day of Peace will be collected on this web site.

# UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO PEACE

APPROVED BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION  
39/11 OF 12 NOVEMBER 1984

The General Assembly ,

Reaffirming that the principal aim of the United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security,

Bearing in mind the fundamental principles of international law set forth in the Charter of the United Nations,

Expressing the will and the aspirations of all peoples to eradicate war from the life of mankind and, above all, to avert a world-wide nuclear catastrophe,

Convinced that life without war serves as the primary international prerequisite for the material well-being, development and progress of countries, and for the full implementation of the rights and fundamental human freedoms proclaimed by the United Nations,

Aware that in the nuclear age the establishment of a lasting peace on Earth represents the primary condition for the preservation of human civilization and the survival of mankind,

Recognizing that the maintenance of a peaceful life for peoples is the sacred duty of each State,

1. Solemnly proclaims that the peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace;
2. Solemnly declares that the preservation of the right of peoples to peace and the promotion of its implementation constitute a fundamental obligation of each State;
3. Emphasizes that ensuring the exercise of the right of peoples to peace demands that the policies of States be directed towards the elimination of the threat of war, particularly nuclear war, the renunciation of the use of force in international relations and the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations;
4. Appeals to all States and international organizations to do their utmost to assist in implementing the right of peoples to peace through the adoption of appropriate measures at both the national and the international level.

(Source: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/peace.htm>)

# GLOBAL PEACE INDEX AND SUSTAINABILITY

Peace and sustainability are the cornerstones of humanity's survival in the 21st century. The major challenges facing humanity today are global — climate change, accessible fresh water, ever decreasing biodiversity and over population. Problems that call for global solutions and these solutions will require co-operation on a global scale unparalleled in history. Peace is the essential prerequisite, for, without peace, how can the major nations of the world co-operate to solve these issues?

The Global Peace Index is a ground-breaking milestone in the study of peace. It is the first time that an Index has been created that ranks the nations of the world by their peacefulness and identified some of the drivers of that peace. 121 countries have been ranked by their 'absence of violence', using metrics that combine both internal and external factors. Most people understand the absence of violence as an indicator of peace. This definition also allows for the measuring of peacefulness within, as well as between, nations.

Peace is a powerful concept. However, the notion of peace, and its value in the world economy, is poorly understood. Historically, peace has been seen as something won in war, or else as an altruistic ideal. There are competing definitions of peace, and most research into peace is, in fact, the study of violent conflict.

Vision of Humanity contains the results from the Global Peace Index and other material of interest on peace. It also contains a section on institutions that need help to fund peace-related initiatives. Over time this source will be updated to combine more relevant material that will demonstrate the linkages between peace and sustainability.

(Source: Retrieved from <http://www.visionofhumanity.com/index.php>)

# GLOBAL PEACE INDEX ENDORSEMENT LETTER



National Association of Social Workers

...the power of social work

May 22, 2007

Dear Mr. Killelea and GPI Team,

I am writing on behalf of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) to endorse the Global Peace Index. We agree that:

"The Global Peace Index is likely to prove a significant milestone in the study of peace as it is the first empirical study to rank nations by their peacefulness whilst also attempting to understand the specific drivers to their peacefulness. These types of studies will help form the basis for more rigorous research into peace. Without a world that is basically peaceful, it will be exceedingly difficult to solve many of the challenges facing mankind today."

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, with 150,000 members. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies. The Association's mission includes enhancing the effective functioning and well-being of individuals, families, and communities through its work and through its advocacy.

We recognize that the well being of communities is in large part dependent on stability and peace and support your work on a Global Peace Index. We look forward to opportunities to collaborate in this important effort.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elvira Craig de Silva".

Elvira Craig de Silva, DSW, ACSW  
National Association of Social Workers  
750 First St, NE  
Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20002

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750 First Street NE, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20002-4241  
(202) 408-8600 • FAX (202) 336-8310 • [www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)

# IFSW — INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT ON PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

## THE ISSUE

Whilst the threat of a nuclear holocaust has receded with the end of the Cold War, the reality remains that nuclear powers retain stocks of weaponry sufficient to kill every known human being in the world many times over. Expenditure on arms continues to grow. Less developed countries are diverting resources from urgently needed social development programmes to military build-up. In Africa and in Asia people starve while governments engage in military conflicts.

For social workers, the issues of peace and social justice are interlinked. Without a radical reappraisal of priorities throughout the world, millions will continue to live in extreme poverty. Such poverty is a denial of the human spirit. It limits the potential of human development. Physical poverty is matched by poor nutrition, poor health and poor education.

Each day social workers engage with the consequences of conflict — sometimes between two individuals, sometimes between groups and communities, and sometimes at national and international level. They know the destructive power of conflict and its capacity to bring heartache and despair in its wake. Social workers devote their energies to the peaceful resolution of conflicts. They are committed to social development and the achievement of social justice in which all living in a country are able to realise their full potential regardless of income, class, caste, religion, race or ethnicity.

The social work profession therefore at international and national level has to direct its energies to the realisation of a world free from conflict in which its vision of the future can be realised.

## BACKGROUND

Social work values assert the unique worth of the individual.

The right to life is the most basic of human rights. Yet human history not yet progressed to the point where peaceful resolution of differences is universally accepted. The brave hopes in the United Nations as the embodiment of a commitment to world peace have not been realised. Military conflict is still the way in which member states of the UN seek to resolve serious differences over territory or national identity. And even those states not immediately involved in conflict invest heavily in armaments with stockpiles of weapons at a level to destroy the planet. The sophisticated technology now in use heightens, rather than reduces, the risk of nuclear accident because of the dangers of the hitherto unknown viruses or mutations destroying internal system safeguards.

The trade in arms is a major source of income for the advanced industrial societies. It cheapens life. The resources, the ingenuity and creativity, and the government support on arms could transform social development in the world. It could provide food, water supply, housing, health care and basic education.

Social justice requires a massive shift in resources from North to South. It requires redirection of investment into socially productive activities. It requires moral leadership asserting the need for redistribution between and within societies so that adequate living standards for all could be attained. In other words, it requires an inversion of the current concentration of wealth and resources in global multi-national enterprises which pursue shareholder value rather than social justice.

## POLICY STATEMENT

1. IFSW will work in collaboration with the United Nations and international human rights organisations to promote peace and social justice.
2. IFSW will campaign for redistribution of resources from military usage to social development.
3. IFSW will promote the concepts of mediation and arbitration to secure the peaceful resolutions of conflicts between nations.
4. IFSW will work with the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) to promote curriculum development in social work schools to include conflict resolution techniques.
5. IFSW will collect information from its member associations to detail and document the impact on social development of excessive expenditure on arms.
6. IFSW reasserts its long-standing commitment to peace and non-violence, and its belief that the promotion of social justice can only be achieved through non-violent change.
7. IFSW calls upon member associations to press their national governments to pledge:
  - a) a reduction in arms expenditure
  - b) an increase in social development expenditure
  - c) renewed commitment to conflict resolution through the United Nations.

Adopted by the IFSW General Meeting in Montréal, Canada, July 2000.

(Source: Retrieved from [www.ifsw.org/en/p38000220.html](http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000220.html), September 29, 2007)

# IFSW — INTERNATIONAL POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS

## BACKGROUND HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The history of human rights is that of the struggle against exploitation of one person by another. It is based on the recognition of basic rights founded on the concept of the inherent dignity and worth of every individual.

The recognition was consolidated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Its preamble asserted "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world".

## THE BASIC INSTRUMENTS CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS ARE:

1. Charter of the United Nations (1945)
2. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
3. The Covenants on Human Rights (1966)
  - 3a. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
  - 3b. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
4. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
5. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)
6. Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984)
7. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
8. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990)

## THESE GLOBAL INSTRUMENTS ARE REINFORCED BY:

1. The European Convention on Human Rights (1950)
2. The American Convention on Human Rights (1969)
3. The African Charter on Human Rights and Peoples Rights (1981)

## THE COVENANTS AND CONVENTIONS ARE SUPPORTED BY UN DECLARATIONS:

- a. The Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons (1971)
- b. The Protection of Women and Children in Armed Conflicts (1974)
- c. The Elimination of All forms of Religious Intolerance (1981)
- d. The Right to Development (1986)

## VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Despite these agreements, gross and subtle violations of human rights are perpetrated every day against thousands of people. The phenomenon of the "disappeared", the torture of political prisoners, summary killings and arbitrary arrests, the increasing use of the death penalty, the extortion of confessions by physical and mental abuse, the manipulation of and the intellectual, emotional and moral pressures imposed on individuals in an attempt to condition their personalities, the detention of prisoners without trial, the economic exploitation of adults and children, displacement of populations due to internal conflicts — these and other violations are all too evident throughout the world. The victims of human rights abuses continue to suffer for many years as a result of their experience.

Many factors contribute to the violations of human rights. The collapse of totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe did not bring an end to the human rights abuses. The resurgence of nationalism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism in countries with established democracies, as well as in the former Eastern bloc, posed new challenges to the United Nations. In Africa, the rise of tribalism undermined the integrity of nations and led to widespread abuse of the most basic rights to life. In more than one region of the world, there has been a disturbing re-emergence of genocide in situations of armed conflict.

## SOCIAL WORK PRINCIPLES

Human Rights condenses into two words the struggle for dignity and fundamental freedoms which allow the full development of human potential. Civil and political rights have to be accompanied by economic, social and cultural rights.

Social workers serve human development through adherence to the following basic principles:

- i. Every human being has a unique value, which justifies moral consideration for that person.
- ii. Each individual has the right to self-fulfilment to the extent that it does not encroach upon the same right of others, and has an obligation to contribute to the well-being of society.
- iii. Each society, regardless of its form, should function to provide the maximum benefit for all of its members.
- iv. Social workers have a commitment to principles of social justice.
- v. Social workers have the responsibility to devote objective and disciplined knowledge and skill to work with individuals, groups, communities, and societies in their development and resolution of personal-societal conflicts and their consequences.
- vi. Social workers are expected to provide the best possible assistance without unfair discrimination on the basis of both gender, age, disability, race, colour, language, religious or political beliefs, property, sexual orientation, status or social class.
- vii. Social workers respect the basic human rights of individuals and groups as expressed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international conventions derived from that Declaration.
- viii. Social workers pay regard to the principles of privacy, confidentiality and responsible use of information in their professional work. Social workers respect justified confidentiality even when their country's legislation is in conflict with this demand.
- ix. Social workers are expected to work with their clients, working for the best interests of the clients but paying due regard to the interests of others involved. Clients are encouraged to participate as much as possible, and should be informed of the risks and likely benefits of proposed courses of action.
- x. Social workers generally expect clients to take responsibility for determining courses of action affecting their lives. Compulsion which might be necessary to solve one party's problems at the expense of the interests of others involved should take place after careful explicit evaluation of the claims of the conflicting parties. Social workers should minimise the use of legal compulsion.

- xi. Social workers make ethically justified decisions, and stand by them, paying due regard to The Ethics of Social Work - Principles and Standards adopted by the International Federation of Social Workers.

These principles, drawn from the experience of social workers in carrying out their responsibility to help people with individual and social problems, place a special responsibility on the social work profession to advance the cause of human rights throughout the world.

## ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Social workers deal with common human needs. They work to prevent or alleviate individual, group and community problems, and to improve the quality of life for all people. In doing so, they seek to uphold the rights of the individuals or groups with whom they are working.

The value base of social work with its emphasis on the unique worth of each individual has much in common with human rights theory. Social workers frequently operate in situations of conflict, and are required by their national codes of Ethics and in the international Ethical Principles and Standards to demonstrate respect for all regardless of their previous conduct. Their experience of the impact of social conditions on the capacity of individuals and communities to resolve difficulties means that they recognise that the full realisation of civil and political rights is inseparable from the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. Policies of economic and social development have, therefore, a crucial part to play in securing the extension of human rights.

As a result of their particular role and responsibility in society, social workers are often the conscience of the community. Therefore, the value system, training and experience of social workers requires that they take professional responsibility for promoting human rights. Social workers need to work with other professions and non-governmental organisations in action on human rights issues. As advocates for change, they are often in the forefront of movements for change and thus are themselves subject to repression and abuse. The IFSW Human Rights Commission was established in 1988 to support social workers under threat for pursuing their professional responsibilities.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Human rights are those fundamental entitlements that are considered to be necessary for developing each personality to the fullest. Violations of human rights are any arbitrary and selective actions that interfere with the full exercise of these fundamental entitlements.

The social work profession, through historical and empirical evidence, is convinced that the achievement of human rights for all people is a fundamental prerequisite for a caring world and the survival of the human race. It is only through the recognition and implementation of the basic concept of the inherent dignity and worth of each person that a secure and stable world can be achieved. Consequently, social workers believe that the attainment of basic human rights requires positive action by individuals, communities, nations and international groups, as well as a clear duty not to inhibit those rights.

The social work profession accepts its share of responsibility for working to oppose and eliminate all violations of human rights. Social workers must exercise this responsibility in their practice with individuals, groups and communities, in their roles as agency or organisational representatives and as citizens of a nation and the world.

IFSW, representing the social work profession internationally, proclaims the following human rights as a common standard and guide for the work of all professional social workers:

### LIFE

The value of life is central to human rights work. Social workers have not only to resist violations of human rights which threaten or diminish the quality of life, but also actively to promote life enhancing and nurturing activities.

Physical and psychological well-being is an important aspect of the quality of life. The deterioration of the environment and the non-existence of curtailment of health programmes threaten life.

Social workers assert the right of individuals and communities to have protection from preventable disease and disability.

### FREEDOM AND LIBERTY

All human beings are born free. The fundamental freedoms include the right to liberty, to freedom from slavery, to freedom from arbitrary arrest, torture, cruel inhuman or degrading treatment, and freedom of thought and speech.

Next to life itself, freedom and liberty are the most precious human values asserting the worth of human existence.

## EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The fundamental principle of equality is closely linked to principles of justice. Every person regardless of birth, gender, age, disability, race, colour, language, religious or political beliefs, property, sexual orientation, status or social class has a right to equal treatment and protection under the law.

Social workers have to ensure equal access to public services and social welfare provision in accordance with the resources of national and local governments, and have a particular responsibility to combat discrimination of any kind in their own practice.

## JUSTICE

Every person has a right to protection against arbitrary arrest or interference with privacy, and to equal protection under the law. Where laws have been violated, every person has a right to a prompt and fair trial by an objective judicial authority. Those convicted are entitled to humane treatment whose purpose is to secure the reform and social readaptation of the individual.

The impartial operation of the law is a crucial safeguard for the citizen in the administration of justice. Social justice, however, requires more than a legal system untainted by interference by the executive. It requires the satisfaction of basic human needs and the equitable distribution of resources. It requires universal access to health care and education, thus enabling the achievement of human potential. It underpins concepts of social development. In the pursuit of social justice workers may have to face conflict with powerful elite groups in any given society.

## SOLIDARITY

Every person whose fundamental freedoms are infringed has a right to support from fellow citizens. The concept of solidarity recognises the fraternity ideal of the French Revolution, and the importance of mutual support. Social workers give expression to this through the Human Rights Commission in relation to social workers whose political freedoms are infringed. In their daily practice they express solidarity with the poor and oppressed. Poverty, hunger, and homelessness are violations of human rights. Social workers stand with the disadvantaged in campaigning for social justice.

## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Social responsibility is the recognition that each of us has a responsibility to family, to community, to nation and to the world community to contribute personal talents, energy and commitment to the advancement of human rights. Those with intellectual and physical resources should utilise them to assist those less well equipped. Social work's engagement with the disadvantaged is a reflection of that responsibility. No person or collective body has the right to engage in any activity, including propaganda, to incite war, hostility, hatred, bigotry or violence, contrary to the institution and maintenance of human rights.

## PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE

Peace is more than the absence of organised conflict. It is the goal of achieving harmony with self and with others. Social workers are committed to the pursuit of non-violence. Their experience in conflict resolution teaches that mediation and arbitration are effective instruments to overcome seemingly irreconcilable differences. Non-violence does not mean passivity in the face of injustice. Social workers will resist and exercise non-violent pressure for change, but will not engage in acts of violence in the course of their professional activity. Social workers devote its energies to constructive efforts to achieve social justice.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

Humankind has trusteeship responsibility for the care of the planet. Environmental degradation poses a threat to life itself in some areas, and to the quality of life in many countries. False development models based on industrialisation, the unequal distribution of resources, excessive consumerism and ignorance of the pernicious consequences of pollution have all contributed to this global plight. Social workers need to work with community groups in tackling the consequences of environmental decline and destruction.

Approved at the IFSW General Meeting, Hong Kong, July 21 - 23, 1996

(Source: Retrieved from [ifsw.org/en/p38000212.html](http://ifsw.org/en/p38000212.html), September 29, 2007)

A large, stylized white feather graphic is centered on a green background. The feather has a central rachis with numerous barbs extending outwards, creating a sense of movement and texture. The background is a solid, muted green color.

# INFLUENCING LEGISLATION **AND POLICY**

Proposed federal legislation and executive branch initiatives included here are pending. For up to date information on their current status please see [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov).

# H.R.808: TO ESTABLISH A DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND NONVIOLENCE.

Sponsor: Representative Kucinich, Dennis J. [OH-10]  
(Introduced 2/5/2007) Cosponsors (67)

## SUMMARY AS OF 2/5/07

Department of Peace and Nonviolence Act - Establishes a Department of Peace and Nonviolence, which shall be headed by a Secretary of Peace and Nonviolence appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Sets forth the mission of the Department, including to: (1) hold peace as an organizing principle; (2) endeavor to promote justice and democratic principles to expand human rights; and (3) develop policies that promote national and international conflict prevention, nonviolent intervention, mediation, peaceful resolution of conflict, and structured mediation of conflict.

Establishes in the Department the Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Peace and Nonviolence, which shall provide assistance and make recommendations to the Secretary and the President concerning intergovernmental policies relating to peace and nonviolent conflict resolution.

Transfers to the Department the functions, assets, and personnel of various federal agencies.

Establishes a Federal Interagency Committee on Peace and Nonviolence.

Establishes Peace Day. Urges all citizens to observe and celebrate the blessings of peace and endeavor to create peace on such day.

## COSPONSORS:\*

REP ABERCROMBIE, NEIL [HI-1] - 2/5/2007  
REP ANDREWS, ROBERT E. [NJ-1] - 2/5/2007  
REP BALDWIN, TAMMY [WI-2] - 2/5/2007  
REP BOSWELL, LEONARD L. [IA-3] - 2/14/2007  
REP BROWN, CORRINE [FL-3] - 2/5/2007  
REP CARSON, JULIA [IN-7] - 2/5/2007  
REP CLAY, WM. LACY [MO-1] - 2/5/2007  
REP CLEAVER, EMANUEL [MO-5] - 2/13/2007  
REP CONYERS, JOHN, JR. [MI-14] - 2/5/2007  
REP CUMMINGS, ELIJAH E. [MD-7] - 2/5/2007  
REP DAVIS, DANNY K. [IL-7] - 2/5/2007  
REP DAVIS, SUSAN A. [CA-53] - 2/5/2007  
REP DEFazio, PETER A. [OR-4] - 2/5/2007  
REP ELLISON, KEITH [MN-5] - 2/5/2007  
REP FARR, SAM [CA-17] - 2/5/2007  
REP FATAH, CHAKA [PA-2] - 2/16/2007  
REP FILNER, BOB [CA-51] - 2/5/2007  
REP GREEN, AL [TX-9] - 2/5/2007  
REP GRIJALVA, RAUL M. [AZ-7] - 2/5/2007  
REP GUTIERREZ, LUIS V. [IL-4] - 2/13/2007  
REP HASTINGS, ALCEE L. [FL-23] - 2/13/2007  
REP HINCHEY, MAURICE D. [NY-22] - 5/1/2007  
REP HIRONO, MAZIE K. [HI-2] - 2/5/2007  
REP HOLT, RUSH D. [NJ-12] - 2/5/2007  
REP HONDA, MICHAEL M. [CA-15] - 2/5/2007  
REP JACKSON, JESSE L., JR. [IL-2] - 2/5/2007  
REP JACKSON-LEE, SHEILA [TX-18] - 2/5/2007  
REP JOHNSON, EDDIE BERNICE [TX-30] - 2/5/2007  
REP JOHNSON, HENRY C. "HANK," JR. [GA-4] - 5/21/2007  
REP JONES, STEPHANIE TUBBS [OH-11] - 2/5/2007  
REP KAPTUR, MARCY [OH-9] - 2/5/2007  
REP KILDEE, DALE E. [MI-5] - 3/1/2007  
REP KILPATRICK, CAROLYN C. [MI-13] - 2/5/2007  
REP LARSON, JOHN B. [CT-1] - 7/24/2007  
REP LEE, BARBARA [CA-9] - 2/5/2007  
REP LEWIS, JOHN [GA-5] - 2/5/2007  
REP MALONEY, CAROLYN B. [NY-14] - 2/5/2007  
REP MARKEY, EDWARD J. [MA-7] - 3/26/2007  
REP MCCOLLUM, BETTY [MN-4] - 2/13/2007  
REP McDERMOTT, JIM [WA-7] - 2/5/2007  
REP MCGOVERN, JAMES P. [MA-3] - 2/5/2007  
REP McNULTY, MICHAEL R. [NY-21] - 5/2/2007  
REP MEEKS, GREGORY W. [NY-6] - 2/5/2007  
REP MILLER, GEORGE [CA-7] - 2/5/2007  
REP MOORE, GWEN [MI-4] - 2/5/2007  
REP MORAN, JAMES P. [VA-8] - 2/5/2007  
REP NADLER, JERROLD [NY-8] - 2/5/2007  
REP NORTON, ELEANOR HOLMES [DC] - 2/5/2007  
REP OBERSTAR, JAMES L. [MN-8] - 2/14/2007  
REP OLVER, JOHN W. [MA-1] - 2/13/2007  
REP PAYNE, DONALD M. [NJ-10] - 2/5/2007  
REP RAHALL, NICK J., II [WV-3] - 3/5/2007  
REP RANGEL, CHARLES B. [NY-15] - 2/5/2007  
REP ROTHMAN, STEVEN R. [NJ-9] - 2/5/2007  
REP RYAN, TIM [OH-17] - 2/5/2007  
REP SCHAKOWSKY, JANICE D. [IL-9] - 2/5/2007  
REP SCOTT, ROBERT C. "BOBBY" [VA-3] - 2/5/2007  
REP SERRANO, JOSE E. [NY-16] - 2/5/2007  
REP SHERMAN, BRAD [CA-27] - 2/5/2007  
REP STARK, FORTNEY PETE [CA-13] - 6/13/2007  
REP TAUSCHER, ELLEN O. [CA-10] - 2/5/2007  
REP TOWNS, EDOLPHUS [NY-10] - 2/5/2007  
REP WATERS, MAXINE [CA-35] - 2/5/2007  
REP WATSON, DIANE E. [CA-33] - 2/5/2007  
REP WOOLSEY, LYNN C. [CA-6] - 2/5/2007  
REP WU, DAVID [OR-1] - 2/5/2007  
REP WYNN, ALBERT RUSSELL [MD-4] - 2/5/2007

\*As of September 15, 2007

# BARBARA LEE AND COLLEAGUES UNVEIL PLAN TO FULLY FUND WITHDRAWAL OF US TROOPS FROM IRAQ

Statement of Representative Barbara Lee and Colleagues of the Congressional Progressive Caucus and the Out of Iraq Caucus to Unveil Plan to Fully Fund Withdrawal of U.S. Troops from Iraq

THURSDAY MARCH 08, 2007

"We are here today to discuss our proposal for Congress to fully fund the safe withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq by December 31st, 2007.

"The American people sent a clear message in November — they called on Congress to bring a responsible end to the Bush administration's failed policy in Iraq, and that is what the Lee Amendment is designed to do.

"Let me briefly explain what the Lee Amendment would do.

"It would require that all funds appropriated for Iraq could be used only for the following purposes:

"First, to complete the withdrawal of all US Armed Forces and military contractors from Iraq by December 31st, 2007.

"And second, to provide for the protection of those forces and contractors during the course of that withdrawal.

"We also clarify that while this would effectively end our military occupation of Iraq, it does not prohibit or restrict funds from being used for diplomatic efforts or reconstruction.

"According to a Gallup poll out this week, 6 in 10 Americans (58 percent) want U.S. troops to be withdrawn within 12 months.

"This very simple proposal represents where the majority of Americans are with regard to Iraq, and we are in discussion with our leadership to consider this proposal in formulating the supplemental."

### THE TEXT OF THE LEE AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT TO H.R. \_\_\_\_\_, AS REPORTED

(SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS, 2007)

OFFERED BY MS. LEE OF CALIFORNIA

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. \_\_\_\_\_. (a) Funds appropriated for Operation Iraqi Freedom or otherwise made available to the Department of Defense under any provision of law may be obligated and expended within the Republic of Iraq only for the purpose of providing for —

- (1) the continued protection of members of the Armed Forces who are in Iraq participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Department of Defense contractor personnel who are in Iraq performing contracts related to such Operation, pending and during the withdrawal of such members of the Armed Forces and such contractor personnel; and
  - (2) the safe and complete withdrawal from Iraq of all members of the Armed Forces and contractor personnel described in paragraph (1) pursuant to a plan that provides for completion of the withdrawal not later than December 31, 2007.
- (b) Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed to prohibit or otherwise restrict the use of funds available to any department or agency of the United States to carry out diplomatic efforts or social and economic reconstruction activities in Iraq.

(Source: Retrieved from <http://lee.house.gov>, October 17, 2007)

# WORKING IN COALITION

Peacebuilding requires working together with other professions and organizations. NASW is a long term partner with the ONE Campaign to Make Poverty History and the Center for US Global Engagement. Both coalitions have taken on important strategies to further our nation's participation in promoting peace.

# A 21ST CENTURY VISION OF US GLOBAL LEADERSHIP BUILDING A BETTER, SAFER WORLD

## CENTER FOR US GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

The extraordinary global challenges and opportunities of the 21st century call for a new vision of America's engagement with the world. Today's U.S. investments in diplomacy and development are insufficient to promote global stability, expand the benefits of the global economy, and guarantee American security. Our increasingly interconnected world requires strong U.S. leadership to strengthen democratic governance, harness economic potential, alleviate global poverty and improve human conditions. American investments in these goals will reaffirm America's tradition of moral leadership, reduce our vulnerability to threats from destabilizing forces and improve America's image abroad. To achieve these objectives, the U.S. must use smart power — elevating diplomacy and development assistance while integrating them with our economic policies, defense and intelligence activities.

### KEEPING AMERICA SAFE: OUR BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD OFFENSE

We cannot rely on military power alone to make our nation secure. This was a key conclusion of three recent reports on national security: the 9/11 Commission Report, the 2006 Department of Defense Quadrennial Review Report, and the 2006 National Security Strategy. America's prosperity and security have become inextricably linked to the prosperity and security of other nations and their people. Diplomatic initiatives, anti-proliferation programs, international exchanges and long-term investments in the health, education and livelihood of citizens of other nations keep America safer by combating terrorism, engendering

goodwill toward the United States, and alleviating conditions that leave fragile countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan vulnerable to the influence of extremist groups.

## REVITALIZING OUR MORAL LEADERSHIP

America's innovation and investment can address some of the world's greatest challenges. Ten million children die every year of preventable diseases before age five; 77 million children don't attend school; and more than one billion people lack clean water. Over the past four decades, U.S. assistance has helped millions of people feed their families; nearly eradicated river blindness and polio; helped Mozambique and El Salvador rebound from civil war; and put hundreds of thousands of HIV/AIDS patients on life-saving anti-retroviral treatments. Doing more to help governments of poor countries offer their people hope for a better future reaffirms our American humanitarian tradition and helps strengthen America's image abroad.

## PROMOTING AND HARNESSING ECONOMIC GROWTH IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Over the past 40 years, trade has tripled as a share of our national economy. Since nearly 45% of U.S. exports go to developing countries, economic progress in those countries has a direct impact on our own. We must put in place development assistance and trade policies that will increase market access and create greater economic opportunities for both America and our trading partners.

## A CALL TO ACTION FOR THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

The next U.S. President must be prepared to tackle these challenging issues with bold new ideas that encourage global cooperation in the pursuit of freedom, security and opportunity. The next Administration needs to revitalize America's moral and pragmatic leadership by making greater investments in our diplomatic and development programs, modernizing our foreign assistance institutions, and improving the accountability and effectiveness of our foreign assistance programs.

We call on all of the 2008 Presidential candidates to elevate and strengthen our non-military tools of global engagement to build a better, safer, more prosperous America and world.

Madeleine Korbel Albright  
Secretary of State (1997-2001)  
Co-Chair, Impact '08

Frank C. Carlucci  
Secretary of Defense (1987-1989)  
Co-Chair, Impact '08

(Source: Retrieved on October 10, 2007 from  
[www.usglobalengagement.org/SignonStatement/tabid/890/Default.aspx](http://www.usglobalengagement.org/SignonStatement/tabid/890/Default.aspx))

# ONE: THE CAMPAIGN TO MAKE POVERTY HISTORY

JOIN THE MOVEMENT, END HUNGER IN THE US AND WORLDWIDE. STRENGTHEN CITIZEN ADVOCACY ON ISSUES OF GLOBAL HUNGER, POVERTY, AND DISEASE.

The United Nations in 2000, adopted the Millennium Declaration. This Declaration, and the Millennium Development Goals it inspired, represent an agreement of the global community (189 countries) to realize targets to advance social, political and economic development by 2015.

## THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS)

### Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty

- Halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and those who suffer from hunger

### Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

- Ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school

### Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality/Empower Women

- Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015

### Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

- Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five

### Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

- Reduce by three quarters the ratio of women dying in childbirth

### Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria & Other Diseases

- Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

## Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

- Reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water
- Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

## Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

- Develop further an open trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – nationally and internationally
- Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems
- In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

## THE ONE CAMPAIGN IS A GLOBAL COMMITMENT

Fighting corruption and prioritizing government spending in the social sectors are matched with commitments to ensure:

- an increase in the volume and quality of development assistance
- just and fair trade
- the elimination of debt

## THE U.S. FULFILLING ITS COMMITMENTS

The US government has a vital role to play in ensuring the alignment of debt, trade and foreign assistance policies into a coherent framework for achieving the MDGs. The US can and should do more to make sure that these goals become a reality.

## AID

- Aid should be made more effective by letting countries decide their own development priorities.
- Aid should be focused on the poorest countries and closely coordinated with other US policies that affect developing countries, such as debt servicing and trade rules.
- A substantial increase of effective aid would have an immediate impact on the self-sufficiency of millions of families.

## TRADE

- Trade agreements should be development oriented and assure that all can share in their benefits.
- Developing countries should have a greater role in setting the pace and nature of further liberalization.
- Agricultural subsidies, by the US and other industrialized nations, harm farmers in developing countries by suppressing the price by which they can sell their goods.

## DEBT

- The US government supports the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) of ongoing debt relief for 27 Least Developed Countries.
- At the 2005 G8 Summit, G8 leaders, led by the U.S. and the U.K., adopted the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI).
- The MDRI agreement provides 100 percent debt cancellation of eligible debts that are owed to the World Bank, IMF and the African Development Bank. 21 countries eligible for the HIPC program have obtained 100% cancellation

## THE U. S. ROLE IS KEY!

The ONE Campaign is an effort by Americans to rally Americans — ONE by ONE to fight the emergency of global AIDS and extreme poverty ([www.ONE.org](http://www.ONE.org)).

ONE is a broad movement of Americans from every state and walk of life, raising their voices together as ONE so that decision makers will do more. Over two million Americans and millions of people around the world are wearing the white band, the international symbol of the campaign for more and better international assistance, debt cancellation and trade reform.

## WAYS TO MAKE YOUR VOICES HEARD:

- Wear your white bands
- Bookmark and frequently visit the ONE Campaign website [www.ONE.org](http://www.ONE.org) for additional information
- Support International Women’s Day March 8th every year
- Participate in World Health Day April 7th every year
- International Literacy Day, September 8

- International Day of Peace, September 21
- World Habitat Day, First Monday in October
- World Food Day, October 16
- Write a letter to the Editor or an Op-Ed piece to your local newspaper
- Submit an announcement for your church bulletin
- Watch for advocacy alerts from NASW and participate
- Take the opportunity to generate public awareness about the consequences of extreme poverty

## IMPORTANT RESOURCES

### Millennium Declaration

In 2000, 189 heads of state agreed to the Millennium Declaration, a plan for the United Nations and its members to better address peace and security issues, development, human rights, and institutional reform of the United Nations. The Millennium Declaration is the basis for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

**The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)**, a new government corporation established on January 23, 2004, administers the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). It is designed to fulfill the administration's commitment to provide greater resources to countries that are taking greater responsibility for their development. [www.mcc.gov](http://www.mcc.gov)

### In Larger Freedom

This report, put forth by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in March 2005, reflects the interconnectedness of developing security and human rights.

<http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/>

### Africa Commission Report

The Commission for Africa was launched by the British Prime Minister Tony Blair in February 2004. The report introduces clear recommendations for the G8, EU and other wealthy countries as well as African countries. <http://www.commissionforafrica.org/index.html>

**The Millennium Campaign** has information about the MDGs as well as activities being undertaken around the world. <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>

# HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHIES: SOCIAL WORKERS **FOR PEACE**

Following are biographies of five social workers known in part for their work opposing wars and promoting peaceful solutions. There are many others who have understood the interconnectedness between chronic poverty, hunger, meeting basic human needs and peace building who are not named here. Today's generation of social workers build on solid foundations laid in earlier years.

# JANE ADDAMS

Perhaps the most influential of all social workers is Jane Addams. Famous for her Nobel Peace Prize and the founding of Hull House in Chicago, she continues to be a widely recognized symbol for the profession of social work.

Jane Addams began her academic career at Rockford Seminary where she gained her Bachelors Degree as Valedictorian of her class. After graduation, Addams was interested in a career in medicine. However, due to a congenital spine defect and poor health, Addams abandoned her medical career. Over the next few years, she traveled through Europe, reading, writing and determining what her future path would be. When Addams was 27 years old she traveled to London with her friend Ellen Gates Starr where they visited a settlement house known as Toynbee Hall. Once back in Chicago, Addams and Starr leased a house from Charles Hull and sought to begin their own settlement house. Their goal was, "to provide a center for a higher civic and social life; to institute and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises; and to investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago."

Jane Addams, along with Ellen Gates Starr saw over 2000 people at Hull House every week. They took care of children and the ill and listened to the stories of troubled people of Chicago. Kindergarten classes formed, along with programs for older children and evening classes for adults. Later came a public kitchen, a gymnasium, a book bindery, an art studio, a music school, an employment bureau, and a labor museum, among other programs.

As Hull House gained notoriety Jane Addams increased her civic responsibilities. She became something of a community organizer as she led investigations on sanitary conditions, milk supplies, narcotics consumption, and midwifery. She helped to found the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy and became the first woman President of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections.

Addams also became a passionate advocate for the peace movement. In 1906, she gave a course of lectures at the University of Wisconsin summer session which she published the next year as a book, *Newer Ideals of Peace*. She spoke for peace in 1913 at a ceremony commemorating the building of the Peace Palace at The Hague, and in the next two years, as a lecturer sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation, she spoke against

America's entry into the First World War. In January 1915, she accepted the Chairmanship of the Women's Peace Party and four months later the Presidency of the International Congress of Women. When this Congress later founded the organization called the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Jane Addams served as president until 1929, as presiding officer of its six international conferences in those years, and as honorary president for the remainder of her life.

Attacked by the press and expelled from the Daughters of the American Revolution, Jane Addams went on to assist Herbert Hoover in supplying relief supplies to women and children in enemy nations. Addams received the Nobel Peace Prize near the end of her life for all of her work on behalf of the peace movement.

### INFORMATION:

[www.nobelprize.org](http://www.nobelprize.org)

[www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/urbanexp/contents.htm](http://www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/urbanexp/contents.htm)

[wall.aa.uic.edu:62730/artifact/HullHouse.asp](http://wall.aa.uic.edu:62730/artifact/HullHouse.asp)

[www.swarthmore.edu/Library/peace/](http://www.swarthmore.edu/Library/peace/)

# JEANETTE RANKIN

Jeanette Rankin was famous not only for her work as the first woman elected to the United States House of Representatives but also as a social worker. Although she obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Biology from Montana State University, she committed herself to a life of social service after witnessing the slum conditions during a trip to Boston. She soon became a resident in the San Francisco Settlement House, then going on to the New York School of Philanthropy (later to become Columbia School of Social Work). Rankin went on to work with children in Seattle, Washington.

Driven by an intense desire to see women gain equality, Jeanette Rankin became active in politics. Originally advocating on behalf of women's suffrage in 1910, she eventually worked for the New York Woman Suffrage Association and became field secretary for the National American Woman Suffrage Association. During the impending First World War, Rankin turned her attention to peace and became a staunch advocate for the peace movement. She quickly realized that the best avenue in which to achieve her goals would be to run for office. Before women had the right to vote, Jeanette Rankin became the first woman elected to the United States House of Representatives.

Rankin voted against the United States' entry into World War I, saying in 1917, "I still believe war is a stupid and futile way of attempting to settle international difficulties. I believe war can be avoided and will be avoided when the people, the men and women in America, as well as in Germany, have the controlling voice in their government. Today special interests are controlling the world." Rankin's anti war stance proved remarkably unfavorable and she lost her seat in the House of Representatives. However in 1939 she was elected to Congress again. She cast the single dissenting vote against the United States entering World War II saying, "As a woman, I can't go to war and I refuse to send anyone else."

Rankin was driven by her commitment to social service throughout her career. She advocated not only for peace and suffrage, but consistently for civil liberties, equal wages, women's issues including birth control, and child welfare. She embodied the spirit of social work and was truly a pioneer in the areas of peace and equality.

### INFORMATION:

[www.womenshistory.about.com](http://www.womenshistory.about.com)

[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

[www.rankinfoundation.org](http://www.rankinfoundation.org)

[www.peaceisawomansjob.com](http://www.peaceisawomansjob.com)

[www.greatwomen.org](http://www.greatwomen.org)

# E. FRANKLIN FRAZIER

Dr. Edward Franklin Frazier was perhaps most famous for his book, *The Negro Family in the United States*, which was released in 1939 and analyzed the many influences on the African American family since the time of slavery. Formally trained in sociology, Dr. Frazier spent a year as a Russell Sage Foundation fellow at the New York School of Social Work (later Columbia School of Social Work). He also accepted an appointment at Atlanta University where he served as the director of the Atlanta School of Social Work. Frazier focused most of his studies on race relations, going as far to call racial prejudice a form of insanity. He continually analyzed our societal structure in terms of race, prejudice and inequality issues. He worked until his death for economic, political and social equality for African Americans.

Dr. Frazier was also bitterly opposed to war and during World War I published an anti war pamphlet entitled *God and War*. He described the battle as “imperialistic conflict” and his pamphlet was the first anti-war publication from an African American intellectual.

In 1995, the E. Franklin Frazier Center for Social Work Research was established at the School of Social Work at Howard University. During Dr. Frazier’s career he produced nine books and over 100 articles and essays challenging research in the field of social work to engage and advocate for African Americans.

## American Sociological Association

[http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/governance/past\\_officers/presidents/e\\_franklin\\_frazier](http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/governance/past_officers/presidents/e_franklin_frazier)

# CHANDLER OWEN

Chandler Owen was a member of the United States Socialist Party and began a Marxist newspaper in 1917, called "The Messenger". The newspaper didn't propose to change the system of capitalism, but rather to create a more just society free of racism and human exploitation. Mr. Owen was a recipient of one of the first social work fellowships, sponsored by the National Urban League to study at the New York School of Philanthropy. "His studies led into radical philosophy and instilled a deep commitment to socialism as the solution to the problems confronting African Americans."

Mr. Owen was an anti war advocate and sought to find peaceful solutions to conflicts at home in terms of race relations, as well as abroad in international conflict. Owen and friend A. Philip Randolph became known as "two leaders who did more than anyone else to focus the attention of the government and of the thinking whites on the injustices suffered by Negroes during the war. While the old leaders capitulated and urged the members of the race to submit while the war was on, the two brilliant young men spoke out fearlessly." "The Messenger" gained notoriety due to opposition from the War Department. In 1918 Owens and Randolph went on a lecture tour, appealing to the American people to petition Congress to agree to a negotiated peace, and bring European conflict to an end. Both were arrested by general marshals on a charge of treason. The presiding judge dismissed the case as a consequence of war hysteria.

[http://www.africawithin.com/jgjackson/black\\_atheists.htm](http://www.africawithin.com/jgjackson/black_atheists.htm)

<http://www.newsandletters.org/Issues/1997/Nov/11-97br.html>

Andrews, J & Reisch, M. (2001). *The Road Not Taken: A History of Radical Social Work in the United States*. New York, NY. Psychology Press.

# BERTHA CAPEN REYNOLDS

As early as 1908, Bertha Capen Reynolds described her professional goal as a desire to “help poor people and the Negro and to be able to earn her living”. Ms. Reynolds went on to receive her BS in 1908 from Smith College and attended a two year course in social work at Simmons College. After graduation, she worked in Boston at a North End Health Clinic. When Smith College began a psychiatric social work program, Reynolds entered the first class in 1917-1918. After completing her program, she taught in the program, becoming Associate Dean in 1925. Administrative tensions with the Dean, including her attempts at unionizing college personnel and her avowed Marxist thinking lead to her termination in 1938. Reynolds went on to work with the Maritime Union and wrote a book on her casework that showed her respect and sensitivity to the population with which she worked.

Ms. Reynolds was often criticized for her early work condemning capitalism. As a leader among radical social workers, she applied this thinking to areas of clinical practice and social work education. During the McCarthy era, Reynolds was cast out of the profession she had done so much to build with only a few progressive defenders. Bertha Capen Reynolds believed that “catastrophes like war, cyclic economic depression, chronic poverty, hunger and a host of others, and their effects upon the human condition, and on a global scale, are but the symptoms of underlying causes which are rooted in societal values and systems; therefore, the searchlight should beamed on, and work directed to, the elimination of the causes.” Reynolds is best known for her work at eradicating the root causes of war.

<http://www.socialwelfareactionalliance.org/roots.html>

<http://www.naswfoundation.org/pioneers/r/reynolds.htm>

<http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/sophiasmith/mnsss58.html>

<http://www.swaarochester.org/whoweare.php>

A large, stylized feather graphic in a light olive green color, positioned behind the text. The feather has a central rachis and numerous barbs that fan out, creating a sense of depth and texture. The background is a solid, slightly darker shade of olive green.

# CONCLUSION

# CONCLUSION

*Luisa Lopez, MSW*

The involvement of social work in working for peace is critical and multifaceted. Preventing violence and meeting basic human needs are common themes for social workers. Working with communities and transforming systems to include social justice and human rights are central to the profession's efforts in social change. Activism and engaging in strategic nonviolent action are also imperative. Trauma, and healing individuals and communities that have experienced trauma, is a focus of social work as well as a focus in creating peace. All of the above elements, common elements in social work, are key in strategic peacebuilding.

Oftentimes social workers seem unaware of the many skills we have to offer in peacebuilding. As a profession that is comfortable in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary settings, we are easily able to collaborate with other key players in creating communities and systems that support and sustain peace.

In the last two decades, the field of peacebuilding has gained recognition and grown around the world. While in the early 1980s no university offered degree programs in conflict transformation and peacebuilding, today there are numerous universities that offer courses as well as bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in peace. Social work is one of many professions that has pertinent skills to offer in peacebuilding. We are joined by diplomats, development experts, economists, military personnel, religious and political leaders, lawyers and many others. Each profession, with a different set of skills, may have different approaches to peace and even different concepts of how to achieve social change.

The vision of constructively addressing conflict and preventing or ending violence is a vision shared by many. This Peace Policy Toolkit is a collection of letters, articles and policies that the National Association of Social Workers — calling on the work of its members and partner organizations — has created to emphasize the ongoing importance of working for peace, and the role of peacemaking in our profession.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## U.S. BASED PEACE ORGANIZATIONS

**THE CARTER CENTER** — has domestic, global, and human rights initiatives. Affiliated with Emory University in Georgia. [www.cartercenter.org](http://www.cartercenter.org)

**ACT: ALLIANCE FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION** — “A Non-Profit Dedicated to Building Peace”. Based in Alexandria, VA [www.conflictransformation.org](http://www.conflictransformation.org)

**UNITED FOR PEACE & JUSTICE** — consisting of various other groups and organizations to organize events across the US (including here in DC) and take a proactive stance to war, etc. [www.unitedforpeace.org](http://www.unitedforpeace.org)

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL** — [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

**NONVIOLENCE.ORG** — [www.nonviolence.org](http://www.nonviolence.org) has a long listing of peace related organizations based in the U.S.

**UNIVERSAL GIVING** — web-based organization that facilitates the receipts/distributions of monies collected and volunteerism around the world. [www.universalgiving.org](http://www.universalgiving.org)

**GREENPEACE INTERNATIONAL** — social/environmental/humanitarian group, probably the most easily recognized group around the world. [www.greenpeace.org](http://www.greenpeace.org)

**PLOUGHSHARES FUND** — mostly anti-weaponry group who also offer grants. [www.ploughshares.org](http://www.ploughshares.org)

## PEACE ENDOWMENT GROUPS

**CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE** — [www.carnegieendowment.org](http://www.carnegieendowment.org)

**CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION** — private philanthropy based in Michigan. [www.mott.org](http://www.mott.org)

**FORD FOUNDATION** — offers various grants for projects around the world. [www.fordfound.org](http://www.fordfound.org)

**COTTONWOOD FOUNDATION** — has an environmental focus in addition to a social focus. [www.cottonwoodfdn.org](http://www.cottonwoodfdn.org)



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