



International Federation of Social Workers
Fédération Internationale des Travailleurs Sociaux
Federación Internacional de Trabajadores sociales

21 November 2014

Tēnā koutou

Dear colleagues

This message is to wish you all the most successful 50th Adversary of ANZASW. It is with a heavy heart that I cannot be with you to enjoy the occasion.

ANZASW is prized member of the International Federation of Social Workers and has made significant contributions to international social work. In recent years Aotearoa / New Zealand has had an extraordinary high input at the IFSW leadership level with Buster Curson, Fiona Robertson and most recently Rose Henderson all having worked or working as regionally or globally elected Officers of the international Executive Committee. Indeed at a recent international meeting, which included Marie Connolly in her capacity as host of the 2014 Work Social Work Conference, the meeting chair paused and asked why was it that such a small country could have such a high proportion of international representatives? This was a good question.

There would be many answers to such a question but one observation is that Aotearoa / New Zealand social workers have spent many years coming to terms with and continuing to learn about 'bicultural social work practice'. This has enabled practitioners to understand different cultural approaches and to be wary of what can be often-horrific problems of applying an outside social work model to a local situation. I believe this commitment to biculturalism has enabled social workers from Aotearoa / New Zealand to have confidence in the global context. To make honest and open exchanges with practitioner from Argentina through to Zimbabwe and all the countries that fall between these alphabetic poles.

ANZASW has played a major part in leading and advocating for bicultural social work practice. The successive leaderships of the Association have taken the responsibility to formulate Practice Standards and Codes of Ethic that insist that practice develops so that it can support the aspirations of all the peoples of Aotearoa / New Zealand. Perhaps, the unexpected bi-product was that others in the world would recognize the skills and value them for building social work at the global level.

Again, wishing you a wonderful celebration – it is so well deserved!

Rory Truell
IFSW Secretary-General

P.O. Box 6875 • Schwarztorstrasse 22 • 3001 Berne • Switzerland
Email: rory.truell@ifsw.org • Phone: +41 22 548 34 46