

IASSW PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE JANUARY 2025 BOARD MEETING

Reporting term: 1 July – 31 December 2024

Delhi, India

1. Introduction

With gratitude for the support of the IASSW Board and the broader constituency, I present this first report marking the beginning of my term as IASSW President for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2028.

I extend my congratulations to the newly elected members of the Board of Directors elected for the 2024–2028 term:

- Secretary: Janestic Mwendu Twikirize (Uganda)
- Members-at-Large: Auschala Chalayonnavin (Thailand) and Sabine Bahrer-Kohler (Germany).

I look forward to working with the Board, as well as current and future IASSW members, to promote social work education at global, regional, and local levels. It is a special term as our efforts will culminate in the centenary celebration of IASSW in 2028, in partnership with the International Council for Social Welfare (ICSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW).

In the early months of my term, I focused on a series of online meetings involving IASSW Office Bearers, the Immediate Past President, Regional Presidents, Chairs of IASSW Committees, and other relevant stakeholders and partners. The primary goal of these meetings was to familiarise the new leadership with ongoing initiatives, successes, and challenges, in order to shape a collective vision for the next four years. Additionally, I prioritised building networks and exploring collaboration opportunities for IASSW. These efforts have informed the agenda of the planning meeting scheduled for January 2025 in India.

This report provides an overview of these meetings, including the individuals involved and the corresponding dates. The next section discusses the interactions with stakeholders and partners, followed by invitations and presentations representing IASSW. The report ends with a brief conclusion.

2. Meetings with IASSW Board Directors, Committee Chairs, and Stakeholders

A series of meetings have provided the new leadership with valuable insights into IASSW's diverse global and regional engagements, covering both administrative and operational activities. Most of these meetings were also attended by the Secretary, and Executive Officer.

2.1 Meeting with Immediate Past President

In addition to informal discussions as necessary, I had an online meeting with Prof Annamaria Campanini on transition issues on 22 July 2024

2.2 Office bearers' meetings

The Office Bearers – President, Secretary, Treasurer and Executive Officer, maintain ongoing communications via e-mail and WhatsApp. In addition, we also had scheduled meetings on the following dates:

- 5 July 2024
- 8 November 2024
- 11 December 2024

2.3 Meetings with Regional Presidents / IASSW Vice-Presidents

Meetings were held with the following leaders:

- President of EASSW, Christos Panagiotopoulos: 30 July 2024
- President of APASWE, David Rose: 2 August 2024
- President of NACASSW, Carole Carpot: 6 August 2024
- Newly elected President of NACASSW, Golam Mathbor: 11 September 2024
- Representative of Latin America Region, Nélide D. Ramírez Naranjo (President: Sonica Brito Rodri): 10 October 2024

Discussions during these meetings addressed several key topics, including:

- Strengthening partnerships between IASSW and Regional Associations.
- Promoting collaborations and information sharing among Regional Associations.
- Enhancing cooperation with Regional Presidents.
- Expectations and ideas to co-develop IASSW and Regional Associations' activities.

2.4 Meetings with Chairs of IASSW Committees

Meetings with Committee Chairs provided valuable insights for advancing international social work and strengthening IASSW's contributions. These meetings included:

- Chair of Human Rights and Social Justice, Ms Janet Walker: 10 September 2024

- Chair of Research, Minna Zechner: 4 September 2024
- Chair of International Projects, Alex Altshuler: 4 September 2024
- Chair of Honors and Awards, Halaevalu F.O. Vakalahi: 26 August 2024.
- IASSW Main Representative at the United Nations, New York, Lynne Healy: 4 October 2024.

The meeting covered several related priorities, including the upcoming Second World Social Development Summit in 2025, World Social Work Day (WSWD), social work intern(s), the UN Newsletter, and IASSW's further engagement in strengthening social work and social development.

- Chair of Communication and Publication Committee, Carolyn Noble: 9 October 2024
The discussion centered on the Springer Book series and *Social Dialogue*.

2.5 Other Key Meetings

- Member at large, Auschala Chalayonnavin and her colleague, Pred Evanson: 12 July 2024. We discussed the possible hosting of the Board of Directors meeting in Thailand in June 2025.
- Capacity Building and Board Meeting Host in India in January 2025, Prof Pamela Singla: 6 July 2024. We planned the upcoming Board meeting, structuring of the capacity building workshop, and relevant logistic matters.
- IASSW Website Technical Team: 26 August 2024. The addressed ongoing website challenges.
- Springer Book Series Publisher, Executive Editor, Janet Kim, and Immediate Past IASSW President, Annamaria Campanini: 18 December 2024. We clarified issues related to the IASSW-Springer Brief partnership and the role of series' and book editors.
- Prof. Monika Alamdar-Niemann, Professur für Soziale Arbeit, Germany: 4 October 2024. Prof Alamdar-Niemann expressed interest in joining IASSW's activities following her official retirement in 2024. Her extensive expertise will be a valuable asset to IASSW.

2.7 Stakeholders and partnerships

- **United Nations Informal Briefing for Stakeholders at the UN Headquarters: 25 November 2025**
Lynne Healy (in person) and I (online) attended an informal briefing regarding preparations for the Second World Social Summit on Social Development in 2025. The meeting was convened by H.E. Mr. Philippe Kridelka, Permanent Representative of

Belgium to the UN, and H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the UN, in their capacity as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental preparatory process leading up to the Summit. The briefing provided an opportunity for NGOs to share their views on the Summit. Lynne Healy represented the position of social work education. However, disappointedly so, no further details were provided on NGO engagement in the Summit.

- **Partnership outreach with the International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD), Center for Social Development (CSD), and Center for Social Development in Africa:** 27 September 2024. IASSW agreed in principle to cooperate in partnership on the Second World Summit on Social Development. Prof Lynne Healy will continue to provide updates regarding NGO participation in the Summit.
- **Meeting with David Jones:** 11 July 2024. We discussed the work of Commonwealth Institutions, particularly the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work, and explored opportunities for collaboration with IASSW.

3. Tripartite Meetings

The Presidents of IASSW, ICSW, and IFSW met on 30 September 2024. The three organisations adopted the recommendations of the Global Taskforce for the World Social Work Day (WSWD) 2025 theme. The final theme is: “Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing”. This theme emphasises the importance of intergenerational care and respect in building strong societies, sustaining the environment, and sharing wisdom for a better future. The Presidents agreed that the theme’s poster and content for WSWD 2025 would be released simultaneously by all three organisations on 2 December 2024.

4. Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training

As a member of the E-learning Series team on the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training, I am actively involved in all ongoing meetings and activities related to this initiative.

5. Global Taskforce for Social Work and Social Development

I represent IASSW on the Global Taskforce. The final theme for the Global Agenda 2020-2030 in 2028 has not yet been decided. As noted in Section 3, the Global Taskforce recommended the theme for WSWD 2025 to the Presidents for approval.

6. Social Work and Social Development (SWSD) World Conference 2026

Date: 26th – 29th June 2026

The IASSW, ICSW, and IFSW World Social Work and Social Development Conference (#SWSD2026) will be held from 26 – 29 June 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya. The conference will be hosted by the Kenya National Association of Social Workers and the conference theme is: “Harambee for Sustainable Shared Futures”. “Harambee”, a Swahili word, means “all pull together”. For more information, please visit the website:

<https://www.iassw-aiets.org/2024/06/01/save-the-date-swsd-2026/>

7. International travel and representing IASSW

I am grateful to the colleagues in Japan and China who invited me to participate in conferences and meet many colleagues while creating opportunities to connect IASSW.

7.1 Invitation to Japan

My first invitation as incoming president of IASSW came from the Japanese Society for the Study of Social Work to deliver the Keynote address at the 41st Annual Conference of the Japan Academy of Social Work, held at Tokyo Metropolitan University on 29-30 June 2024. The topic of my presentation was: “Global Agenda for Social Work & Social Development: Co-building inclusive social transformation.” This presentation was later revised and submitted as a contribution to the *Japanese Journal of Social Work*, which was submitted in July 2024. I also visited the Japanese Association for Social Work Education (JASWE), gaining valuing insights into social work and social work education in Japan.

7.2 Invitation to China

I was invited by the Peking University-The Hong Kong Polytechnic University China Social Work Research Centre to participate in the International Conference on “Synthesizing Knowledge: Chinese Social Work Practice Research and Its Dialogue with the World”, held on 30 November to 1 December, 2024, at Peking University in Beijing, China. I presented a plenary paper on the theme: “A Child-Centered Practice Research Framework for Social Work in Synthesising Global Knowledge and Local Insights for Sustainable Development”. The conference provided a valuable networking opportunity for IASSW, fostering engagement with current and aspiring members.

8. Greeting messages via video clips

On invitation, I prepared the following messages:

- A congratulatory message for the opening session of the China Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) on the occasion of their 30th conference, celebrating their achievements in November 2024.

- Welcome greetings to participants of the 3rd International Summer School delivered welcome greetings to participants of the 3rd International Summer School on the Role of Social Work in Policy Practice in the 21st Century, organised by the Southeast Europe Academic Women's Leadership Network. Date: 2-5 September 2024, Sofia, Bulgaria.

9. Springer Book Series

I contributed the foreword to the book titled *Research- and Practice-Based Models for Advancing Social Work Education*, edited by N.T. Tan.

10. Conclusion

The nature of IASSW's committee activities is of significant importance in advancing international social work and promoting social work education at global, regional, and local levels. The outcomes of the meetings and activities outlined in this report will be included in the agenda for discussion at the Board's planning meeting in January 2025.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Rasmi Pandey, Executive Officer, for her role in facilitating the meetings and orienting the new leadership over the past few months. I also appreciate the support and collaboration of the other Office Bearers, the Immediate Past President, the Regional Presidents, the Chairs of Committees, and every Board member who actively contributed to making this period a rewarding beginning for planning the way forward.

My best wishes to all for a blessed and prosperous New Year in 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Prof. Antoinette Lombard, PhD.

President, International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)

Professor in Social Work, University of Pretoria