



National Association of Social Workers - Zimbabwe (NASW-Z),

WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY

**Speech by the President of the National
Association of Social Workers – Zimbabwe
(NASW-Z),
Mr. Gift Saladi**

19 March 2024

Harare Gardens

- Director of Ceremony, Mr Tinashe Anderson Maburu
- Deputy Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Hon. Mercy Mercy Maruva-Dinha (MP)
- Director Social Development, Mr Tawanda Zimhunga and all Government officials here present,
- President of the International Federation of Social Workers, Dr Noel Muridzo,
- The Chairperson of the Council Social Workers in Zimbabwe, Mr Ncube and officials from the Council of Social Workers Zimbabwe,
- Chairpersons of department of social work from various institutions of higher learning,
- Government departments and representative of private sector institutions
- Fellow social workers
- Distinguished delegates
- Invited guests
- Students
- Ladies and gentlemen
- Comrades and friends.

1.1 TODAY MARKS THE 17th EDITION OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY. THE FIRST WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY WAS CELEBRATED IN 2007 UNDER THE THEME “SOCIAL WORK -MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE”. THE INITIATIVE OF CELEBRATING WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY WAS APPROVED BY THE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (IFSW) AT THE GENERAL MEETING IN ADELAIDE, 2004.

1.2 IT IS MY HONOR AND PRIVILEGE TO EXPRESS MY PROFOUND GRATITUDE TO THE MIISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE FOR ACCEPTING OUR INVITATION DESPITE THE SHORT NOTICE AND BUSY SCHEDULE. THE GESTURE RENDERED TO THE SOCIAL WORKERS AND THE PROFESSION WILL NOT GO UNNOTICED. WE ARE GRATTFUL (FELOW SOCIAL WORKERS, LADIES AND GENTLEMAN) FOR THE EXCELLENT FACILITY AT OUR DISPOSAL BY THE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WORKERS WHICH SHOULD NO DOUBT INSPIRE US TO SUCCESSFULLY HOST THE COMMEMORATIONS OF THE 2024 GLOBAL SOCIAL WORK DAY.

1.3 WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY IS A CELEBRATION THAT AIMS TO HIGHLIGHT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOCIAL WORK, TO RAISE

THE VISIBILITY OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE FUTURE OF SOCIETIES, AND TO DEFEND SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS. EVERY YEAR, WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY IS CELEBRATED THE THIRD TUESDAY OF MARCH, IT IS A CELEBRATION THAT HAS BECOME A HIGHPOINT IN THE SOCIAL WORK CALENDAR WITH SOCIAL WORKERS ALL OVER THE WORLD CELEBRATING AND PROMOTING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PROFESSION TO INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND WIDER SOCIETY.

1.4 THOUGH SOCIAL WORK HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN A FORMAL PROFESSION, SOME PRACTICE OF IT HAS LONG BEEN IN PLACE IN THE FORM OF CHARITY AND PHILANTHROPIC WORK. HOWEVER, THE PROFESSION IS QUITE SCIENTIFIC AND RECENT, ORIGINATING IN 19TH CENTURY ENGLAND AND SPURRED TO EXISTENCE BY THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION. IT IS BASED ON CASEWORK, SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION, RESEARCH, POVERTY RELIEF, SOCIAL PROTECTION, SOCIAL ACTION AMONG OTHERS.

1.5 OVERALL, IT IS AN EXCITING INTERDISCIPLINARY AND ECLECTIC PROFESSION THAT REQUIRES A BACKGROUND IN PSYCHOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY AS EVIDENCED BY MOST UNIVERSITIES PROVIDING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION THE HAVE DESIGNED CURRICULUM THATB ACCOMMODATES

INTRODUCTORY COURSES TO STUDENT FOR BETTER CONCEPTUALIZATION.

1.6 SOMETHING THAT MAKES NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH EXTRA FUN IS THE YEARLY THEMES. EACH YEAR'S THEME IS BASED ON A SOCIAL ISSUE THAT NASW WANTS TO BRING TO LIGHT. SOME OF THE BIGGEST PAST THEMES INCLUDE HIV/AIDS, CHILDREN IN POVERTY, RACIAL AND ETHNIC HARMONY, GLOBALIZATION, CLIMATE CHANGE, DEVELOPMENT, INCLUSIVITY, AGING PARENTS.

2.0 THIS YEAR'S COMMEMORATION THEME

2.1 WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY TAKES PLACE TODAY THE 19TH OF MARCH 2024. THIS YEAR'S THEME IS 'BUEN VIVIR: SHARED FUTURE FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE', WHICH IS ROOTED IN THE GLOBAL AGENDA AND EMPHASIZES THE NEED FOR SOCIAL WORKERS TO ADOPT INNOVATIVE, COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES THAT ARE GROUNDED IN INDIGENOUS WISDOM AND HARMONIOUS COEXISTENCE WITH NATURE.

2.2 THIS THEME RESONATES WELL WITH OUR EDUCATION 5.0 HERITAGE-BASED PHILOSOPHY OF HIGHER EDUCATION THAT ENCOMPASSES FIVE CRITICAL COMPONENTS, NAMELY, MODEL

TEACHING AND LEARNING, COMMUNITY SERVICE, RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND INDUSTRIALIZATION.

2.3 WE WANT TO APPLAUD THE SECOND REPUBLIC FOR THEIR EFFORT IN TRANSITIONING A BILL INTO AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT WHICH IS TRANSFORMATIVE AND WILL GO A LONG WAY IN THE PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN IN ZIMBABWE

2.4 THIS THE LADIES AND GENTLEMEN RESONATES WELL WITH THE CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND ASPIRATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK AROUND THE GLOBE. OUR WORLD FACES MULTIFACETED CRISIS, RANGING FROM VIOLENT CONFLICTS, ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION, PERSISTING POVERTY, POLITICAL DISPARITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE (IN VIEW OF THE PREVAILING ELNINO INDUCED DROUGHT AND DECREASED HARVEST THERE IS NEED FOR A TRANSFORMATIONAL APPROACH TO RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

2.5 AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, SOCIAL WORK MUST EVOLVE AND ADOPT INNOVATIVE, TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES THAT ARE COMMUNITY-LED AND STEEPED IN INDIGENOUS WISDOM. CENTRAL TO THIS TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IS THE PRINCIPLE OF “BUEN VIVIR”, EMPHASIZING THAT TRUE WELL-BEING IS ACHIEVABLE WHEN COMMUNITIES LIVE HARMONIOUSLY WITH

NATURE, STRIVING COLLECTIVELY FOR BALANCED DEVELOPMENT.

2.6 FELLOW SOCIAL WORKERS, THIS THEME “BUEN VIVIR” SHARED FUTURE FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE UNDERSCORES THE NEED FOR SOCIAL WORKERS TO ADOPT INNOVATIVE, COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES THAT ARE GROUNDED IN INDIGENOUS WISDOM. THE CALL FOR SOCIAL WORKERS TO FOCUS MORE ON DEVELOPING MORE INDIGENIZED THEORIES AND MOVE TOWARDS DECOLONIZATION OF SOCIAL WORK. THE DECOLONIZATION OF SOCIAL WORK AGENDA SHOULD BE POPULARIZED IN THE ACADEMIA TO PAVE WAY FOR INDGENOUS SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES THAT IS ENTRENCHED IN OUR CULTURE.

2.7 THIS INDIGENOUS PHILOSOPHY (BUEN VIVIR) UNDERSCORES THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERCONNECTIVITY, RECIPROCITY, CORRESPONDENCE, AND COMPLEMENTARITY IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS AND OUR BOND WITH NATURE. OUR GOAL IS TO CHAMPION THIS PRINCIPLE, FOSTERING AN ECO-SOCIAL WORLD THAT THRIVES ON INCLUSION, RESPECT, MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING, AND THE UPHOLDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

2.7.1 ANNAMARIA CAMPANINI, IASSW PRESIDENT, SAID “THE GLOBAL AGENDA ISN’T JUST A BLUEPRINT; IT’S A TESTAMENT TO OUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT. AS WE NAVIGATE THE COMPLEXITIES OF OUR WORLD, THIS AGENDA SERVES AS A BEACON, GUIDING THE PATH FOR SOCIAL WORKERS EVERYWHERE, ENSURING WE REMAIN ANCHORED TO OUR CORE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.”

2.7.2 SANG-MOK SUH, ICSW PRESIDENT, ADDED: “THIS THEME ENCAPSULATES THE ESSENCE OF WHAT SOCIAL WORK STANDS FOR. IT SERVES AS A REMINDER THAT TO BRING ABOUT MEANINGFUL CHANGE, WE MUST EMBRACE COMMUNITY-DRIVEN INITIATIVES THAT ARE GROUNDED IN INDIGENOUS WISDOM AND HARMONIOUS COEXISTENCE WITH NATURE. IT’S A CALL FOR UNITY, COLLABORATION, AND TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION.”

2.7.3 JOACHIM MUMBA, IFSW PRESIDENT, COMMENTED: BUEN VIVIR RESONATES DEEPLY WITH THE CORE VALUES OF SOCIAL WORK. AS WE CELEBRATE WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY, LET’S EMBRACE THIS PRINCIPLE AND CHAMPION A FUTURE WHERE COMMUNITIES AND NATURE COEXIST IN HARMONY A FUTURE WHERE SOCIAL WORKERS WILL, TOGETHER WITH LOCAL

**PEOPLE CO-DESIGN AND CO-BUILD PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES
CRITICAL TO OUR SHARED SUSTAINABLE FUTURES.”**

**3. THIS THEME SERVES AS A TIMELY REMINDER OF THE
TRANSFORMATIVE ROLE SOCIAL WORKERS PLAY IN DRIVING
POSITIVE CHANGE AND FOSTERING COMMUNITIES THAT THRIVE
ON MUTUAL RESPECT AND SUSTAINABILITY.**

HAPPY SOCIAL WORK DAY!

I THANK YOU.