

Record of Proceedings of the 33rd ISSA General Assembly

33rd General Assembly, 15 October 2019
International Social Security Association

ISSA/GA/33/PV

R E C O R D O F P R O C E E D I N G S **of the 33rd General Assembly of the ISSA**

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The PRESIDENT opened the 33rd Session of the General Assembly by informing the delegates of the passing on 14 October 2019 of Mr William Gardey, President of the National Health Insurance Fund of France and member of the ISSA Bureau, and he requested the General Assembly to observe a minute of silence in his memory.
2. He then welcomed the delegates, informed them of the importance of the General Assembly in the governance of the ISSA and thanked the hosts of the World Social Security Forum for their hospitality.
3. In line with *Article 13* of the ISSA Constitution, the PRESIDENT informed the General Assembly that the Bureau at its 119th Meeting designated the following Chair- and Vice-Chairpersons of the 33rd General Assembly.

Chairperson of the 33rd General Assembly:

- Mr Koen SNYDERS, Director General, National Social Security Office, Belgium

Vice-Chairpersons of the 33rd General Assembly:

- Ms Hamdah AL-SHAMSI, Adviser to the Chairman of the Board, Public Authority for Social Insurance, Oman;
- Ms Rosario OIZ MARQUEZ, Director, Social Insurance Bank, Uruguay;
- His Royal Highness Prince LONKHOKHELA DLAMINI, Chief Executive Officer, Eswatini National Provident Fund, Eswatini.

4. The PRESIDENT then invited Mr SNYDERS to take over the Chairpersonship of the General Assembly.

5. Mr SNYDERS took the floor, welcomed all delegates to Brussels, and thanked the ISSA Bureau for nominating him as Chairperson of the General Assembly.

Report of activities of the Association 2017-2019

6. Upon invitation by the CHAIRPERSON, the SECRETARY GENERAL presented his report on the activities of the Association during the triennium 2017-2019 by means of a Powerpoint presentation.
7. Beginning with the accomplishments regarding the ISSA Guidelines and the Centre for Excellence, the SECRETARY GENERAL reported that in addition to the preparation of a new set of ISSA Guidelines on Error, Evasion and Fraud and new chapters of the ICT Guidelines, eight Guidelines that had been launched in 2013 were reviewed and updated in collaboration with the ISSA Technical Commissions. He also highlighted the increase in the number of good practices linked to the Guidelines, in the service provision of the Centre for Excellence, including technical advice and support, academy workshops and diploma training, and in the number of institutions that have successfully applied for ISSA recognition.

8. The SECRETARY GENERAL emphasized that studies and activities on innovation and the ten global challenges for social security represented an important work stream for the General Secretariat, the Technical Commissions and the regional structures. He outlined that this work resulted in a number of publications, including the global and regional reports on 10 global challenges for social security, a number of reports prepared by the General Secretariat and the Technical Commissions and special issues of the *International Social Security Review*. As regards social security knowledge provision, the SECRETARY GENERAL also informed that the ISSA social security country profiles that contain unique and up-to-date information on social security systems in 183 countries and territories were updated regularly and constituted a source for important international publications such as the World Social Protection Report of the International Labour Office (ILO).

9. The SECRETARY GENERAL then recalled that the ISSA had organized 75 conferences and workshops during the triennium as well as 46 ISSA Academy training courses, 20 meetings of statutory bodies and 20 meetings of the ISSA Prevention Sections. Having welcomed around 10,800 delegates at ISSA events during the triennium, he highlighted the important role that the ISSA plays as a platform for member institutions to meet and exchange. He informed that a number of novelties had also been introduced in the ISSA meeting programme during the triennium, both in terms of methodology and types of events.

10. The SECRETARY GENERAL then reported on activities to develop collaborations with partner organizations and strengthen the voice of the ISSA to promote social security at the international level. He in particular outlined the positive development in the long-standing collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the ISSA's sister organization, and a number of other organizations and platforms such as the United Nations, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) or the G20 group.

11. In terms of programme delivery, the SECRETARY GENERAL highlighted the paramount role played by the 17 ISSA regional structures and the 13 ISSA Technical Commissions in the development and implementation of the ISSA activities. Expressing his gratitude to all member representatives who had been active in these structures and Commissions, he emphasized that this member involvement and engagement is one of the unique strengths of the Association.

12. The SECRETARY GENERAL concluded by reporting that the triennium 2017-2019 was a successful one in terms of meeting the objectives established by the Bureau and the Council, but that the ISSA activities must be further developed during the next triennium in order to respond to evolving member demands for more responsive, tailored and practical knowledge and services.

13. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the SECRETARY GENERAL for his presentation and requested the General Assembly to adopt his report.

14. The General Assembly adopted the report of the Secretary General on activities by acclamation.

15. The CHAIRPERSON then gave the floor to the ISSA PRESIDENT who also thanked the ISSA member institutions that have made the impressive programme of activities implemented during the triennium possible. He emphasized that the ISSA is a member driven organization and asked that a video with impressions of the triennium be shown.

16. The ISSA PRESIDENT proceeded by asking the Chair- and Vice-Chairpersons of the General Assembly about their impressions of the triennium and the value that their engagement in the ISSA brings to them and their institutions.

17. The PRESIDENT first asked Mr. SNYDERS about what he considered the role of the ISSA in facilitating international cooperation in the area of social security, and what had been the reasons for the exceptional commitment of Belgium to host the World Social Security Forum.

18. Mr SNYDERS first emphasized that social security is a fundamental human right and that much work remains to be done to ensure that all people enjoy access to social security. He then outlined the unique role of the ISSA as a world leader in social security that can bring experts and practitioners, and in general people in charge of social protection, together to promote various activities to strengthen social security around the world. Concerning the second question, he responded that Belgian institutions have been very active in the Association since its foundation and that the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the social security system in Belgium in 2019 provided an ideal occasion for the hosting of the Forum. He closed his remarks by thanking all the participants for their presence in the event and in Belgium.

19. Explaining that the Social Insurance Bank of Uruguay has been a very active member institution and hosted the ISSA Regional Social Security Forum for the Americas, the ISSA President then asked Ms OIZ MÁRQUEZ what she considered the value of the ISSA to her and her colleagues, and what had motived her institution to host the Regional Social Security Forum.

20. After thanking the Bureau for having appointed her as Vice-Chairperson of the General Assembly, Ms OIZ MÁRQUEZ emphasized that the high engagement of the four member institutions from Uruguay was a result of the high value they receive from this engagement in the Association. She explained that the reason for which the social security institutions of Uruguay had organized the Regional Social Security Forum had been that such events are indispensable to ensure the qualification, training and information exchanges that are necessary to provide and ensure the fundamental human right to social security.

21. Considering that Ms Al-Shamsi had been the Chairperson of one of the ISSA Technical Commissions during the triennium and that many of the staff of her institution had taken part in ISSA workshops and training courses, the ISSA PRESIDENT also asked her about the reasons for this engagement in the ISSA.

22. Ms AL-SHAMSI responded that the ISSA provides an important platform for exchanging knowledge and experiences, and that she felt honored to having had the opportunity to be both a member of the ISSA Bureau and provide leadership to one of the Technical Commissions in which more than 20 prestigious institutions had been represented. She highlighted that a part of the training budget of her institution had been allocated to participating in the ISSA Academy Diploma training program and that 96 staff members had already benefited from this training. She further explained that her institution had also been actively engaged in a number of other activities including the Regional Forum for Asia and the Pacific and the ISSA Good Practice Award competition. Concluding her remarks, Ms AL-SHAMSI said that she is looking forward to an even more active and fruitful collaboration between her institution and the ISSA.

23. The ISSA PRESIDENT finally asked His Royal Highness Prince Lonkhokhela Dlamini about the value of the ISSA for his institution during the triennium, and in particular what had motivated his institution to take leadership by hosting the ISSA Liaison Office for Southern Africa.

24. At the outset of his remarks, HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS sent regards from his country, his Minister and his institution. He then explained that his institution was a relatively small one that found it was necessary to be part of a bigger family and that the objectives of the ISSA to promote social security, including through good governance and administrative excellence of social security institutions, was the reason for them to join and engage in the ISSA. His Royal Highness then emphasized that the benefits for his institution from being a member of the ISSA in terms of capacity-building and knowledge sharing with institutions from Africa and elsewhere could not be quantified.

25. The PRINCE then highlighted that the reason to host the Liaison office and to thereby take his institution's commitment with the ISSA one-step forward was to identify problems encountered by the region and to strengthen the impact of ISSA on the institutions of the region. He concluded by saying that the two years of hosting the Office have been a positive and rewarding experience without any complaints from the regional membership or the ISSA General Secretariat.

26. The ISSA PRESIDENT thanked the Chair- and Vice-Chairpersons for their informative remarks representing a wide range of active ways of engaging with the ISSA, and then handed the floor over to the CHAIRPERSON who in turn gave the floor to the delegation of France to make an announcement.

27. Mr TESSON from the Central Agency of Social Security Bodies in France introduced a project proposal of the French member institutions of the ISSA to establish a World Day on Social Security. Taking into account the key role of social security for individuals and societies and considering that there were already a number of other World Days on related topics such as Health or Occupational Health, he expressed regret that there is currently no World Day on Social Security. He explained that World Days are designated by the United Nations General Assembly upon the proposal of a country and explained that the French member institutions are in the process of preparing such a proposal. He then requested the support of the ISSA and its global membership to the proposal to designate 4 October, date of establishment of the ISSA, as the World Day on Social Security.

28. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the French member institutions of the ISSA for this initiative and gave the floor to the ISSA PRESIDENT who expressed his full support and invited the General Assembly to express its opinion. The General Assembly unanimously supported the proposal to designate 4 October as the World Day on Social Security.

29. Before the closing of the General Assembly, the ISSA leadership awarded the ISSA medal of merit to Mr Johan Verstraeten, Honorary President of the ISSA, for his outstanding services to the Association and to the promotion of social security throughout the world. In addition, the leadership of the Association recognized persons and institutions who had made a special contribution to the many ISSA activities during the 2017-2019 triennium, including the hosts of the Regional Social Security Forums and the International Professional Conferences, the hosts of the ISSA Regional Structures and the Chairpersons of the Technical Commissions.

30. After these recognitions, the CHAIRPERSON gave the floor to the PRESIDENT who thanked the delegates for their attendance and closed the Session of the 33rd General Assembly of the ISSA held in Brussels, Belgium on 15 October 2019.

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