

WUS AUSTRIA INTERNATIONAL

World University Service (WUS) is one of the oldest NGOs to be engaged in human rights. Already after the First World War, WUS contributed to the reconciliation of the various European nations by organizing student exchanges and supporting disadvantaged students.

(Prof. Dr. Manfred Nowak)

world university service is a voluntary association of university people, students, staff and administrators, working together for the material and intellectual advancement of the international academic community.

organisation

The governing body of WUS is the General Assembly, which meets biennially. The Assembly discusses and approves the international programme of action, grants status to WUS National Committees, and elects the Executive Committee, which governs the organisation between meetings of the Assembly.

The administrative agency of WUS is the International Secretariat (13 Rue Colvin, Geneva, Switzerland). The Secretariat administers international funds, organises international meetings such as seminars on student health or cooperative enterprises, and produces the international WUS publications.

programme

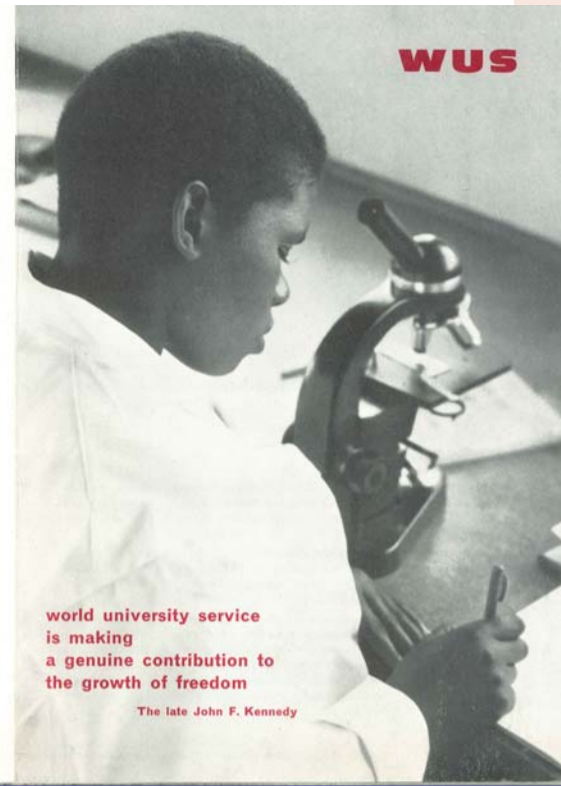
The international WUS programme amounts to more than 1.7 million Swiss francs (\$400,000 or £140,000) per year. The total programme, sum of the international programme and the various national programmes, is some eight times this amount. The financial backbone of the international programme consists of donations by individual students and students groups, professors, and other sources within the university community. In order to expand the self-help activities of WUS, additional funds are now being sought from non-university sources, such as foundations, business concerns, and international governmental agencies.

publications

The voice of WUS to the university community is "WUS in Action", published in English, Spanish and French. The International Secretariat also publishes reports and research documents on its work in the field of student health, co-operative enterprises, community development and education in developing countries.

World University Service Secretariat 13, rue Colvin, Geneva

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world university service is making a genuine contribution to the growth of freedom
The late John F. Kennedy

1920

"European Student Relief" was founded (in a Viennese cafe) by an inter-religious British initiative in order to support students of the University of Vienna, who were in a desperate situation after the First World War.

1950

"European Student Relief" changed its name to "World University Service - WUS".

WUS is organised as a loose federation of more than forty independent country committees with an International Management Board, presently chaired by WUS Canada. It has consultative status within the United Nations and UNESCO.

The first foundation of an Austrian WUS Committee took place after the Second World War, but it did not stay active for long.

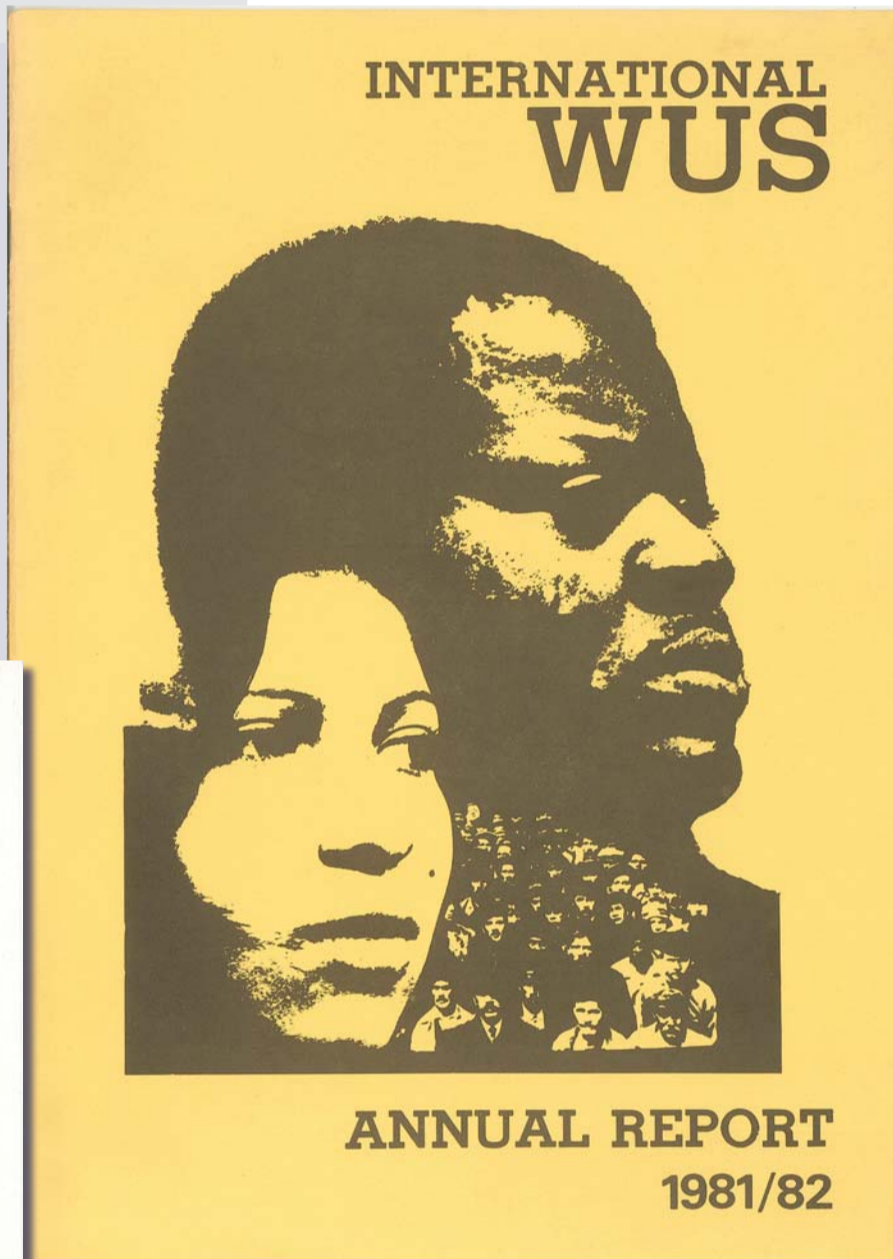
1983

"World University Service - Austrian Committee" was re-founded in Graz with three active groups in Graz, Vienna and Salzburg.



End of the 80s - WUS International "Strategy Meeting for WUS 2000". Issa Salim, PhD, today Chairman of WUS Palestina (in the middle) and Prof. Wolfgang Benedek, Chairman of WUS Austria (4th from the right) with collaborators.

Beginning of the 80s - WUS Austria Flyer



1988 - WUS International meeting. Harald Dossi, PhD (in the middle), today Head of the Department for European Affairs in the Austrian Federal Chancellery, and Prof. Wolfgang Benedek, Chairman of WUS Austria (right)



WORLD UNIVERSITY SERVICE (WUS) CELEBRATES ITS 70TH ANNIVERSARY

To celebrate its 70th Anniversary, World University Service held a seminar on "WUS's contribution to Education, Human Rights and Development" at the University of Geneva on 9 April 1990.

Participants included representatives from a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations with which WUS has close working relations, as well as educationalists, former staff of WUS and long-standing friends of the organisation.

Mr. Stoltenberg's speech

Among a number of notable speakers was the new UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Thorvald Stoltenberg, whose first encounter with refugee work was with WUS in 1952 when he was a member of the Norwegian WUS committee.

Mr. Stoltenberg evoked in particular his activities in 1955-57 as representative of WUS in Vienna, where the organisation was responsible for 12 camps for Hungarian refugees, assisting many university teachers and students. Reflecting on the issues that were dealt with during that period, he was convinced that there were very much the same issues we are discussing today. 'Charity versus solidarity, a new international economic order based on common interest, debt relief, and others which are still a challenge in the present time. Responding to Nigel Hawley, General Secretary of WUS, who in his intervention had expressed concern that current interest in Eastern Europe could endanger support for the South, he recognised the evidence of that risk, but felt nevertheless that compared to the period of

WUS and Human Rights

Manfred Nowak from WUS Austria focused on WUS and human rights, explaining that changes occurred in world politics and long-term trends during the 1980s were the major reason why WUS had considered necessary to expand its focus to human rights issues. The failure of traditional development strate-

gies and the painful realization that the gap between the North and the South had broadened instead of declined, and the fact that human rights had become an accepted principle in world politics and a new source of hope in resolving problems, has made human rights a cause for drastic and sometimes revolutionary social and political changes.

Referring to WUS's efforts to establish a distinct role in the field of human rights, he defined WUS as an organisation promoting the right to education at all levels, protecting the rights of students, university teachers and other members of the academic community and promoting academic freedom and university autonomy as concepts guaranteeing the proper functioning of teaching and research. As to the concrete work being done by WUS he mentioned:

"The adoption in 1988 of the 'Lima Declaration on Academic Freedom and Autonomy of Institutions of Higher Education', of which more than 4000 copies in several languages have been distributed.

"Regular participation at meetings of the UN Human Rights Commission and its Sub-Commission with, for example, well-documented statements on the human rights situation in the Palestinian Occupied Territories, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Sri Lanka or South Africa."

GUIDELINES ON NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE



WORLD UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Until 1990

WUS International was mainly involved in supporting higher education in Africa and Latin America and offered thousands of refugee-students the chance to proceed with their education.

Today

WUS Austria is a member of WUS International. Besides the Head Office in Graz, WUS Austria has operative offices in Belgrade, Podgorica, Pristina and Sarajevo and focal points in further 7 countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldavia, Rumania, Slovenia).

WORLD UNIVERSITY SERVICE
PALESTINE (WUS-P)



1998 in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates - Prof. Manfred Nowak and Prof. Wolfgang Benedek after a meeting with his Majesty, the Emir of Sharjah