



35th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council 35^{ème} Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

Minutes of the 10th meeting

held on 27 November 2017 at 1:30 p.m. in Room C.529

Council members present: ALMARIO Francis, ALMEIDA Patricia, APOSTOLOV Mario, BALY Mohamed, CHANTREL Dominique, CHAOUI Prisca, GAZIYEV Jamshid, NWABUOGU Gloria, PECK ARIF Catherine, RICHARDS Ian, STANOVIC Marko, TAPORAIE Amos, TOUHIRI Mohssen, VESTERMAN Claire.

Council members absent: ASFAW Tensai, BEN AYED Slim, FEGLI Catherine, FUNCK Samuel, JAMES Elizabeth, KALOTAY Kalman, KELLY Paul, MELLET Johnny, NOBLAT-PIANTA Virginie, POPA Gabriela, ROUAI Slim.

The meeting opened at 1:40 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

Following a brief discussion, the agenda was adopted with changes as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 9th meeting

Following a discussion, the minutes of the 9th meeting were adopted with changes as recorded by the Council's secretariat.

3. Report of the Finance Commission

The FC reported that the CCISUA treasurer had recently asked the Council for its bank details to enact the bank transfer concerning the CCISUA receivable, which should arrive in the Council accounts soon. It was also reported that the selected external auditor will review the Council's 2016-2017 financial year during January and it is thus expected that a report will be available at the next staff GA.

4. Report of the Executive Bureau

The Executive Secretary, Mr. Richards, reported to the Council plenary on the work of the EB since the 9th meeting on the following points:

- a. Upcoming Staff Gala on 8/12/2017 (which will include a professional plus a staff band; quotes for technical services will be obtained; noted that there was lack of interest in staff who had initially volunteered to organise a parade or talent show);
- b. CCISUA had transferred the funds for amounts receivable, which the Council should be receiving soon;
- c. Sabbatical programme in OHCHR, whereby a preselection of candidates was deemed to be not transparent and the issue was raised with Management;
- d. Time management issues in ECE whereby the Bureau had intervened against a request for staff to record any deviation from the standard 8.30-5.30 work hours in Umoja;
- e. Global harassment survey, to be drafted and coordinated with other staff unions in other duty stations;
- f. UNOG WG on staff well-being, which will be co-chaired by the Council and the Staff Counsellor;
- g. Office arrangements: The Council was reminded that correct behaviour and respect is expected towards Council personnel as email exchanges were recalled which did not adhere to said principle. It was said that the Council office is available to provide information to all staff representatives, but such requests from those who had engaged in inappropriate email should henceforth be addressed

to the President and/or the ES and DES. A discussion followed. Seeing no objection, the Council agreed on such procedure.

5. 2017 Inter-Agency Games subsidy request

The Council looked at the request from the Sports Commission to subsidize the participation of the staff at the Inter-Agency Games 2017 that had taken place in Vienna earlier in the year. It was noted that, unlike previous years where the participation costs included accommodation, this year the fees charged to participants were exclusively for the cost of the games (EUR 250) with them having to cover their own accommodation.

The Council recalled its usual practice in previous years of subsidizing 50% of the cost including accommodation for dues-paying members. It noted the EB's recommendation to approve the subsidy, which could be greater than the usual 50% due to the exceptional circumstance regarding accommodation. Following a discussion, the Council agreed that the 2017 subsidy for dues-paying members could exceptionally be of 100% for the explained reason.

The above approval is for a total of EUR 6'000.00, taking into account 24 identified dues-paying members at a rate of EUR 250 per dues-paying member.

6. Mid-term CCISUA GA and mission to NY

Reference was made to the recent broadcast on the subject. It was recalled that the Council's delegation attended the CCISUA mid-term GA, addressed the 5th Committee and met with Member States, and that the mission served well to share experiences and coordinate positions with other staff unions. The Council was informed that the main topics addressed throughout the mission were the ICSC pay cuts, GSDM, Pension Fund administration, among others. A discussion followed.

A suggestion was raised to implement a mission report requirement for staff representatives who travel on behalf of the Council in order to keep the Council informed, noting that in general UN staff who travel on behalf of the UN must submit individual reports upon their return. It was however argued that if the point is to inform the Council and the staff, then the report that is normally circulated via broadcast to all staff met that standard is enough, which would render individual mission reports repetitive and unnecessary in the context of the Council. It was further added that CCISUA will send out a report of its mid-term GA in the near future.

7. Pay cut

The Council discussed the pay cut in the context of the GA and whether it would reverse the ICSC decision on the matter by reinstating a gap closure or margin of error at 5 percent instead of 3 percent. The Council also referred to the information regarding the pay cut that had already circulated via broadcast and noted that legal actions continue at the level of the UNDT.

8. GSDM

It was recalled that during the recent mission to NY the issue of GSDM was discussed with Member States, notably explaining to them better alternatives to GSDM - an article had been published on iSeek to this end. The Council also recalled the recent townhall on GSDM where staff were briefed about mitigating measures. A discussion followed on various aspects of the expected GSDM implementation.

9. SHP

The Council noted Management's request to Member States for funds to condition the old Palais buildings for hot-desking, and recalled that the Council's delegation in NY expressed its concerns to Member States regarding SHP. It also noted that the ACABQ report to the 5th Committee on the subject is still to be issued. A discussion followed on the process and the different plans being evaluated by SHP.

Mr. Touhiri left the meeting at this point.

10. Management reform

It was noted that the subject of management reform had been covered under the previous headings.

11. Intimidation against staff representatives

It was brought to the attention of the Council the intimidation by Administration towards staff representatives. The Council expressed its concern about the trend whereby most times when the Council raises an issue within its mandate it is accused by Management of either interfering with the proper functioning of the Organization, or circumventing the rules, or being defamatory. The Council noted that the EB had decided to raise the issue with the DG, which had been done. Council members agreed to subscribe a joint letter of complaint within a week.

12. OCHA

The Council recalled the organisational restructuring within OCHA and its efforts to ensure that transparency and staff rules on downsizing are respected. Concerns were raised regarding management of staff and the handling of contracts in OCHA.

13. UN Beach Club

The Council recalled that UNOG Administration had been displeased at how the UN Beach Club was run in earlier years and that in mid-2017 an interim committee was established to manage it between the Council and Administration. It noted with approval that since then that said body has become less of a club and more a staff facility. The Council was informed that UNOG Administration has now requested that the interim provisions become permanent and that new statutes be drafted to that effect, thus cementing such UN plot of land as a staff facility, to be operated under the Council jointly with Management in an arrangement similar to that of SAFI.

The Council was made aware of a current problem with the children's water playground at the Beach, whereby the children's pool cannot be chemically treated to maintain it safe as it is not connected to the city's water evacuation system and its drain goes into the lake, due to which it needs to be filled with water every two days to be usable. Such situation required a high maintenance cost, is not eco-friendly, and still generates complaints from staff using the facilities. A proposal was raised to invest approximately CHF 60'000 in the renovation of the children's water playground. Such proposal was said to be in benefit of staff as it would benefit the children of those who attend the Beach, and it would cement the stake of the Council on the plot of land. The Council agreed to the principle of such expenditure and to obtain at least 3 quotes before deciding on the final spending amount.

14. CCISUA receivable

Reference was made to what had already been mentioned regarding the Council's CCISUA receivable.

Ms. Peck Arif and Ms. Nwabuogu left the meeting at this point, after which the quorum was lost but the meeting continued on an informative basis for the members present.

15. Work programme

An inquiry was raised as to whether the Council should discuss individually the progress of each item of its work programme so far, and whether the discussion in itself should be listed as an agenda item. A discussion followed whereby the majority of those present agreed that there was no need for such a detailed discussion as the work programme of the Council was developed and discussed on an ongoing basis, and several reports were continuously sent to staff at large in the form of broadcasts.

16. Staff gala

Reference was made to what was said under the item "Report of the Executive Bureau". A brief discussion followed on a suggestion raised to provide free meals to all staff during the Staff Gala, to which the majority of those present disagreed due to the cost, and recalled that such right is reserved only for dues-paying members of the Council thereby establishing a specific benefit for dues-paying members.

17. Any other business

No other business was raised.

The meeting closed at 3:10 p.m.