



31st UNOG Staff Coordinating Council 31e Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

Minutes of the 5th meeting
held on 27 June 2013 at 11:00 a.m. in Room IV

Special session on staff-management relations

Present: Ian Richards, Mohamed Chiraz Baly, Elizabeth James, Jamshid Gaziyeu, John Gillies, David Koné, Catherine Peck-Arif, Rajamani Ramasamy, Mohssen Touihri, Gloria Nwabuogu, Samira El Garah, Dan Lin, Evelina Rioukhina, Zhongchao Hua, Ahmed Ghailan, Vladislav Chouvalov, Nazir Koheele, Marko Stanovic, Mohamed Doumbouya Fode, Samuel Funck Thomaz.

The meeting started at 11:00 a.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted unanimously as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 4th meeting of the 31st Council

The Council decided unanimously to adopt the minutes of its 4th meeting, registered accordingly in the Council records.

3. Presentation of the outcome of Staff-Management Committee (SMC) and discussion of strategy on way forward, including cooperation with other unions

The President, Mr. Ian Richards, briefed the Council on the functioning of the SMC system, the changes proposed by Management to ST/SGB/2011/6 following GA resolution 67/255, and the events that happened during SMC II in Mexico City. He mentioned how it is believed on the staff side that the current SGB on SMC is compatible with the Staff Rules, and how the proposed changes may take away any negotiation rights of staff. Mr. Richards indicated that according to the current SMC rules, mediation should be the next step vis-à-vis the disagreement in Mexico City. It was also indicated that whilst the Secretary-General insists that he is duty-bound to respect the resolution of the GA, it was in fact he himself who by means of a letter dated October 2012 requested the GA to address the issue of negotiation. It was mentioned that the Administration's new form of consultation was to circulate items via email requesting comments.

Mr. Richards, in his capacity of -recently elected- Vice-president of the SMC, continued to elaborate on the strategy currently being formulated in coordination with all the other staff unions of the SMC system. He outlined the objective of this strategy and pointed out its major aspects: internal and external communication, legal issues, and mobilization. He said that staff need to mobilize the Member States for support in New York, quoting Ms. Lin Dan as an example when she mobilized Member States in support of mobility last December.

A proposal was circulated to the Council to allocate funds for the abovementioned strategy. At the local level: to avail to the extent necessary of approximately CHF 300'000 to fully fund legal action for dues-paying colleagues where negotiation and consultation rights are not respected. At the global level: 1) authorize and fund 6 missions to New York that will include the leadership summit (two persons), lobbying activities, and official travel of the Vice-president of the SMC; 2) make available CHF 50'000 for legal and other professional services in support of strategy agreed with other unions.

A discussion followed among the Council members about the strategy and proposal. It was made clear that the CHF 300'000 already exist in the Council's accounts and that such allocation will not impact the budget for other planned Council activities. It was said that the work is being split out between the staff unions. Legal actions are already taking shape. Acquiring visibility both inside and outside the Organization is a key component. Several Council members signaled to the Council the urgency and time-sensitiveness of the issues at hand.

It was also mentioned that staff members may individually suffer the consequences of actions by Management where negotiation and consultation rights are not respected. Mr. Chiraz Baly proposed that for these cases the Council should cover 100% of any legal fees. The proposal seeks to emphasize and prioritize those cases where negotiation and consultation is affected and make sure Council's funds are focused on this.

Mr. Ahmed Ghailan, after thanking our representatives and unions for staying unified facing the Administration, proposed that the CHF 300'000 initially discussed be divided into different phases, starting with a first allotment of CHF 100'000, at which point of exhaustion the Council should be presented with a proposal to approve a second phase. As suggested by other Council members, Mr. Ghailan supported the idea that the Executive Bureau will evaluate and approve the related expenses.

In unanimous agreement, the Council:

- 1) Approves an allocation of CHF 300'000, with an initial allotment of CHF 100'000 where remaining funds shall require further approval, to fully fund legal action for any staff members under the protection of the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council, whether dues-paying member or not, where negotiation and consultation rights are not respected.
- 2) Approves an allocation of CHF 50'000 to cover the costs of various travel related to staff-management relations, including official travel of the Vice-president of the SMC.
- 3) Approves the allocation of CHF 50'000 for legal and other professional services in support of the strategy agreed with other unions.
- 4) Instructs the Executive Bureau to evaluate and approve the expenses under the funds hereby allocated.

4. Any other business

No other issue was raised by the Council members.

The meeting ended at 12:45 p.m.