



## 35<sup>th</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council 35<sup>ème</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

### Minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting

held on 29 August 2017 at 1:30 p.m. in Room XXII

**Council members present:** ALMARIO Francis, ALMEIDA Patricia, CHANTREL Dominique, CHAOUI Prisca, FUNCK Samuel, JAMES Elizabeth, KALOTAY Kalman, NWABUOGU Gloria, PECK ARIF Catherine, POPA Gabriela, RICHARDS Ian, ROUAI Slim, STANOVIC Marko, TAPORAIE Amos, VESTERMAN Claire.

**Council members absent:** APOSTOLOV Mario, ASFAW Tensai, BALY Mohamed Chiraz, BEN AYED Slim, FEGLI Catherine, GAZIYEV Jamshid, KELLY Paul, MELLET Johnny, NOBLAT-PIANTA Virginie, TOUHIRI Mohssen.

*The meeting opened at 1:40 p.m.*

#### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with changes as reflected below.

#### 2. Adoption of the minutes of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting

The minutes of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting were adopted without changes as recorded in the Council's secretariat.

#### 3. Report of the Executive Bureau

The Executive Secretary, Mr. Richards, reported to the Council plenary on the work of the EB since the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, which included: (1) Education grant: a meeting was held with the Geneva Private Schools Association to brief them on the changes to the EG and the impact of the pay cut. A discussion was held on school fees in that context, (2) upcoming townhalls on selection process and harassment, (3) upcoming townhall on Swiss tax regime, (4) health insurance issues for dependents of staff members with Swiss nationality, (5) request from Management to revisit the crèche project, (6) UN Beach Club, now managed jointly by Management and the Council, the improvements at the club and the positive feedback from staff.

#### 4. Report of the Finance Commission

The Treasurer, Mr. Almario, updated the Council on the expenditures made under the special budget approved for the "no pay cut" campaign, where a balance of CHF 11,598.09 remains out of the CHF 30,000.00 budget.

#### 5. Update on pay cut

The Council was informed that efforts on the legal front continue to be carried out against the new July ICSC decision on the pay cut. In this context, two legal challenges are pursued, one through OSLA and another through the specialized lawyer engaged for this purpose. It was noted that 283 staff members have filed a MEU to challenge the decision through OSLA, and that other Geneva-based organisations will also pursue legal options in the context of ILOAT.

It was noted that a townhall will be held on the subject at the end of September to update staff and gather their feedback. It was also noted that the upcoming GA will be an appropriate forum to raise the issue and show Member States the pay cut is a global issue. The Council was informed that the statisticians who conducted the study on the ICSC data are being encouraged by staff unions to publish their findings in a reputable publication.

## **6. Update on Pension Fund**

The Council was informed that a letter was sent to the SG concerning the appointment of the UNJSPF CEO and the SG's commitments on managerial accountability. The Council's delegation will talk about this issue with Member States during the upcoming GA. It was noted that the current backlog of the Fund is 1 month, which although improved, is still not on the 15-days target. Also, there continues to be a considerable delay for a number of "difficult cases", which is a concern currently being addressed. The Council recalled that the CEO's appointment was recently extended for 3 years instead of the normal 5, whilst the RSG for investments was not renewed following 3 years of underperformance.

## **7. Update on recruitment of GS staff**

It was noted that there have been cases where GS staff coming from other duty stations have been locally recruited. The Council was informed by Management that candidates from other duty stations will not be shortlisted for Geneva GS vacancies.

## **8. GSDM and management reform**

The Council recalled UN Management's GSDM initiative and noted its expected implementation for 2019. It was explained that efforts are made along with the UNOG Administration to protect necessary posts in Geneva and ensure the quality and timeliness of service delivery to staff. A discussion followed on the approach to take where the importance of collective action was highlighted; the possibility of external advertising to increase awareness was raised as well as the need to correctly target the staff message to decision makers. It was noted that efforts include looking at training and reassignment of staff, allowing them to evolve and adapt to the changing circumstances.

## **9. Mid-term CCISUA GA and lobbying**

The Council was presented with a proposal by the EB to attend the upcoming mid-term CCISUA GA in October, and to lobby Member States on issues related to staff welfare. The purpose of CCISUA, namely to coordinate with other unions on global issues/actions, and its recent achievements were also mentioned (i.e. recently pushing the ICSC to reformulate its decision on the pay cut issue, and preventing shifting of international posts into national officer posts which would be given responsibilities of international nature). The Council agreed that it should have three members in New York for the CCISUA meeting and for lobbying, to be determined by the EB.

## **10. Update on SHP**

Mr. Stanovic as member of the WG on SHP briefed the Council on its recent meeting with Management, highlighting the "hotdesking" and design issues. The Council agreed the WG should continue to liaise with Management and make efforts on behalf of staff on the subject. A discussion followed on the problems for staff that will result from SHP given the envisaged new work spaces and the need for practical solutions.

## **11. External auditor**

Mr. Almario noted that, following the recent audit report's recommendation, 6 vendors were contacted asking for quotes to conduct an external audit, of which 4 replied with offers ranging from CHF 2,500 to CHF 15,000. The Council was presented with the recommendation from the FC and the EB to select the least expensive quote (from the company AMS Audit SA) for CHF 2,500, which seemed to fulfil the auditors' requirement. Following 14 votes in favour and 1 abstention, the Council agreed.

## **12. Beach Club**

Mr. Richards noted that this item had already been addressed above, under "Report of the EB".

### **13. Staff gala**

The Council was informed that the 2017 staff gala will be held on 8 December, with the idea of having a festive event as in the past, for which CHF 70,000 had been allocated in the 2016-2017 budget (to be also confirmed for the 2017-2018 budget under which the 2017 staff gala falls). The EB will take the lead in organising the event.

### **14. Audit report**

Mr. Taporaié proposed to the Council to recoup the amount receivable (CHF 22,715.76) from CCISUA which had been on the accounts since 2015. It was clarified that the Council had tried several times to recover it, but that it seemed difficult for CCISUA to respond due to several changes of persons in charge of its finances and difficulties with the invoices supplied by UNOG. Mr. Taporaié conceded that, following a review of the accounts, there was no “black hole” as he had argued previously by email.

### **15. Any other business**

- The issue of promoting remuneration for interns was raised. It was recalled that the Council has engaged in efforts on the subject, including interactions with multiple interns' organisations and lobbying at different fora. PSI was also mentioned as a supporter of interns' remuneration, and that UNICEF has recently introduced a remuneration package for interns.
- It was noted that staff should be kept informed about the implementation of the new retirement age.

*The meeting closed at 3:15 p.m.*