



36th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council 36^{ème} Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

Minutes of the 4th meeting

held on 16 April 2018 at 1.15 p.m. in Room XXII

Council members present: APOSTOLOV Mario, BALD Ian, BALY Mohamed Chiraz, CHANTREL Dominique, CHAOUI Prisca, DUPARC Philippe, EL GARAH Samira, FUNCK Thomaz Samuel, GAZIYEV Jamshid, JAMES Elizabeth, KALOTAY Kalman, KELLY Paul, NWABUOGU Gloria, PECK ARIF Catherine, POPA Gabriela, RICHARDS Ian, STANOVIC Marko, TAPORAIE Amos.

Council members absent: ALMARIO Francis, BEN AYED Slim, MEYER Olivier, ROUAI Slim, RUHANA-MUKAMUSONI Angelique, SMITH Bradford, TOUIHRI Mohssen.

The meeting started at 1.20 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with changes as reflected below.

2. Election of the Finance Commission

Having noted that the Executive Bureau had appointed **Mr. Kalman Kalotay** to the Finance Commission as per the Regulation, the Council proceeded to elect the following three additional members:

Ms. Prisca Chaoui, following her nomination by Ms. Peck Arif and elected without opposition.

Mr. Samuel Funck, following his nomination by Mr. Chantrel and elected without opposition.

Mr. Francis Almario, following his nomination by Ms. Chaoui and elected without opposition.

3. Adoption of the minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Council

The minutes of the 3rd meeting were adopted with changes as recorded in the Council secretariat.

4. Report of the Executive Bureau

The EB reported on its activities since the previous Council meeting, notably on the following subjects: (1) the strike days of 16 and 23 March – discussed under separate item below – which were held before and after the ICSC session respectively, noting good participation of staff; (2) the situation of the Reference Unit, which will be ceased by the end of the biennium in 2019, for which a meeting was organized by the Council between its staff and OSLA to discuss staff options; (3) the survey on harassment being drafted, on which Mr. Bald was taking the lead; (4) SHP, on which subject there is contact with the Administration on the following stages of the project; (5) the upcoming Children's party on 16 May, where preparations are advancing; (6) GSDM (discussed under a separate item below), for which a joint working group is being set up; (7) the recent meeting with the DG where several items were discussed, i.e. SHP and mitigating measures vis-a-vis GSDM.

The Council noted that 46 posts had been identified by the Administration in HRMS and FRMS to be abolished in the context of GSDM.

5. CCISUA General Assembly

The Council recalled that the CCISUA GA will take place in Bangkok during the last week of May. It agreed on the following composition of its delegation: Mr. Ian Richards, to attend as President of CCISUA, Mr. Froylan Silveira, to attend as the Council's Rapporteur, plus three other delegates to be nominated by the EB.

6. ICSC Reform campaign

The Council recalled that the pay cut in Geneva sparked a movement of the staff, yet the matter had become a global campaign for the reform of the ICSC and thus the Council continued to liaise with other staff unions. It was noted that during the recent ICSC session all stakeholders agreed that reform was needed in both statutes and methods of the Commission. It was also noted that the legal appeal of the pay cut continues in Geneva in two fronts, one with the assistance of OSLA and another with the assistance of an external lawyer.

The plenary recalled the latest townhall with staff on the subject where staff members commended the Council for its initiatives, and the following conclusions were reached: (1) the Administration clearly recognized the staff right to strike; (2) it highlighted the importance of collective bargaining; (3) advocacy/public relations efforts are needed, as well as (4) the need to increase visibility of the campaign.

A past WTO silent protest was recalled which had good results for the staff, although the WTO salary methodology wasn't clear, and the need to continue protesting the pay cut was emphasized. It was also mentioned that the terms of strike are not defined in the Organisation, and that many managers did not have clear how to react or apply a docking of pay vis-à-vis the strike days.

7. GSDM

The Council was informed that four administrative centres had been selected for GSDM as per the SG's report to the GA on the matter: Kuala Lumpur, Mexico City, Nairobi and Budapest, to be confirmed by the General Assembly. It was also informed that 687 positions were going to be affected globally, of which 46 in Geneva. It was particularly noted that originally 60 posts were to be affected in Geneva yet was brought down to 46 due to staff pressure. The Council noted with regret that departments were yet to be contacted on the matter by the Administration. The Council was further informed that a request had been submitted to the DG to form a joint working group to look at mitigating measures. The latest OCHA experience on downsizing was said to be worth analysing as well.

The Council continued discussing about the scope of post cuts due to GSDM. It was noted that some of the 46 affected positions may become vacant due to staff retiring or transferring, thus reducing the final impact. The Council's role was reaffirmed in ensuring that only internal staff are considered for vacancies, as part of the efforts the Council may undertake at the local level.

At the global level, the Council's role in the SMC working group was emphasised, where staff can make sure mitigating measures are put in place for the whole Secretariat. It was noted that following the work at the working group, mitigating measures were included in the SG's report to the GA. It was said that staff must ensure from then on that such measures are implemented and monitor them on an ongoing basis. The hiring freeze implemented for all GS posts in the Secretariat was mentioned as an example of mitigating measures, which had been piloted in Geneva and taken to a global level. It was further noted that an administrative instruction on downsizing was yet to be promulgated. Also the importance of the working group actively ensuring the transparency of the mechanism was highlighted, and that it looks into the proposed locations, quality of local services for staff and integration of families in new duty stations.

The possibility of transferring staff between departments was raised as another possible mitigating measure. It was agreed to contact HRMS on the matter.

8. Council investments

The Council recalled proposals for investments had been called for, and that recently the EB had been exploring the possibility of purchasing holiday apartments in France that would be available to staff. The Council was informed of a recent meeting with a French lawyer on the implications of making such purchases, who expressed overall that the investment could be feasible in legal terms and advised to look into Swiss implications with a Swiss lawyer – for which a meeting will be planned. It was also mentioned that other proposals were still welcome.

A discussion followed on the mentioned investment proposal and on the set criteria for Council investments, namely (1) staff welfare, (2) income generation, and (3) passive management.

It was mentioned that it is a usual practice for trade unions to invest in real estate related to the tourism industry.

The discussion continued on the importance of correctly structuring any investment, its thorough review, return on investment and sustainability, for which obtaining legal opinions was the first step. A suggestion was further raised to ask advice from financial advisors specialised in the non-profit sector. Other suggestions were raised to look into purchasing a boat, and also the possibility of purchasing an apartment in Geneva that could be offered to newly arriving staff at the duty station.

9. Any other business

The Council agreed that all requests regarding Council meetings should be addressed to the President.

The issues of contract renewal time and the revision of Appendix B were raised. It was said that the establishment of a working group will be requested to Administration regarding Appendix B and that both issues raised would be discussed during at the following meeting.

The meeting ended at 2:25 p.m.