



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

Minutes of the 5th meeting

held on 6 June 2018 at 1.15 p.m. in Room C.529

Council members present: ALMARIO Francis, APOSTOLOV Mario, BALD Ian, BALY Mohamed Chiraz, CHANTREL Dominique, CHAOUI Prisca, DUPARC Philippe, FUNCK Thomaz Samuel, GAZIYEV Jamshid, KALOTAY Kalman, KELLY Paul, MEYER Olivier, NWABUOGU Gloria, RICHARDS Ian, ROUAI Slim, SMITH Bradford, STANOVIC Marko, TAPORAIE Amos.

Council members absent: ADELISE Dominique, EL GARAH Samira, JAMES Elizabeth, PECK ARIF Catherine, POPA Gabriela, RUHANA-MUKAMUSONI Angelique, 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. Adoption of the minutes of the 4th meeting

The minutes of the 4th meeting were adopted without changes as recorded in the Council secretariat.

3. Report of the Finance Commission

The Treasurer, Mr. F. Almario, briefed the Council on the recent financial transactions, namely CCISUA GA and Children's party expenditures.

A suggestion was raised to make reports of the Finance Commission in writing rather than verbal. Concerning the election of the Finance Commission at the meeting of 16 April 2018, it was inquired why the nominations previously presented at the meeting of 15 March 2018 were not retained for the election. It was mentioned that it had been the Council's usual practice for all internal elections to have nominations put forward at the time of each election. The FC election was suspended on 15 March due to the unavailability of polling officers, and put again on the agenda for the meeting of 16 April, at which time nominations were again called for as per the referred practice, and on which basis the candidates were elected.

The Council agreed for the FC to invite Mr. B. Smith as an observer to its meetings.

4. Report of the Executive Bureau

The EB reported on its activities since the previous Council meeting, notably on the following subjects:

- (1) **Meeting with USG for Management**, where discussions were held concerning ICSC reform, GSDM, harassment, gender balance, SMC reform;
- (2) **Meeting of the JNC**, where discussions were held concerning GSDM/downsizing, Appendix B SSS working group, working hours, fixed-term contract renewal, cross assignment at UNOG;
- (3) The **Staff Benevolent Fund (SBF)** and its annual report's recommendation for the Council to grant funds to their reserves. It was noted that the grant to the SBF was for CHF 30'000 in 2015. The EB presented its recommendation not to approve a grant seeing that the SBF still had sufficient reserves (over CHF 120'000) vis-à-vis its operational needs, but to remain open to requests from the SBF when the need would arise. The Council agreed on the EB's recommendation.

Questions were raised concerning SBF statutes and its connection to the Council. It was said that the Council participates in the SBF's committee, yet conducting a review of its statutes would fall outside the mandate of the Council.

- (4) The recently held **inter-federations meeting**, at which all 3 federations were represented and common issues were discussed;
- (5) The **legal challenge to the pay cut**, noting 813 appeals had been submitted through OSLA;
- (6) The recently held **children's party**, of which was noted to have followed positive feedback parents.
- (7) The following **nominations** presented by the EB were confirmed by the Council:
 - *SSS working group on Appendix B*: Ms. P. Chaoui, Mr. P. Duparc (accompanied by the SSS Sectoral Assembly President).
 - *Staff representative to the GPAFI board*: Ms. C. Peck Arif;
- (8) **Purchase of smoking shelters**: the Council was briefed on the Administration's request for it to finance the purchase of new smoking shelters around Palais buildings, following the recent survey on smoking where most staff favoured moving smoking away from buildings. The Council noted the EB's recommendation not to agree to the request as it fell outside the Council's responsibility, as it was an expense that corresponded to the Administration.
- (9) **Installation of additional benches in the Arianna Park**: the Council was briefed on a proposal of the EB to finance said installation, and was explained there are only few benches available and several comments had been received from staff pointing out that that such situation limits the use of the park by staff. The Council agreed on the principle to finance the purchase of additional park benches in benefit of staff well-being. It was noted that Management had agreed to the project and that it would establish the financial implications, at which time the expenditure would be put to the Council's consideration.
- (10) The proposal to raise the Council's **annual contribution to CCISUA** from CHF 35'000 to CHF 37'500 following the 2018 CCISUA GA, considering the special campaign undertakings of the federation, namely on ICSC reform, the ICSC's review of the salary methodologies, hiring of external expertise – for which unions agreed to increase their contributions.

Questions were raised about the value for money received through the contribution to CCISUA, whether the funds would serve more if spent locally, and if the federation reported back on the use of funds. It was said that campaign impact would always be stronger when carried out collectively and with a common (and larger) and budget – especially taking into account the magnitude of the goals, notably changing decisions and a whole culture; the long-term goal being to reform the ICSC to allow fairer participation of staff in its decisions, which would require all unions to campaign together. The agreement among stakeholders to initiate a reform process of the ICSC was said to be the result of the pressure applied commonly by all unions. It was recalled that CCISUA issues annual reports.

The Council agreed to increase its 2017-2018 contribution to CCISUA to CHF 37'500.

5. Behaviour of Council members

Mr. K. Kalotay raised that Mr. A. Taporaie had sent a number of impolite and harassing email messages to the Council Assistant, recriminating him for issues the Assistant was not even responsible for and using a disrespectful tone, which was unbecoming of a staff representative and outside of the respect for colleagues and UN rules (e-mails on file). It was noted that the EB had considered this issue seriously and that it had found these messages to be inappropriate and regrettably a recurrent issue, hence why it agreed to submit to the Council for its discussion to prevent the recurrence of such behaviour.

A discussion followed concerning the email exchanges that led to the issue. The Council agreed that respect to rules and regulations, as well as respect towards colleagues, is expected of every staff member and especially from staff representatives, and that those who work for the Council should be protected from bullying and harassment. Members reproached Mr. A. Taporaie's conduct and expressly requested him to refrain from contacting directly the Council Assistant and to refer any requests to the Council secretariat directly to the Executive Secretary and the President.

6. SMC delegation

It was noted that an upcoming SMC meeting would take place in New York on 18-23 June 2018. It was recalled that Management would bear the travel costs for the attendance of two staff representatives. Following the EB's recommendation, the Council agreed to nominate Ms. P. Chaoui and Mr. I. Richards for the Council's SMC delegation. Additionally, as recommended by the EB, the Council agreed to include M. J. Gazyev in the delegation given his legal background and experience in the substantive issues to be discussed, and thus to cover the respective travel costs.

It was recalled that SMC papers had not yet been circulated to the Council members, and was suggested that all of the latter should be involved in their drafting. The Executive Secretary took note of the suggestion, and mentioned that a broadcast would be soon circulated to all staff with all the related papers.

7. ICSC campaign

The legal challenge to the pay cut was said to continue, for which there remains contact with OSLA; a townhall would soon be held with staff to inform them about the developments and the way forward. It was said that there will be discussions with Management in the context of SMC concerning ICSC reform, noting that one of the main goals for staff is to strive for tripartism in ICSC. Also, 3000 "ICSC reform" pins will be distributed in Geneva as part of the visible campaign.

A discussion followed. The need to keep the campaign alive was highlighted, as well as raising awareness among staff on the substantive issues behind it. It was recalled that the nature of the campaign changed over time, in the sense that it had stopped being a Geneva campaign against the pay cut, but rather a global campaign for ICSC reform, with clear actions in the legal field, outreach and pressure at the federation level.

The possibility of doing more strikes was mentioned, however caution was raised on calling a new strike in Geneva, especially when it came to realistic possibilities to achieve goals with it.

Mr. M. Apostolov left the meeting at this time.

8. GSDM

The Council recalled that 46 posts are expected to be abolished in Geneva due to GSDM. It was informed that staff representation at the JNC proposed to set up a working group to study that impact and ways to reduce it. It was noted that the final number of impacted posts would likely be less due to attrition. It was also noted that the number of GSDM service centres was reduced to three: Mexico City, Kuala Lumpur and Budapest, regretting that a francophone duty station was not included. The latter issue was said to have been raised with the International Organisation for the Francophonie.

A discussion followed. It was mentioned that lobbying would be carried out at the federation level during the GA. The importance of ensuring the implementation of mitigating measures was highlighted, as well as the staff representatives' involvement through the working group.

9. SHP

The Council was informed that the working group on SHP was already in place and noted the latest meeting of staff representation with the SHP team. At said meeting, Management showed the most recent plans which include OCHA, OHCHR and UNOG Administration as the departments moving to the new building. The Council noted that the exact number of staff to be affected was yet to be determined, and that considering GSDM and possible budget cuts there would perhaps be no need for hotdesking in the new building.

A discussion followed in which the importance of staff awareness was raised. It was further noted that staff representation had refused that staff in the D categories be given dedicated offices, thus segregating the rest of the staff. The Council expressed its concern on the lack of involvement by SHP of staff at large. It was recalled that health and safety issues related to SHP are discussed in the context of the Joint Committee on Health and Safety at the Workplace.

10. Council investments

Council members were invited once again to put forth ideas for Council investments. Concerning the idea of purchasing holiday residences in France, the Council was informed that it was currently being studied by a French and a Swiss lawyer.

A discussion followed during which points raised included liquidity needs, risk appetite, specialist advice, return-on-investment analysis, as well as a tax implications and exchange rate analysis. A poll was said to have been conducted by the Staff Alliance list, in which 138 people voted against the project of a possible project or purchasing holiday residences in France, with 19 in favour. It was mentioned that the poll lacked validity as it had been proven that the same people could vote multiple times.

Mr. S. Funck left the meeting at this point.

11. Garden party

The Council agreed to hold its Garden Party on 29 June 2018, for which a music band would be brought in. It was recalled that the approved budget for this event was CHF 10'000.

12. Report of CCISUA GA

The Council was informed that 14 delegations attended the recent CCISUA GA in Bangkok, where multiple discussions took place on topics relevant to the federation, including important issues such as ICSC reform and its audited financial statement and draft budget. It was noted that Mr. I. Richards was re-elected as CCISUA President, and that a report of the GA would be issued in due course.

13. Children's Christmas party

This agenda item was withdrawn due to time constraints.

14. Council mission reports

This agenda item was withdrawn due to time constraints.

15. Any other business

No other business was raised.

The meeting ended at 2:55 p.m.