



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

Minutes of the 8th meeting

held on 1 November 2018 at 1.15 p.m. in Room IX

Council members present: APOSTOLOV Mario, BALD Ian, BALY Mohamed Chiraz, CHANTREL Dominique, CHAOUI Prisca, DUPARC Philippe, EL GARAH Samira, JAMES Elizabeth, KELLY Paul, MEYER Olivier, PECK ARIF Catherine, POPA Gabriela, RICHARDS Ian, RUHANA-MUKAMUSONI Angelique, STANOVIC Marko.

Council members absent: ADELISE Dominique, ALMARIO Francis, FUNCK Thomaz Samuel, GAZIYEV Jamshid, KALOTAY Kalman, NWABUOGU Gloria, ROUAI Slim, SMITH Bradford, TAPORAIE Amos, TOUIHRI Mohssen.

Seeing quorum was yet to be reached, an informal discussion was held with the members present.

- **OCHA:** It was noted that OCHA was facing further restructuring with the possibility of post cuts, and that its management had declined the staff suggestion to set up a staff-management group (both globally and for Geneva only) not considering the restructuring as “downsizing”, for which it needed to wait to see the next budget’s implications. The staff side noted the such “decentralization” exercise seemed to be only applied in Geneva by removing posts from the duty station. Clarity on the implications for staff would be established in the following month, at which time staff would ask Management to establish a group if there were to be any post cuts. It was mentioned that a townhall with OCHA staff on the matter would take place the following Friday.
- **Gender parity:** It was noted that management was proposing new downsizing guidelines in which “gender parity” would be the determining factor replacing contract type, length of service, competence and integrity. Reference was made to discussions with other staff unions, most of whom had expressed strong reservations with this approach. Following an SMC meeting, management had made a new proposal but the only changes were in terminology. Concerns were raised that the proposal replaced an objective process with a subjective one and would be open to manipulation by managers. Further, the policy would penalise men who had spent many years in the field and women in the general service category.

Quorum was reached and the meeting began at 1.40 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 7th meeting

The minutes of the 7th meeting were adopted with changes as recorded in the Council secretariat, where the text of the last para. under “Any other business” would be reviewed.

3. Report of the Finance Commission

The FC reported it had met to discuss the 2018-2019 budget, to be discussed under a separate item.

4. Report of the Executive Bureau

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

(1) Legal case against the pay cut: a UNDT hearing on the case (held in NY) where OSLA represented staff was broadcasted live in Geneva; the case awaits instructions from the judge. As for

the separate legal case where staff is represented by the engaged lawyer, it is still ongoing. (2) SMC: discussions were held with Management on how consultations are carried, notably seeing a large number of emails requesting comments of various texts with hidden substantive changes which require regular SMC review. (3) Working hours: the difficulty of aligning working hours with NY to compensate for the pay cut was raised, as both Geneva and NY followed their respective local standards. A different proposal was raised to have the Organisation in Geneva close during Christmas and New Year. (4) CCISUA: Mr. Richards as President of CCISUA undertook a mission in NY and was in contact with ACABQ members advancing staff interests in Pension Fund, common system and GSDM issues, noting on the latter issue it was postponed for March 2019 as new service centre proposals were expected from Member States. (5) Townhalls: the Council had recently hosted a PSI townhall on tax issues for consultants; another townhall was held with OHCHR temporary staff and Management on their situation and type of contract. For the latter, issues such as CDL issuance are being followed up with the UNOG Legal Advisor. A third townhall was held on travel policy, which had been well attended and a paper containing the comments and conclusions would be drafted for submission to Management. Council members were encouraged to suggest relevant themes for townhalls. (6) Survey on misconduct: the importance of encouraging participation was highlighted. (7) UN Special: the UN Special magazine recruited an external journalist and an assistant. Said recruitment was carried by the IAC (at which UNOG SCC and WHO SA are represented) without budgetary implications for the Council. (8) New Work initiative: it was noted that a new client service centre was installed by the Administration. (9) Legal case of a staff member: the case for which the Council had approved CHF 5'000 for a legal assessment was recalled. It was noted that the assessment was carried out free of charge and that the EB had agreed to repurpose the funds to pursue the case, which the Council approved. (10) SSS: consultations are being held with SSS staff on the new relocation policy proposed by SSS Management; on the application of the shifts policy, several individual cases had been identified and were being followed-up.

Ms. El Garah left the meeting at this point.

5. 2018-2019 budget

The Council reviewed the draft budget and held a brief discussion. It noted the decrease in income from SAFI. The 2018-2019 budget was adopted as presented.

6. ICSC reform

The Council was informed that a contact group had met, including the Administration (CEB), staff federations and the ICSC, to discuss the approach to ICSC reform. Whilst it was noted that ICSC statutes did not allow for tripartism, the consultative process could be strengthened in the ICSC's internal rules of procedure. A working group would meet by the end of the year.

A discussion followed, where the importance of lobbying Member States in NY was highlighted in order to change the statutes, but also the need to exhaust all possible measures working with the ICSC internally before calling on Member States. It was noted that – in the larger picture – ICSC reform was the greater gain despite the pay cut. On the latter issue, it was further noted that the UNDT judge noted at the latest hearing a number of dysfunctions in the ICSC – to be discussed by CCISUA at its upcoming midterm review.

7. OCHA

The Council took note of the informal discussion held.

8. Gender parity

The Council took note of the informal discussion held.

9. Staff Gala

The Council was informed that the 2018 Staff Gala was planned for 7 December, with a similar format to previous years.

10. Picnic tables for Ariana Park

The Council was informed that, having looked at various picnic tables with the Administration, the latter found only one to be of acceptable standard, at an approximate cost of CHF 5'900 each. CSS is

expected to contribute with CHF 10'000 for the project. It was mentioned that many comments had been received from staff complaining that the park lacked such communal spaces, and that such an investment would be made in the staff welfare interest. It was made clear that, as donation of the Council to the staff, the tables would be identified as such. A discussion followed, noting that less expensive tables had been proposed to management, who did not accept such options in order to maintain a certain level of quality. In taking into account said quality, the investment was said to be proven not of excessive value as the tables would last much longer than cheaper versions. The Council agreed on an expenditure envelope of CHF 30'000, bearing in mind that depending on the Administration's contribution it could be reviewed downwards.

It was noted that a request had been made to Management to plant a tree in the park in honour of former SG Mr. Annan, currently under discussion.

11. Any other business

A brief discussion was held on how insurance claims (UNSMIS, GPAFI/UNIQA) were submitted.

The meeting ended at 2:35 p.m.