



## **30th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council 30ème Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG**

Minutes of the 7th meeting  
Held on 14 December 2012 at 2 p.m. in Room 9

**Present:** Mohamed Chiraz Baly, Dominique Rames, Elizabeth James, Ian Richards, Jean-Pascal Stancu, Jamshid Gaziyeu, David Kone, Nazir Kohealtee, Mohamed Doumbouya-Fode, Vladislav Chouvalov, Mounia Atiki, Rajamani Ramasamy, Ahmed Ghailan, María José Orellana Alfaro, Marko Stanovic, Mohssen Touihri

**The meeting started at 2 p.m.**

### **1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted unanimously.

### **2. Adoption of the minutes from the 6th meeting of the 30<sup>th</sup> Council**

The minutes were adopted unanimously.

### **3. Election of a new member of the Executive Bureau**

Mr. Christian David resigned from the United list's automatic seat in the Executive Bureau in October 2012. The United list nominated Ms. Lin Dan, and so it was decided.

### **4. Report of the Executive Bureau**

#### **• Mobility of General Service**

A report was submitted by the Executive Secretary to the Executive Bureau for discussion and some comments have been received. The topic remains open for discussion; Council members are encouraged and invited to contact the Executive Bureau should they wish to participate. Meetings in this regard will be planned for as soon as possible.

#### **• Townhalls**

It was noted that the main point of discussion in previous townhall meetings (ECE, DCM, Ms. Susana Malcorra) was budget cuts and its effect on staff. The Executive Bureau has continuously defended the position that prior consultations are required before taking any decision that affect the staff (ST/SGB/172, ST/SGB/274).

A point was raised regarding reporting of townhall meetings and encouraging attendance of staff members. It will be studied whether it is feasible to publish audio and/or video footage of townhall meetings on the Council's website.

#### **• Meetings with the new Central Review Panel**

The Executive Bureau had its first meeting with the new CRP. It was argued that members of the CRP elected by staff did not seem conscious enough of the fact that they are staff representatives, and that they should beware of any possible conflict of interest being that some of them work as a part of the Administration. It was agreed that the Council would continue to work with them and make sure they are provided training that includes the Council's point of view.

- Meetings with Sectoral Assemblies

It was noted that the different Sectoral Assemblies do not necessarily have the same concerns. The role of the Sectoral Assemblies is not always clear to their members, and the Executive Bureau advised them accordingly. It was noticed that most of Sectoral Assemblies do not have Terms of Reference neither an executive bureau, which it is advisable to have.

Ideas were exchanged with members of Sectoral Assemblies and they were reminded of the staff rules. They have taken the initiative to address the Administration directly on their own, but were informed of the need to consult and be accompanied by the Executive Bureau should they wish to address the top management.

It was noted that Joint Bodies and Sectoral Assemblies are actively working. Report of activities from those bodies and assemblies may be accepted even if they are not signed by all the respective members.

- United Nations Day, 24 Octobre 2012

Organized by the Council, it was very successful event. The staff and clubs actively participated. The event was opened by Mr. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, who noted that the event had "energized" him.

- New single Joint Body for Finance

According to the previous Council meeting, it was decided to create a new Joint Body for Finance. Before this new Joint Body takes shape work must be done on its statues or Terms of Reference. The Executive Bureau reiterates its call to the Council for volunteers to join a working group in this regard.

- UN Special annual meeting

The Executive Bureau decided which four members would be part of its delegation to attend the UN Special annual meeting. They will meet with the other four members of the delegation coming from the World Health Organization. **The four members of the SCC's delegation, selected based on their expertise with the magazine, were: Mr. Rajamani Ramasamy, Ms. Elisabeth James, Mr. Ian Richards, Mr. Chiraz Baly.**

- Purchase of a webcam

It was proposed to the Council the purchase of a webcam to serve the communication and logistical purposes of the Executive Bureau. Such a webcam is to be bought with the Balxert vouches currently in possession of the Council. **The proposal was adopted unanimously.**

- Communication expenses

A request will be sent to the Administration to clarify the services that they provide to the Executive Bureau, such as international phone lines and the treatment of communication costs. It is proposed to the Council that it reimburses communication costs to the members who, during missions, have incurred in communication costs related to their work as members of the Council, provided that such expenses are duly verified in corresponding invoices. **The proposal was adopted unanimously.**

It was recommended by Council members that the Council approve for the future, guidelines for the reimbursement of these expenses; the Executive Bureau would draft an outline of the procedures.

## **5. Update on the crèche**

Meetings with the staff of UNICEF and ILO have taken place, they have shown interest in participating in the project and the manner in which they could participate is being studied.

The Administration is expected to give its comments on what are they prepared to contribute and/or provide to the project and are determining who has approving authority in that regard.

## **6. Inter Agency Games 2013**

The UN Staff Sports Commission at Geneva (CSPNU) presented to the Council an overview of Inter Agency Games 2013 (IAG 2013) which they are in charge of organizing. The CSPNU requested a contribution of CHF 100'000 that would settle the deficit in the IAG 2013 budget and prevent the prices charged to participants from rising. The CSPNU offered visibility to the Council as a direct consideration for its contribution during the opening and closing events, as well as visibility in invitations, programmes, banners, screens and presentations.

Several points were raised after the presentation and the CSPNU clarified the following:

- The city of Castellón, Spain (north of Valencia) was chosen over the city of Geneva because no strong commitment was perceived from Geneva authorities and few sports facilities were available;
- The budget was recalibrated to Spanish prices. Negotiations with the hotel are still ongoing.
- Spanish authorities have committed to provide the sports facilities, as well as protocol for VIPs, visas and police security at the venues, all free of charge.
- The Swiss company which the CSPNU hired to help them organize the event was selected through a bidding process where it was considered to be the best option compared to several others.
- The CSPNU will try to organize a tombola/lotto funding activity as suggested by several Council members, however they warned it may be difficult.
- Should the Council not contribute with the IAG 2013 as requested by CSPNU, the deficit in the budget will have to be reflected in the prices charged to every participant, resulting in an increased cost per individual and a probable decrease in participation.

**The Council agreed to vote on this issue at its next meeting, once the Executive Bureau would have presented its conclusions to the Council.**

## **7. General service hiring freeze**

Given the expected budget cuts, OHRM had proposed a hiring freeze of external applicants for general service posts so that the staff members affected by those cuts could be easily relocated to vacant positions before selecting external candidates. However, this would only be implemented at the global level in August at the earliest.

It was agreed that the Council would advocate for such general service hiring freeze, to be implemented specifically in Geneva by the Director-General of UNOG under his delegation of authority.

## **8. Report on General Assembly and leadership summit**

Mission reports will be sent for the next Council's meeting.

## 9. OCHA, decentralization and budget cuts

The current situation of OCHA regarding relocations to the “global south” was discussed. A meeting had been held with OCHA staff members who pointed out that a study carried out by external consultants recommended the consolidation of administrative support for the field in Geneva. Ms. Valerie Amos (USG/Emergency Relief Coordinator of OCHA) organized a Townhall meeting where concerns were raised regarding the implementation of such relocation to the “global south”, whose answers did not provide much clarity to those concerns.

The issue on decentralization was brought up during the Townhall meeting held by Ms. Malcorra, with reference to Umoja. Administrative services would be consolidated in single locations. This would have a huge impact in staff members, particularly in Geneva. Assessment of this impact is still ongoing. The Council still expects to receive more information from the Administration.

Administrative support budgets will have to be cut by 5%. The Council understands, however, that for the time being there will be no cuts in ECE, OHCHR or DCM. Consultations are still being carried out with UNCTAD and UNOG.

## 10. Report of the Finance Commission

- The books of accounts are expected to be closed by 5 January.
- The great success of the latest UN Day event organized by the Staff Coordinating Council resulted in an unforeseeable participation of twice as many people as expected, which in turn led to an excess of CHF 555.55 from the budget originally approved by the Council (CHF 5000). It is requested that the Council approves the payment of such difference to settle the invoice with DSR. **This was approved unanimously by the Council.**
- The Council has received a proposal from UBS regarding the Council's investments to shift cash positions to other portfolios. A study is still being carried out. After a discussion on whether the Council should liquidate and/or modify its investments, **it was agreed to delegate such decision to the Executive Bureau.**
- A contribution of CHF 400'000 was received from SAFI during 2012, as per their commitments. It is requested to the Executive Bureau to provide the Financial Commission with its views on how these funds are to be split up in order to take action accordingly.
- The Council received a refund of CHF 4'000 from a beneficiary of the Solidarity Fund. It was pointed out that the Staff Coordinating Council has not received any refund or response from all other beneficiaries, regardless of the follow-up that is still ongoing. The Financial Commission requests the Executive Bureau to evaluate possibilities regarding uncollected payments and consider suitable action as necessary in the books of accounts.
- The fixed-assets registry, including the update of the inventory and registration of movement of assets, will be under the responsibility of the Executive Bureau's Office Assistant, Mr. Froylan Silveira. Once the updated inventory is ready, the Financial Commission will update the Council in this regard.
- The Financial Commission acknowledges that the Council granted CHF 30'000 to the Benevolent Fund during 2011. The Benevolent Fund's Report of Activities of that year shows that it had expenses of CHF 22'039.30, of which 50%

(CHF 11'019.65) corresponds to the Council's contribution, thus leaving CHF 18'980.35 as the balance of unused contribution from the Council (out of the original CHF 30'000). The Financial Commission proposed that the Executive Bureau authorize to record such balance of unused funds as its contribution to the Benevolent Fund for 2012. However, **it was decided by the Council to wait until such balance runs out before considering contributing again.**

#### **11. Farewell event for David Winch**

Mr. David Winch has been member of the Staff Coordinating Council for many years and this farewell event intends to honour him. The event is expected to take place during February 2013. The Executive Bureau can organize it but requires the necessary funding. **The Council approved a budget of CHF 500** for Mr. Winch's farewell event which will be organized by the Executive Bureau.

**End of the meeting at 4.30 p.m.**