



The 33rd UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

**Year in Review**

**2015-2016**

22 January 2016

## **Preface**

This has been a very busy year for the Council. Based on the mandate and feedback you have given us, it has been great to see Council members and volunteers work on all fronts, whether protecting staff salaries and allowances, helping colleagues in need, holding management to the rules of the UN, defending our pension fund, battling age discrimination in the mandatory age of separation or organizing the many recreational activities in which you have taken part.

At the same time we have had to contend with a difficult economic environment with continued pressure on our compensation and on posts, which manifested itself most clearly at the start of 2016. This more than anything has shown the value of staff working together as a council and of the each union coordinating on many fronts, whether in Geneva or globally.

Our biggest priority this year has been to defend staff salaries. For professional salaries we were able to reverse many harmful changes being proposed to the General Assembly. For general service salaries, we led the survey and worked hard to find the best local employers to use as salary comparators.

Finally, it's important to recognize that as staff we all have aspirations to put our skills and efforts to good use in the service of the world's people. All we ask for is a fair, just and positive workplace, and we hope that this year, despite the many challenges, we have helped the UN take a step closer to that.

Ian Richards  
Executive Secretary  
UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who, throughout the past year, have supported the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council in efforts to achieve its goals, namely to represent and defend the interests of staff. Without you, the Council would not exist because representing you is the very reason for its existence.

The year 2015 was a busy year for the Council. Through its members, the Council has been involved in several tasks of primary importance for the staff, such as the General Service salary review, the campaign against the decline in the pay and benefits of P staff, the Change Initiative in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and many other tasks that you will be able to read about in this report.

The results achieved have been positive for the most part but it is clear that the road ahead is still long and full of obstacles. But is it not true that union is strength? In working together and heading in the same direction, success will be ours to find. By success we refer to maintaining a work environment in which the rights of all staff are respected, where UNOG cannot afford the luxury of not providing that environment since it is within UNOG that human rights are discussed and preserved.

Prisca Chaoui  
President  
UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

# **The UNOG Staff Coordinating Council**

## **Members**

Prisca Chaoui	President
Marko Stanovic	Vice-President
Ian Richards	Executive Secretary
Catherine Peck Arif	Deputy Executive Secretary
Francis Almario	Executive Bureau member
Mohamed Chiraz Baly	Executive Bureau member
Samuel Funck-Thomaz	Executive Bureau member
Gloria Nwabuogu	Executive Bureau member
Jamshid Gaziyeu	Executive Bureau member
Mario Apostolov	
Tensai Asfaw	
Mounia Atiki	
Dominique Chantrel	
Samira El Garah	
Yenny Ezquerro	
Elizabeth James	
Kalman Kalotay	
Paul Kelly	
David Kone	
Virginie Noblat-Pianta	
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Oksana Rott	
Oleksandr Svirchevskyy	
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Rohita Yapa	
Yenlin Zhang	

## **Auditors**

Serguei Kouzmine  
Yaroslav Bulych

## **Assistant to the Council**

Froylan Silveira

## I. Mission Statement

This year's Council has worked hard and has accomplished many things. We have worked together as a team, with transparency and full cooperation between all Council members. We believe that we should be accountable to you, the staff who have elected us. This is a summary of our year's accomplishments and achievements for you to see if we have well represented you in the way you wished.

Staff representation is an honour, a privilege and with that it brings a duty to serve responsibly and to perform. We have worked hard to implement our work programme and act in your interest.

## II. Membership

While all staff are represented by the Staff Coordinating Council, as a union the Council depends on members' contributions. By becoming a dues-paying member, not only are you taking a real stake in your union, but you are also showing strong solidarity to the cause of staff rights.

The Council aimed at increasing the number of members who contribute financially. To encourage more staff to contribute, it maintained a series of partnership deals offering reductions with Manor, Payot, Pharmacie Principal, Europcar, Mycolorphone, Lemman Pneus, Curves, Gidor hairdressers and Aesthetics. As a result, the Council has increased its number of dues-paying members by 14 percent during the last year (from 296 to 338). However, Geneva still remains the duty station with the lowest proportion of dues-paying members due to the territorial dispersion.

Membership dues are paid monthly from payroll by filling out a form, which is provided at the end of this report. This form can also be found on our website. Contribution is only CHF 10 per month for all staff.

The Council provides a membership card for its dues-paying members. With your card, on top of the reductions offered by our partners, you also receive the following benefits,

- Access to the Council's legal assistance.
- Free use of the Council's classified notice boards.
- Participation in the Inter-Agency games is subsidized.
- Three times a year, SAFI organizes a 13 percent discount day. Dues-paying members are entitled to the discount one day before as well.
- Free access to the Children's Party for your children.
- Free welcome drinks and a voucher for a meal during the Staff Gala.
- If you are member of a club, with 15 dues paying members, your club becomes eligible to receive an annual grant from the Council.

*If you want to be a dues-paying member, kindly find at the end of this Report (Annex 2) the Membership form.*

### **III. Defending staff interests**

As the representative union of UN staff in Geneva, the Council has a right to be consulted on all issues affecting the careers, welfare and working conditions of staff in any secretariat department. Based on this principle, the Council assumed a proactive role in defending staff and engage Management where there had been staff rights violations and/or lack of consultation.

Meetings with Management in Geneva took place through formal channels, such as the Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC), and meetings with the Director-General, UNOG's Director of Administration, the Chief of Human Resources, and the various department heads and executive officers in Geneva.

With Management in New York, the Council communicated through ad hoc meetings and video conferences, with the Secretary-General, the SG's Chef de Cabinet and Deputy Chef de Cabinet and the Under Secretary-General for Management, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and their staff plus the Assistant Secretaries-General at the Pension Fund

The Council has also informally engaged with Member States in Geneva and at Headquarters in order to promote and defend staff interests.

#### **1. Retirement age**

Many of you expressed interest in being able to choose to work until 65 (without affecting the acquired rights of those who wish to retire at 60 or 62). We took this up via our federation, CCISUA, of which the Executive Secretary of our council is the President.

The International Civil Service Commission meeting in August, agreed that UN and agency staff be able to choose to retire at 65, with implementation of this change by 1 January 2017. Staff who currently have the right to retire at 60 or 62 would retain that right if they wish.

Certain organizations had queried whether retirement at 65 would prevent rejuvenation, good performance and gender balance. However, staff unions showed that with the average UN entry age at 41, a new and improved performance management system due to be put in place and a lack of significant interest in ensuring gender balance at recruitment, changing the retirement age would have little impact.

The General Assembly subsequently adjusted the implementation date to no later than 1 January 2018, while leaving organizations the freedom to implement earlier. While this was a disappointment, it does significantly improve on the current situation, and we were able to prevent efforts by organizations for an even later implementation date of 2020.

We will take this up via SMC, so as to encourage the Secretary-General to abide by his earlier position of 1 January 2017.

Notwithstanding the date, the decision recognizes that many staff still have much to contribute at 60 or 62 and provides a more transparent alternative to the situation in many organizations where significant numbers of staff are already retained beyond 62 or rehired. It also brings the UN in line with its own commitments against ageism.

## **2. Contractual stability**

The contractual stability of staff is a key concern for the Council.

For colleagues formerly classified as L staff or 200 series, the Council pushed via SMC for them to be provided contracts without limitation of office. The regularization exercise has taken place over the last year, and we worked closely with staff and management, especially in UNCTAD, UNRISD and ECE, to ensure predictability, reducing the burden on staff and ensuring that staff could still apply for other jobs within a year. We are pleased that the exercise was successful for all staff involved, although it was initially a stressful experience.

Following the regularization of L staff, we pushed for a new continuing appointments review, which is now underway.

We have also intervened in cases where colleagues have received contract renewals for shorter periods than foreseen by the relevant policies.

The Council has also highlighted the continuing problem of colleagues being asked to do long term staff work on consultancy contracts and has ensured press coverage of the issue.

## **3. General Service salary review**

A survey was jointly conducted in September 2015 by the ICSC secretariat in conjunction with the various Geneva based administrations and staff unions. The purpose of the survey, undertaken every seven years, is to establish the level of remuneration for local recruited GS staff as their pay is benchmarked to local salaries.

Three members of the Council were fully involved in the preparation and implementation of this survey which starts by identifying 20 local comparator employers in various sectors such as public non-profit making, international and non-governmental organizations, marketing, finance, transport storage and communications etc. Considering the current situation in the private sector, this was by no means an easy task to firstly identify the employers and even when potential employers were identified, several did not agree to actually take part in the survey. The methodology itself, due to its complexity entailed two training sessions of several days for those involved. Our Council worked directly with the other Geneva staff unions and involved themselves in the sub-working groups that were established on various subjects such as the list of employers, the bench mark jobs to be included, and the tax and social security system in Switzerland etc. plus attending the actual interviews with various employers. The data that was collected is currently being compiled and analysed, and the subsequent report will be submitted in March 2016 to the ICSC.

## **4. Professional Salaries**

In November, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) made a number of proposals on the pay and benefits of P and D staff, to the General Assembly, under the title of the Compensation Review. If implemented in full, these proposals would have resulted in some staff being more than ten percent worse off.

The Council worked through the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA) and its sister federation, FICSA, to campaign at the General

Assembly against the harmful elements contained in the proposal. The campaign included extensive meetings with delegates and management, information briefs, petitions and media outreach.

The campaign took place amid strong pressure from major contributing countries to push the changes through, with some even declaring at the start that the proposed cuts did not go far enough, the presence in New York of management teams of organizations lobbying in support of many of the cost-cutting proposals, and a broader negotiation on the UN budget of which the compensation review was only a chip.

We were able to persuade the General Assembly in passing its resolution on the compensation review to reverse several harmful elements proposed in the compensation package. However, we weren't able to prevent all the ICSC's proposals going through.

A detailed overview of the changes was broadcast to staff on 31 December 2015 and is provided in Annex 5.

## **5. General Service career development**

The Council has been involved in a project to help the career development of GS staff. This has included being part of a working group (WG) set up by UNOG Administration and a WG set up by the SMC. Within UNOG, the WG started by identifying staff members who have been on the same post for 10 years or more, they then conducted interviews with a random selection of those identified to find out their reasons for having remained in the same post. Questions were asked such as if they were interested in moving and what they felt could be done to help this happen. Staff were also asked about what types of training they would like to be made available.

The SMC WG prepared a survey which was sent to all GS staff Secretariat wide asking them the same types of questions, the results of which are currently being compiled.

## **6. Geneva duty station**

The danger of posts being moved out of Geneva remains an important one, especially for staff working in administrative functions. Member states have been asking for important savings as a result of the implementation of Umoja and a review is currently taking place from New York to examine which posts should be offshored to a cheaper location.

The Council has worked with the acting Director-General and kept in close contact with the Swiss government in order to highlight ways in which they can protect the position of the UN in Geneva, an important foreign policy goal for the country and actively spends time promoting Geneva as a duty station in its regular contacts with Member States. It has also raised the challenges in the local media (Le Temps, Tribune de Geneve).

The Council has also worked with SMC to ensure that the high productivity of Geneva operations are integrated into the study.

## **7. Crèche**

Work has again continued throughout the year on this very complex and ambitious project. The Swiss Mission is now asking that the project, for the particular plot of land in question, goes to what in Switzerland is called a 'Competition'. This is a body of various

cantonal departments who ask local architects to submit their projects and the board then chooses one plan for actual construction. This system is difficult for the Council to comply with as it will have little control over the type of construction or the budget of the project. However, in the meantime and to try to keep the idea moving forward, a letter has been sent to the Swiss Mission enquiring about the details of another piece of land, mentioned in previous discussions, not far from the Palais. Further, due to all the difficulties being experienced, we are also exploring the idea of using an existing building in the nearby area and converting it into a crèche rather than actually building a new construction. This would minimize our need to deal with the considerable bureaucratic and other hurdles being imposed by the host country authorities.

## **8. Mobility**

Following a General Assembly resolution, mobility started in 2016, initially for the political and peacekeeping network. A new job network will be added every year, with final network, the conference network, in 2020. The passage to mobility implies a much more centralized staff selection system with a new administrative infrastructure and selection bodies to support it. It also classifies staff into job networks.

We along with the other unions raised concerns on how the job networks were composed, and these were subsequently reconfigured with our input to enable staff to be able to move more easily within their area of expertise. We also raised concerns on how the selection process would function in a more fair and transparent way and how the various bodies that administer mobility would operate. Many of these concerns were taken on board, via the staff-management working group, especially with ensuring that staff are not rotated to posts with weak funding prospects.

We will continue to monitor mobility as it is implemented, to see where adjustments may need to be made and address concerns and problems as they arise. This first year is a voluntary year, so the numbers taking part are expected to be small. However, from next year, those who have reached their post occupation limits in the relevant job networks will need to move and thus ensuring that problems have been fixed becomes all the more important.

## **9. Budget cuts**

The General Assembly adopted the budget for the 2016-2017 biennium, whereby a cut of 5% in General Service posts was introduced.

UNOG thus proceeded to abolish 13 posts in its Division of Administration and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), 4 posts. According to the information given by UNOG Administration, a solution was found to abolish 11 posts where some staff were transferred to other positions and other staff retired or received golden handshake. However, there remain two posts where no solution has been found to date. The Council entered into negotiations with the Administration on this issue and proposed the establishment of a joint group composed of 3 staff representatives and 3 representatives of Management. This group will be responsible for identifying vacant posts where the incumbent staff could be transferred, and if no position is found then to ensure that Article 9.6 (e) of the Staff Rules is fully respected. The Administration of ECE gave assurances to the Council that solutions will be identified for all staff whose posts have been abolished.



## **10. G-1 to G-4 staff selection process**

Since February 2014, an interim review body has reviewing appointments at G1-G4 levels. Earlier during the year, we submitted our findings, comments and suggestions on how to improve its mechanism to the Administration. The group is now functioning and applying to the greatest extent possible, the principles and rules used in the CRP and CRB bodies. We feel that whilst this may still not be the most perfect methodology it is allowing for some staff representative control to be exercised over the G1-G4 recruitment process and which in itself is a significant achievement for Geneva as a duty station, as it is the only one to have implemented such a review group.

## **11. Pension fund**

The Council has taken an active role in resisting attempts by the management of our pension fund to distance itself from the UN through renewed attempts to modify the memorandum of understanding between the fund and the UN.

When in March serious allegations were raised about how the fund was being administered, we, along with the New York staff union, requested OIOS to conduct an investigation.

During the pension fund board meeting in July, we reiterated our concerns on the dangers of changing the MOU. UN management agreed that it too had concerns and stated that changing the MOU at this stage would not be appropriate.

In the fall, serious delays started emerging in the payment of pensions to newly retiring staff following the botched implementation of a new IT system at the fund. We worked with other staff unions to bring these to the attention of the Secretary-General. New staff have now been recruited to deal with the backlog, but we need to maintain pressure as the delays are likely to last a while.

## **12. Division of Conference Management**

The Council has managed to establish a trustful dialogue with the Administration of this Division. It is now part of the Staff-Management group set up by the Division of Conference Management (DCM). The Council also provided support to two services within DCM, namely the Information Technology Section that may be merged with UNOG Information and Communication Technology Section, and the Languages Service in a case of abuse of power and harassment.

## **13. OHCHR**

The Council was requested by staff at OHCHR to represent them with regards to the proposed restructuring, including the creation of regional hubs, proposed by the High Commissioner.

In order to provide inputs to the restructuring process, in line with relevant UN human resources policies such as ST/SGB/274, we held meetings with the staff of every OHCHR division and service in Geneva and received comments from many colleagues, including those in the field. The Council heard from over 250 colleagues.

Based on the report it prepared of these meetings, the Council prepared a proposal on how the planned lateral reassignments could take place in a fair, transparent and legally secure manner, and presented the proposal in a meeting with the High Commissioner on 8 September. Unfortunately this proposal was not implemented.

However, and separately, the General Assembly decided to send back the changes for further development, citing a number of concerns related to a lack of clarity and transparency. These concerns reflected those raised by OHCHR staff to the Council.

We hope that in the development of the new proposals, a more open and transparent approach will be adopted, enabling a system that has both the buy-in of staff and of the General Assembly.

## **14. UNCTAD**

The Council was made aware of severe funding shortages to the DMFAS debt management programme as a result of decisions by major donors to shift resources from development to migration issues.

A key concern for the Council was the lack of information initially available to DMFAS staff on their funding situation and on the consequences on their contract. The Council worked with UNCTAD management to have a more open discussion on the issue so that the impact on staff could be better analysed and measures taken in accordance. We will continue to monitor this closely.

## **15. OCHA**

The Council was informed of plans by OCHA to close one of its sections as a result of the automatization of procedures in Umoja. The plans could have led to affected staff losing their jobs.

We raised a number of concerns to OCHA senior management and proposals on how to ensure staff jobs are safeguarded and how to coordinate more closely with UNOG. This remains an ongoing issue that we are following closely.

## **16. Security**

The Council brought to Management's attention, on several occasions, an increasing number of problems in the administration of the Security Section in Geneva and held several meetings on the subject. Partly as a result of these concerns, action was taken to change the management arrangements in the section.

The Council has also been working with management on reviewing the working hours and shift system governing security staff, following recommendations by OIOS and to make them more compatible with Umoja.

The outcome, which was approved by security staff in a townhall meeting for a trial period of three months, include new standardized working hours that include time to change, collect a weapon and get to post, and a slightly revised shift system.

Under the new system, staff will be counted overtime for any work beyond 7 hours and 20 minutes at post. Currently overtime is only granted for work beyond 8 hours at post.

## **17. GPAFI**

As reported previously GPAFI will now remain on the UN premises and will be integrated into the MEC. The details of the integration are currently being worked on and should soon reach their completion.

## **18. Support to staff**

The Council provided assistance to all staff who approached it, to the extent of its capacity, in the areas of ePas rebuttal, harassment, etc. The Council represented staff before the Administration when necessary, in most cases to find a formal or informal solution (through mediation) regarding their work-related issues. For purely legal matters, staff are encouraged to contact the Office of Staff Legal Assistance (OSLA).

## **19. Palais renovations (Strategic Heritage Plan)**

Far-reaching renovations have been decided for the Palais, which will involve both the old buildings and the replacement of floors 4-10 of the E-building by a new tower.

Extremely mindful of concerns expressed by you in the survey which we had conducted and in particular with regards to the possibility of practices such as open-space and hot-desking, on-going discussions have continued with the SHP team on the planned renovations for the Palais. We have also met with the Board of Auditors on this subject and prepared a paper highlighting your concerns which was submitted to ACABQ on your behalf.

The survey's outcome has to some extent been integrated into the planning of the new office space. It is foreseen that hotdesking will not be a standard feature and that open plan will related to work needs. In order to further develop the last point, the Council has pushed for meetings between staff and the SHP team, and these will be organized shortly. However, pilot meetings at ECE, organized by management, left a number of concerns remaining as to the extent of the consultative nature. Based on this, the Council will organize focus groups on the issue that are both transparent and open.

We believe that office space should be planned around enabling staff to be productive, not saving unnecessarily on rent charges.

## **20. Benefits for married partners**

In June 2014 the Secretary-General revised an administrative bulletin, thereby providing benefits such as medical insurance for all married partners of UN staff. One country proposed a vote to reverse that decision.

We believe in equal treatment for all staff; we therefore lobbied intensively against the proposal, together with UN-GLOBE (the UN LGBT association), certain countries and the Secretary-General's office. Our actions included a joint letter from the federations. The vote was held at the end of March and the result, fortunately, was the maintenance of benefits for married partners whether same sex or opposite sex.

## **21. Staff safety and remembering fallen colleagues**

The Council has been at the forefront of efforts to ensure that fallen colleagues are better remembered and safety in Geneva and the field improved.

At various memorial services (Peacekeeping Day, World Humanitarian Day), in the press and in meetings with management, we have drawn attention to the new risks facing UN staff, the need for the flag to be flown at half-mast when colleagues die, the need to better help victims immediately after an incident and later on, and the need for an independent legal UN coroner to investigate all deaths-in-service of UN staff so as to ensure lessons are learned and those who kill UN staff held accountable.

The proposal to establish a UN coroner has made progress through SMC and discussions are underway. The Council has also worked through CCISUA on strengthening the organization's duty of care to staff in dangerous locations.

## **22. Swiss nationality**

In July 2014 the Swiss parliament changed the Swiss nationality law by requiring prospective applicants for naturalisation to hold a C permit. This will put Swiss nationality out of the reach of UN staff or their children regardless of their period of residence in Switzerland. The new law will be implemented in 2017.

The Council has been working with other staff unions in Geneva and taking legal advice, to explore how legal adaptations could be made to enable staff or their families to obtain C permits in the new environment.

Based on this, the unions are analysing the current law on C permits.

## **23. Taxes on the UN pension**

It has been brought to our attention that a modification made to the UN-Switzerland host country agreement in 1952, clarifying that tax exemption for UN salaries and allowances did not extend to tax exemption for UN pensions, may not have been made correctly and could therefore be challenged.

A legal proposal was brought to the attention of the Director-General, whose office is now closely examining the matter.

## **24. Whistleblower protection**

The Council has expressed ongoing concern at the treatment of whistleblowers at the UN and those presumed to be whistleblowers, including colleagues in Geneva.

We have taken the lead in the SMC working group on whistleblower protection with the aim of enabling staff to be able to legally challenge a decision not to provide them with protection from retaliation.

Recent developments, including criticism of the Ethics Office by the CAR review panel and the judgement of *Postica v. Secretary-General*, have strengthened our position in this regard and we hope to conclude the matter shortly.

## **25. Interns**

The case of an UNCTAD intern sleeping in a tent brought the UN's policy on not paying interns to international attention. The Council worked with interns groups and representatives in order to provide advice, support and encouragement, and to help bring the matter to the senior management and delegates.

Recognizing that an internship can be a valuable opportunity for students to learn about the UN and its many opportunities, the Council coordinated with other staff unions in order to develop a common position of support for an intern stipend that would cover living costs and enable the best students to intern at the UN regardless of their financial background.

The Council used media and social media to advocate this position and was able to move the debate from the stipend being a payment for work rendered, to the stipend being a way to avoid students from poor backgrounds being filtered out.

We continue to support interns associations in bringing this to the General Assembly.

## **IV. Supporting staff welfare activities**

### **1. Clubs and societies**

The Council provided support (logistical and financial) to UNOG clubs and societies that were able to demonstrate, in line with the Council's guidelines, that their activities would broadly benefit staff. Support included the provision of funds for proper bike wear and the creation of an outdoor gravel-sand surface to allow for table tennis, pétanque, and other sports practiced by staff in the outdoors. The Council also made possible the reconditioning of the breastfeeding room with new furniture.

### **2. Breastfeeding room**

Following requests from many staff members, the breastfeeding room (PN.036) has been renovated making it a better place for breastfeeding mothers. It has been equipped with a new fridge and a comfortable sofa.

### **3. UN Special**

The UN Special is a staff magazine jointly owned by the UNOG and WHO staff councils. Following a number of complaints regarding the relevance and quality of content in the magazine, the previous Council undertook a staff survey, which reached similar conclusions.

The current Council was tasked with putting these into practice and made clear the need to take staff interests into consideration when developing content. To this end it worked with the UNOG Deputy Editor to identify more contributors from the UNOG side.

A new editor has been appointed, who together with the deputy editors will work towards evermore compelling content that promotes a staff perspective. This could include articles from staff working in the field, news on what is happening in Geneva that would affect UN staff, op-ed pieces from staff with interesting experiences to tell, and analysis of developments in the organization that staff may be interested in.

#### **4. Children's Spring party**

Over 400 children attended the first ever UNOG Children's Olympics. Once the Olympic flame was raised, children enjoyed several hours outside in the park taking part in various competitions and games. This was topped off by a mini-disco, and a medals ceremony, where the winning teams took to the podium to receive their trophies.

#### **5. Staff party**

The Council and SAFI financed the Staff Party, which took place on Friday, 13 December 2015. Despite the terrorist threat, the party was well attended. It hosted UK band Incognito and local singer Azania. Very popular was the international karaoke lounge, which drew a large crowd. Free refreshments were made available to all dues-paying members. Videos of the evening can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaebuRjxX9kL6W5ovx2As9w>

#### **6. Garden party**

To celebrate the United Nations 70th birthday, the Council organized a summer garden party in the grounds. A band and DJ were organized, several village fete type activities were provided including archery, a slack line, candy floss and ice cream stands, a beer tent, etc. We also arranged with the Administration that staff were allowed an extended lunchtime on the day in question and from your feedback it appears that the event was a huge success. Photos and videos can be viewed here: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/33381699@N07/albums/72157655592937846>

#### **7. Petanque and table tennis court**

The Council launched its new petanque pitch and table tennis area in August. The decision to build the pitch, which is open to all staff, follows a haul of gold medals in those two disciplines at the 2015 Interagency games.

The launch involved a game of petanque, with the team led by UNOG Director-General Michael Møller winning 13-9. Mr. Møller noted that the facilities would provide an ideal meeting point for staff from across the UN organizations and agencies in Geneva, and that it complemented the lake views and green meadows surrounding the historic Palais des Nations.

The launch was polished off in traditional fashion with a bottle of pastis.

#### **8. Activities room**

Several UN clubs have used the sports room on the 8th floor, including the Dance, Fitness, Tai Chi, Table tennis and Pilates clubs. Following the high demand for more space to be devoted to club activities, the Administration has temporarily made available a room on the 4th floor of Building E. The use of that room falls within the purview of the Administration.

## **9. UN Beach Club**

The UN beach club is a much-appreciated facility for UN staff and the Council plays an active role in its management.

Following a large number of complaints during the 2014 season on the quality of the catering provided by the UN's caterer, Eldora, the Council worked with the beach club committee and UNOG administration to bring in a new independent caterer.

Feedback from on the new caterer, who took charge in the 2015 season was very positive both in terms of food quality and service, which was reflected in increased gate takings at the club. However, a number of improvements regarding food quality had still to be made and these will be implemented for the 2016 season.

The Council is also working with the club to widen the range of activities and entertainment.

## **10. Chalet Monbovon**

After the 1896 Swiss expo in Geneva, a 17<sup>th</sup> century chalet, from Monbovon in the Canton of Fribourg, was transferred to the Ariana Park. In its early days it served meringues and cream to passers by. Since the League of Nations took over the park, it has mainly been used for storing gardening equipment.

Based on its workplan, the Council has been working to broaden facilities for staff and, in line with UNOG's new approach, help bring the park back to life for the benefit of staff and visitors. To this end, the Council has spoken with administration and with potential caterers about having an outdoor beer garden style operation at the chalet, and the project appears to be feasible. We will be working further on this with the aim of opening a chalet beer garden in May 2016.

## **11. Concerts**

The Council supported three concerts this year. The concerts were generally, but not always, held at lunchtime and featured both staff and external musicians, reflecting musical styles from around the world.

## **12. Inter-Agency Games 2014**

This year the Inter-agency games were held in Spain in April 2015. The Council contributed financially to this event via the Sports Commission by reimbursing 50% of the travel costs for any dues-paying members of the Council who participated.

UNOG either alone or as joint teams with other organizations, won gold in pétanque, football and table tennis, marking a gradual improvement on previous years.

## **13. Fundraising for humanitarian emergencies**

Collections were held by staff to raise funds in favour of the victims of the conflict in Syria (through the ICRC); assistance to the victims of the Nepal earthquake (through the Nepalese Red Cross and Médecins sans frontières); in favour of children victims of Ebola in Sierra Leone (through Caritas); and in favour of children affected by Xeroderma Pigmentosum in France. In all cases the Council matched the funds collected by staff.

## **14. Staff benevolent fund**

The Council has remained the main contributor to the staff benevolent fund. Following a request for funding from the fund, an amount of CHF 30,000 was disbursed to finance its activities.

## **v. Communication with staff**

The Council is accountable to you for its actions, and in turn is made all the stronger by the active support and feedback it receives. We have kept you informed of all our positions and of matters affecting or likely to affect you. We have listened and understood your concerns and most definitely benefited from your feedback. We have made extensive use of the communication tools available to us.

### **1. Email broadcasts**

As of 18 January 2016 the 33<sup>rd</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council has sent out 61 email broadcasts. Our broadcasts have informed you of developments, inviting your feedback and seeking your support in our campaigns. We are pleased that you appreciate being informed and engaged on such a regular basis, and the Council will continue improving its communications.

### **2. Staff townhalls**

The Council held several townhall meetings both on issues of interest to all staff, such as our campaign on the compensation review, and on issues of interest to staff in various departments, such as OHCHR, DCM, UNCTAD and Security, allowing us to have a solid base of knowledge of what you the staff really need and aspire to, and help us make more specific interventions on your behalf with Management.

### **3. [www.staffcoordinatingcouncil.org](http://www.staffcoordinatingcouncil.org)**

The Council's website contains all the news updates on the activities of the Council, important documents, contacts, information on meetings, the services the Council provides and on the clubs and societies, and upcoming events.

We have also continually updated our Facebook page, created in conjunction with the other unions to distribute the information to a wide an audience as possible. [www.facebook.com/unstaffunions](http://www.facebook.com/unstaffunions).



## **VI. Making the Council stronger and more effective**

### **1. Participation**

All members of the current Council, without exception, have contributed to its work.

Furthermore, interested members were able to take part in working groups, negotiations and networking events with other staff unions. In addition, almost all votes were taken unanimously, displaying the strong sense of purpose and unity among the members of this Council. A table showing the attendance of each Council member in its meetings is attached as an Annex to this report.

### **2. Financial management**

The Financial Commission has been in contact regularly by virtual means, allowing for the timely processing of all payments etc. They have also now implemented every past outstanding audit observation.

### **3. Training of staff representatives**

Based on its strong relations with the Office of the Ombudsman, seven staff representatives and members of the Council benefited from a two-session course on “Representing staff in conflict situations” on 24 November 2015. The course was facilitated by Ms. Deborah Mendez, Director of Mediation in the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services at Headquarters. Further training sessions are being organized to which other staff unions in Geneva will be invited.

### **4. Representation at the Staff-Management Committee**

The Council has played an active role at SMC, and the position of Vice-President is currently held by Geneva’s Executive Secretary.

Unions work together at SMC and support and contribute jointly to papers and positions. They also share the responsibilities of being in various working groups. The report has mentioned where issues have been brought by the Council to SMC.

### **5. Representation through our federation, CCISUA**

The Council attended in June 2015 the 30th Annual General Assembly of the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA) in Bangkok, Thailand. During this meeting our Council’s Executive Secretary was also re-elected as the President of CCISUA. By now being the lead player in the Federation, we have been better able to contribute to defend your interests in various subjects such as the pension fund, on the retirement age issue, and in the review of the Compensation Package, among other things.

## **6. Relations with other staff unions in Geneva**

The Council worked closely with the unions of the specialized agencies on the GS salary survey and on issues related to Geneva and Switzerland such as Swiss nationality and taxation of pensions.



## 33<sup>rd</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

## 33<sup>e</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

### Work Programme

*Mindful of these difficult economic times, financial pressures and the many new challenges we face with the implementation of Umoja, we have resolved to prioritize the following objectives this year: In doing so, we will use all forms of staff-management fora that are available to us.*

#### Protecting jobs, promoting careers

Faced with these difficult economic times the Council will:

- defend Geneva as a duty station with Management and Swiss Authorities, highlight its benefits and address the challenges, particularly in relation to the implementation of Umoja and staff whose positions may be at risk;
- push for the GS external hiring freeze and golden handshakes so cuts fall on vacant posts;
- protect posts from being outsourced;
- ensure staff selection rules are applied correctly and strengthen their oversight;
- work with management to identify career bottlenecks for GS staff and expand possibilities; and
- ensure staff needs are taken into account in the implementation of mobility.

#### Support Staff Welfare

There is a proven strong link between the quality of the work environment and the ability of all staff to participate in the workplace to their full productivity. The Council will therefore:

- finalize the permit process for the crèche and move to construction;
- work to improve the implementation and use of flexible working arrangements for all staff, regardless of grade, gender or department;
- ensure the Palais renovations result in offices we want to work in, and don't cram staff together in open space and hot-desking;
- improve the rules against harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination;
- defend the independence of the formal and informal systems of internal justice, and advocate effective protection of whistleblowers;
- support staff by providing advice on legal and ePas issues;
- continue to advocate to member states for the right of current staff to choose whether to retire at 65;
- address new and ongoing issues related to the host country including in relation to Swiss nationality; and
- ensure the UN70 celebrations honour you for making the UN a success.

#### Protecting staff of all categories

The Council will:

- protect family benefits and other entitlements in the compensation review;
- involve ourselves fully in the GS salary survey; and
- defend staff working shifts, nights and weekends.

#### Keeping staff informed and involved

Communication is important. The Council will continue to :

- hold department and thematic townhalls and issue broadcasts on subjects of concern; and
- create a staff magazine you want to read.

## Annex 2



# 33<sup>rd</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council 33<sup>e</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

## YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE STAFF COORDINATING COUNCIL

### Registration Form

#### Why become a dues-paying member of the Staff Coordinating Council?

The UNOG Staff Coordinating Council defends your rights as a staff member of the UN. Your Council makes sure that UN Administration pays attention to the issues that matter to you: mobility, security, salaries, etc.

Thanks to your contribution the Council also finances and makes available to your benefit:

- Staff Gala (free refreshments)
- Children's party (your kids attend for free)
- Interagency Sports Games (your participation is subsidized)
- Legal assistance (in job-related cases)
- For sale / For rent advertisement (free publication of ads)
- SAFI (access to 13% discount the day before the scheduled date)

✓ Plus 10 to 20% discounts, free services, discounted gift cards and more our partners:

Pharmacie Populaire    **5-à-sec**    EVO fitness evolved

Ardentis - cliniques dentaires    MANOR    PAYOT LIBRAIRE

Europcar    MyColorPhone-Online Smartphone Store    Léman Pneus Nyon

Curves    GIDOR COIFFURE    AESTHETICS

More information on the exclusive offers and discounts for our members at

<http://staffcoordinatingcouncil.org/index.php/member-benefits>

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Think of paying your monthly subscription of CHF 10 by automatic deduction from your salary.

All you have to do is fill in this form and return it to the Council (room C-527), where it will be forwarded to the payroll office. Thank you.

**Yes, I understand how important it is to contribute to my Staff Council and I wish to become a dues-paying member :**

Last name:	First name:
Index #	Signature :
Monthly contribution : CHF 10	

**Annex 3**






**33<sup>rd</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council**  
**33<sup>e</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG**

**Attendance of Council meetings as of 18 January 2016**

*Members of the Council*

*Council meetings*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ALMARIO Francis	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
APOSTOLOV Mario	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present
ASFAW Tensai	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present
ATIKI Mounia	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
BALY Mohamed Chiraz	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
CHANTREL Dominique	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
CHAOUI Prisca	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
DOUMBOUYA Mohamed	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time
EL GARAH Samira	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
EZQUERRO Yenny	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Absent/excused	Present
FUNCK-THOMAZ Samuel	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
GAZIYEV Jamshid	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused
JAMES Elizabeth	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present
KALOTAY Kalman	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused
KELLY Paul	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
KONE David	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present
NOBLAT-PIANTA Virginie	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Absent/excused
NWABUOGU Gloria	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused
PECK ARIF Catherine	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
POPA Gabriela	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused
RICHARDS Ian	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
ROUAI Slim	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
SHAMSIE Syed	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused
STANOVIC Marko	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
TOUIHRI Mohssen	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present
VILCHES Sandrine	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused

Present   
 Absent/excused   
 Not a member at this time 




Annex 4



**33<sup>rd</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council**  
**33<sup>e</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG**

**Attendance of Executive Bureau meetings as of 18 January 2016**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
BALY Mohamed Chiraz	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
DOUMBOUYA Mohamed	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time
GAZIYEV Jamshid	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present
NWABUOGU Gloria	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
PECK ARIF Catherine	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
RICHARDS Ian	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
STANOVIC Marko	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused
CHAOUI Prisca	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present
JAMES Elizabeth	Present	Absent/excused	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time
FUNCK-THOMAZ Samuel	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Absent/excused
ALMARIO Francis	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Not a member at this time	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Absent/excused	Present	Present

Present   
 Absent/excused   
 Not a member at this time 

## Annex 5



## 33<sup>rd</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

## 33<sup>e</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

### Overview of changes to the compensation package

#### Key losses

The key change is the introduction of a new unified salary system for P & D grades, starting from July next year. No staff member will be immediately worse off, and single staff will benefit slightly. However, progression through **step increments** every two years instead of annually after step 7, will reduce pay in the long run. We were not able to prevent this going through. Further, married staff with children, whose spouses are working, could see small reductions in pay as they move from the current dependency scale to the new single scale, with child allowance replacing the dependency benefit. Accelerated increments for staff with **language proficiency** will be replaced by either cash or non-cash awards; we will work with management to better define this.

At the same time, a proposal by the ICSC to increase the **assignment grant** for junior staff was overruled by the General Assembly at the behest of organization management teams.

The **repatriation grant** will require five years of service instead of the current two, with sitting staff retaining their current rights.

#### Improvements on the ICSC proposals

However, we were able to have the General Assembly agree on a number of improvements to the original ICSC proposals.

Following our analysis that single parents would be the biggest losers, and that this could have a serious impact on gender balance in the UN, the General Assembly overruled the ICSC and agreed to introduce a **single parent allowance** of six percent. This matches the allowance given to married staff whose spouses aren't working. This despite the ICSC arguing that identifying single parent would be an "administrative complexity."

We also argued that proposed cuts to the **mobility incentive** would reduce the attractiveness of geographic mobility. As a result, the General Assembly agreed to increase the allowance by 25 percent for those on their fourth assignment and by 50 percent for those on their seventh assignment.

The ICSC's proposal to abolish **accelerated home leave** was not approved in full. In response to our concerns, it will be retained, although only for staff in D and E category duty stations that are not covered by the R&R framework.

## Annex 5



### 33<sup>rd</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

### 33<sup>e</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

For the **education grant**, the ICSC proposed two options for the reimbursement of tuition and enrolment fees. We were able to persuade the General Assembly to adopt the more generous one, which at \$40,600 provides a reimbursement rate of 75 percent of tuition and enrolment fees. Lower amounts will benefit from a higher rate of reimbursement, unlike now. We remain concerned however that unavoidable costs, which in some duty stations are significant, such as transport and food, are not covered and aim to draw attention to this in the future. We regret that staff in headquarter duty stations will only be able to obtain boarding coverage for primary and secondary education in exceptional circumstances. We will work with management to better define these circumstances, bearing in mind that staff are increasingly mobile. We will also work with management on ensuring capital assessment fees are reimbursed.

The ICSC made proposals for cash bonuses in a new **performance pay** scheme to be financed from the slowing down of step progression. We successfully argued that the proposals were impractical. This led the General Assembly to send this proposal back to the ICSC.

Many of you were concerned at proposals to increase the salaries of staff at the **Under and Assistant Secretary General** levels by ten percent. The General Assembly heard these concerns and ordered that those salaries be frozen.

In addition, **all allowances** will be unfrozen, for GS staff on 1 January 2016 and for P and D staff on 1 January 2017. These have not been updated for three years.

On a related issue, the General Assembly decided that staff on board as of 1 January 2018 be able to choose whether to **retire at 65**. While the ICSC had decided 2017, a push by major contributing countries at the behest of organization management teams to push the date to 2020 failed, and the ensuing compromise was reached. The resolution also leaves organizations the flexibility to make the change earlier should they wish, and we will be taking this up with management.

#### Looking ahead

Your representatives through CCISUA and FICSA intend to actively engage in the monitoring and review of the new compensation package. To this end, the General Assembly has asked the ICSC to “continue its inclusive approach” with staff representatives and others.

Among our concerns is the impact of the new compensation package on the health of staff. The UN medical directors’ group had urged the General Assembly to conduct a health impact assessment of the ICSC’s proposals on staff in the field. The doctors’ recommendation was ignored.



## Annex 5



### **33<sup>rd</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council**

### **33<sup>e</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG**

We will also be acting on the General Assembly's demand that the ICSC report back on how the changes affect gender balance and geographical mobility. The Assembly was not convinced that the new structure would support the aim of 50/50 gender balance at all grades, or improved diversity.

We will further examine the legal implications of the new package in the context of your acquired rights.

In the coming year, we will be asking for your evidence and experiences of the changes, including the effects on pay, mobility and your views on health and wellbeing. We will also be closely monitoring and participating in the ICSC's review of pay and conditions for general service and related categories, and national staff.

At a time when you are being asked to do more with less, safeguarding your pay and pension is our primary concern, and we will continue to do our best to this end.

We look forward to supporting you and representing you as we move forward.