



37th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council 37^{ème} Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

Minutes of the 10th meeting

held on 12 December 2019 at 1.15 p.m. in Room XXV

Council members present: ALMARIO Francis; BULYCH Yaroslav; BALI Mohamed; CHANTREL Dominique; CHAOUI Prisca; JAQUIOT Cédric; KALOTAY Kalman; KELLY Paul; MEYER Olivier; PECK ARIF Cathy; RICHARDS Ian; RUHANA MUKAMUSONI Angelique; SAMA ITOUA Nzété Da; SMITH Brad; STANOVIC Marko; TAPORAIE Amos.

Council members absent: APOSTOLOV Mario; BALD Iain; DAN Lin; DUPARC Philippe; GAZIYEV Jamshid; JAMES Elizabeth; LEONI Brigitte; POPA Gabriela; RIOUKHINA Evelina.

The meeting opened at 1.20 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 9th meeting

A discussion was held on the content of the minutes of the 9th meeting, and a proposal was raised to postpone their adoption to allow proper time for it to be reviewed.

Mr. Stanovic left the meeting at this point.

A vote was held on the proposal resulting in 14 votes in favour and 1 against.

3. Report of the Finance Commission

The FC reported that (1) the children's party expenditures amounted to approx. CHF 24'500 which was considerably less than the CHF 30'000 approved budget; (2) the Staff Gala was unfortunately postponed until 2020 due to the restriction on services in the Palais following the cash conservation measures by the Organisation. This had incurred a cancellation fee payable to the music band of CHF 3,000 as per the terms and conditions for the contract; (3) concerning potential investments a number of banks were contacted, all proposing negative interest rates. Feedback from UNFCU was pending.

The FC would study and present other potential proposals for investments to the EB and reported to the Council.

4. Report of the Executive Bureau

The EB reported on its activities since the previous Council meeting (excluding items listed separately below in the Council's meeting agenda):

- (1) Abolition of G-to-P exam, the Administration was supposedly going to issue a broadcast on the issue;
- (2) Changes in GS salary slips due to the increase in Pension Fund contribution by the ICSC, the Administration indicated it had no intention of sending an explanatory broadcast on the issue;
- (3) Impasse in the SMC where the Administration was not respecting SMC rules, discussions were ongoing between staff unions on how to overcome it.
- (4) Thanks were expressed to the organizers of the recently held children's party and all who helped, very positive feedback had been received from staff.
- (5) Staff gala: as the exception to hold the event beyond 6 p.m. was not given by the Administration, the gala was therefore postponed to end-January, pending lifting of the liquidity restrictions, to coincide with the Long Service Awards.
- (6) The name of the new staff magazine "UN Today" had been officially accepted by management. It was reiterated that the previous publisher refused at the last minute to sign the contract with the Council despite having applied and accepted the terms of reference. New proposals from potential publishers were

obtained and *PCL Presses Centrales SA* was selected as its proposal met the terms of reference originally established and showed extensive experience in the publishing field.

- (7) Concerning the ongoing cash preservation measures in the Palais, SSS staff expressed the wish that the overtime currently granted as CTO be paid retroactively once the liquidity measures are lifted.
- (8) At the latest JNC meeting, the Administration expressed its wish to increase its collaboration with the Council on issues of common interest. Staff representatives raised issue of personnel on UNOPS contracts undertaking regular staff work. The EB has asked management to release the minutes of the meeting.
- (9) SHP, management informed that the proposal for an externally-operated fitness would not be carried forward due to lack of interest from potential service providers, seeing the level of fees staff expressed they were willing to pay for in the recent survey previously conducted. This was noted to be positive for staff clubs to continue operating using the available space. Contact with the administration continued to ensure the maximum space possible would be made available to the clubs in the dedicated space.

5. Equal Pay Campaign

Several broadcasts had been sent concerning this issue. It was noted that the pressure on the SG had resulted in him accepting to meeting with Geneva staff at the upcoming 16 December townhall, where other issues of interest to staff would also be raised. The external expert adviser has continued to advise on strategy, actions and communications on an ongoing basis as per the contract signed, holding weekly meetings. Those who submitted testimonials would be encouraged them to voice their concerns at the townhall.

The recent survey on equal pay at UNOG gathered some 950 replies and comments, noting it was positive to maintain staff engagement especially with upcoming townhall. On the legal front, the external lawyer submitted a motion to expedite the issuance of the UNDT judgement. Staff engagement would be particularly important the moment the UNDT judgement was released.

6. Follow-up on harassment cases in UNCTAD

The recent survey circulated to UNCTAD staff concerning harassment, showed results of more than 50 percent of staff had felt harassed in previous 12 months and noted that the intervention of UNCTAD SG had not significantly changed the problem. Results have been communicated to the UNCTAD administration, but they were yet to reply. It is apparent that individual staff were scared of going ahead with official complaints due to potential retaliation. The new policy on harassment was noted to allow for anonymous complaints. The Council agreed to continue accompanying staff individually, as well as taking the lead in gathering and submitting complaints when required.

7. Update on SHP

The Council was briefed on the recent meeting with SHP, noting the following: The 6th floor of the E building had not yet been attributed to any department, the other floors has been attributed to DOA, OHCHR, OCHA. Despite the emptiness of the 6th floor the administration insisted in a reduced ratio of desks. UNCTAD, ECE, DCM would stay in the old building. It was not yet clear if the new building will be connected underground. The H building would have a grab-and-go small cafeteria. Staff representatives raised the issue of locker space and compartmentalization issues. The possibility of writing to the DG on the lack of consultation was being reviewed.

Concerning the future office space of the Council, SHP they couldn't yet confirm the location as it was waiting for larger entities to be placed first. It noted however the need, noting the need of the Council to have offices that protected confidentiality. Staff representatives stated their wish to keep the same symbolic space.

OHCHR has no clarity at present on the date expected for it to move to the new building, and that its staff had strong reservations in respect of hot-desking following the experience in NY as well as on the hardcopy filing space.

Council members recalled that pressure has been put on SHP for it to be consulted and involved in SHP matters, but the Council continued to be ignored in many respects and systematically put before *fait accompli*. It was agreed to raise this with the DG.

A discussion followed on the change management strategy of SHP. The plenary took note that there would only be seating for 80% of the staff after renovations, which may well push for more absenteeism risking job precarity.

8. Pension Fund

The Council plenary was briefed on a recent meeting with Pension Fund management where issues affecting the Geneva office, the attempt to move leadership positions out of Geneva and harassment were discussed.

The Council agreed to issue a survey to Pension Fund staff to look at patterns of harassment and to meet and advise them on the way forward.

Mr. Kalotay left the meeting at this point.

9. UN Port

Council members noted Council efforts to reinforce its activities to provide staff welfare through the UN Port (formerly the UN Beach Club). Recreational activities for staff were noted to be very appreciated. It was recalled that the funds of UN Port stemmed from memberships and entrance fees, which would begin as of March, yet the association faced preparation costs at the start of the season (dredging of the port and installation of a new pontoon) and before membership fees and other forms of income are received.

The plenary recalled that the Council had previously provided a bridging loan to UN Port two years before a number of improvements, which was fully reimbursed as per the established terms. A similar proposal was then raised to provide the UN Port association with another bridging loan of CHF 40'000 at 0 percent interest to be repaid entirely within 12 months. It was noted the Council was part of the management of the beach and was in a position to ensure that the funds were reimbursed. A Council member requested the proposer to submit to the Council all documents relevant to UN Port before approval of the bridging loan proposal. The Council agreed on the loan.

10. Any other business

The plenary took note that the 2019 Long Service Awards would take place on 31 January 2020, co-hosted with the administration.

The meeting was adjourned at 2.45 p.m.