

Languages Service Sectoral Assembly (LSSA)

Minutes of the fifth meeting of the Bureau¹

Held on Thursday, 22 November 2018, from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m., room E-4116.

Attendees: Fatima Biad-Smith (CTU), Edith Bourion (FTPU), Olga Campos (STS), Jianjun Chen (CTS), Marie-Agnes Deleschaux (RU), Emily Duggan (ETS), Hassan Harrafa (ATS), Tatiana Jaques (RU), Olivier Meyer (President), Luz Urquizu Marroquin (STPU), Bruno Nissou (FTS), Yenlin Zhang (CTS)

Main topics discussed:

- Activities of the President since the last Bureau meeting
- Collaboration with the Staff Union in New York
- Training for Languages Service (LS) staff
- Update on the redeployment of members of the Reference Unit (RU)
- Communication activities
- Any other business

Decisions taken:

1. *Collaboration with the Staff Union in New York:* **The President** has established a strong contact with representatives of the UN Staff Union (UNSU) in New York to address shared concerns. **The Bureau** will reflect on ways to collaborate more closely with UNSU, including on productivity matters and downsizing policy (they have an informal working group on productivity issues and they are calling for the release of ST/AI on Downsizing and Restructuring which was negotiated through the Staff Management Committee).
2. *Productivity:* **The President** will soon meet with the Chief of LS and EAMS to discuss productivity matters. An update about this meeting will be disclosed as soon as possible.
3. *Training for LS staff:* **The President** conveyed to the Office of the Chief of the Languages Service proposals as to how to ensure that training for LS staff is relevant to their specific needs and the future needs of the Organization. **The Bureau**, which represents the staff, should be included in the whole training organization process. The idea of creating a cross-assignment opportunity for an *LS training coordinator*, who could help the administration to optimize its action and its resources to ensure the professional transition of staff, was put forward.
4. *Update on the redeployment of members of References Unit:* Since the five members of RU have not yet been reassigned, **the Bureau** will remain seized of the matter.
5. *Communication activities:* In 2017-2018, the LSSA Bureau launched a communication initiative which led to the publication in UN Special of seven articles written by LS Staff members, in order to make their professions better known². The Office of the Chief of LS recently took up the idea: a video explaining the role of précis-writers at the United Nations was recently produced and posted on YouTube. **The Bureau**, which welcomes this initiative, will use Yammer to discuss the possibility of making/participating in one or several explanatory videos to publicize the work of LS staff.
6. *Overtime and Special assignments:* **The President** will meet with the Chief of the Languages Service to discuss cases in which staff members have been required by their managers to work overtime in order to compensate for time spent at LSSA Bureau meetings. **The President** will also request clarification with respect to LS policy on the logging of time spent on administrative tasks and surveys as special assignments. He will also raise these issues at the next meeting of the Staff Management Relations Group.

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the opinions reflected herein represent staff suggestions and views collected by their representatives and are aimed at promoting communication between management and staff. In order to avoid misunderstandings, any comments or requests for corrections to the minutes should be submitted to the President of the LSSA only, for inclusion in the minutes of the following meeting.

² Available at the following web address: <http://www.staffcoordinatingcouncil.org/index.php/uncategorised/351-language-service-sectoral-assembly>.