

**UNION FIGHTS TO END UNITED NATIONS EQUAL PAY SCANDAL**  
**UNITED NATIONS EQUAL PAY PROTESTS STEPPED UP TODAY**  
**TWO YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF ILLEGAL PAY CUT**

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UN Staff in Geneva today protested the UN's 'hypocrisy' for launching International Equal Pay Day at the same time as failing to reverse an illegal pay cut that has left 3,000 staff in Geneva being paid 5 per cent less than colleagues on the same grades.

Staff at UNOG (United Nations Office Geneva) occupied the staff canteen holding banners with the slogans:

- "Equal Pay for UN Staff"
- "Two years and still waiting/Deux ans et toujours en attente"
- "Equal Pay Now/Salaire Egal Maintenant."

A 5.2 % pay cut was imposed in February 2018 on all UN Staff and employees at specialised agencies such as the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization. This pay cut was declared illegal in July 2019 by the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization (ILOAT) which only has jurisdiction over the specialised agencies.

Crucially, staff directly employed by the UN were not covered by the ruling. This means they are now paid 5.2% less than agency colleagues on the same grades - a total loss of more than \$20 million over the last two years.

Prisca Chaoui, Executive Secretary of the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council, commented:

*"What makes this situation even harder for UN staff is the gaping chasm between the words and actions of the UN on the issue of Equal Pay. In December, the General Assembly adopted resolution 74/142 to establish International Equal Pay Day, calling on the world to support equal pay for work of equal value."*

*"The UN stands accused of hypocrisy for failing to ensure equal pay for its own staff."*

Instead of supporting equal pay and accepting that the February 2018 pay cut is illegal, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has referred the issue to the UN Disputes Tribunal (UNDT) which has failed to give any date for a decision.

Ian Richards, President of the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council, commented: *"The astonishing admission from the UNDT that, right now, they don't have the judges to hear our case means there is no end in sight to the UN's equal pay scandal. Staff will take action and keep escalating action until we get justice on equal pay."*

The campaign for equal pay is being led by the United Nations Office at Geneva Staff Coordinating Council, supported by other local staff associations such as UNICEF, UNEP, UNDP and UNHCR.

Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, attended the protest and heard the staff calls for equal pay justice.

ENDS

Pictures of protest attached below.

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The General Assembly on 18 December 2019 passed resolution 74/142 establishing International Equal Pay Day - link: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/142>