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12 April 2021

Dear Director-General,

On behalf of the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council, we are writing to you to express our deep regret concerning the United Nations Administrative Tribunal's decision ¹ to affirm the judgment of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal (UNDT/2020/106) upholding the reduction in salaries based upon the revised post adjustment multiplier determined by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). This decision, unfortunately, affirms a two tier pay system for United Nations staff members serving in Geneva, and contradicts judgment No. 4134 dated 3 July 2019 and related judgements by the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) in relation to the same subject matter with respect to staff members of most specialized agencies based in Geneva.

In order to restore equal pay in Geneva, the International Civil Service Commission, had planned to conduct a new cost-of-living survey this year based on a revised methodology that took into account many of our concerns. While we originally supported a new cost-of-living survey this year, we now believe that the current COVID-19 restrictions and temporary changes to how we live our lives mean it will not be possible to accurately measure normal staff spending on eating out, travel, commuting and other relevant consumption categories.

We understand that you are also opposed to any cost-of-living survey taking place in 2021 as stated by you at a recent town hall meeting. In this regard, we kindly request your urgent intervention at the level of the ICSC in order to oppose any cost-of-living survey taking place in 2021. We note that the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Union and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA), to which the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council belongs, has already expressed its objection to the ICSC Chair. Your intervention will greatly reinforce our common position.

Very truly yours,

Bradford Smith
Executive Secretary

Prisca Chaoui
President

Ms. Tatiana Valovaya
UNOG Director-General

CC: Mr. Larbi Djacta, Chairperson, ICSC
Mr. David Chikvaidze, Chef de Cabinet, UNOG
Mr. Clemens Adams, Director of Administration, UNOG

¹ The decision has been announced on the website of UNAT. The text of the decision has not yet been published.