



39th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council
39^{ème} Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

Le Bureau exécutif | The Executive Bureau

Minutes of the 23rd meeting

held on 30 November 2021 at 9 a.m. via MS Teams

Members of the Executive Bureau	BALI Mohamed	Present
	DUPARC Philippe	Absent
	JOHNSON Laura	Present
	MEYER Olivier	Present
	POPA Gabriela	Present
	RICHARDS Ian	Present
	SMITH Bradford	Absent
President of the Council	CHAOUI Prisca	Present
Vice-president of the Council	PECK ARIF Catherine	Present

The meeting began at 9 a.m.

Point 1 Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted with changes as reflected below.

Point 2 Adoption of minutes of the 22nd meeting

The minutes of the 22nd meeting were adopted without changes as recorded in the Council secretariat.

Point 3 CCISUA mid-term

The EB was briefed on the recent CCISUA mid-term meeting in New York (16-18 November). There was no formal outcome because, as was normal, mid-term meetings served mainly for the federation to meet/be briefed by policy makers at the global level. Highlights from the meeting included:

- Meeting with the working group on the review of jurisdictional set up: staff unions would be consulted in the following weeks on a system to harmonize the criteria of the ILOAT and UNDT when it comes to ICSC-related judgments.
- Senior management confirmed they were looking at reintroducing other types of contracts such as the former 200/300 series to give the Organization more flexibility to respond to fluctuating budget (staff unions would have to be consulted at SMC prior to implementation).
- UNHQ-NY would continue without core working hours as part of flexible working. Staff unions were cautious on this as lines could easily be blurred for staff and managers.
- The UNHQ Working Group on Racism would adopt a strategy in the following weeks and communicated to entities.

A discussion ensued. The level of participation in the mid-term meeting was noted to be quite successful as most unions were present and it was an occasion to renew the links between them, build solidarity and ensuring a united front on various issues.

On the core working hours, it was noted it could be interpreted in different ways, but the most important point was to ensure managers kept meetings within established times. It was also noted that in the Covid-19 context, core working hours in Geneva were still suspended.

Concerning the Geneva-based Working Group on Racism, EB members were informed that its first meeting was scheduled to take place on 7 December, where the Co-Chairs of the group were Marie Diur and Brad Smith. A suggestion was made to send a formal letter to senior management in New York noting the working group at the Secretariat level should uphold values and advise its members to leave any “baggage” outside.

It was also raised that there seemed to be a trend now to put in place parallel groups to address a myriad of issues, which went against the principle of "One UN". This matter could be brought to SMC.

On contract types, Bureau members recalled that in the past, project personnel were recruited under 200 series and were therefore considered staff and had more rights than consultants presently, therefore suggesting that going back to such modalities could be a good compromise compared to other consultant-type contracts which were more precarious. The EB noted that the three federations had hired a consultant to review the matter of contractual arrangements.

Taking into account that in 2022 CCISUA will celebrate its 40th anniversary, the UNOG SCC delegation at the CCISUA mid-term meeting proposed to host the CCISUA GA in Geneva, which was accepted by the federation. The EB agreed on and will submit it to the Council for confirmation.

Point 4 Lobbying

The CCISUA mid-term meeting was followed by lobbying efforts in New York, where various Member States were approached by Prisca Chaoui, Brad Smith and Mohamed Bali. The lobbying efforts were deemed to have been very positive as not only an opportunity to reconnect with Member States (as many delegates had changed), most of whom were keen on listening to staff concerns and sharing theirs. In most cases they were on board on a range of issues presented to them, namely concerning the Pension Fund; ICSC issues like education grant and settling in grant; Administration of Justice; the Young Professional Programme; career progression; geographical distribution.

A meeting with the ACABQ Chair also took place, where it was made clear that Member States are not keen to see any increase in entitlements for staff.

In particular regarding the education grant, it seemed a number of Member States from particularly wealthier nations were pushing to discontinue grants for tertiary education and extending it for kindergarten, to save on costs.

Point 5 Next JNC meeting

EB members were informed that feedback from some GS staff, particularly in UNOG CSS, regarding the lack of career prospects, especially since there seemed to be a trend whereby GS posts were being abolished and replaced by lower-P posts. This issue would be raised at the next JNC meeting.

Another item for discussion at the JNC was mentioned to be the increased use of personal devices and equipment to perform official duties of the organization, especially now with teleworking. This issue was also linked to that of management being able to seize personal devices during investigations.

The EB agreed to aim to hold the next JNC meeting in January.

Point 6 Next Council meeting

The EB agreed to call for the next Council meeting on Thursday 9 December at 1.15 p.m. via Teams. Agenda items would include: report on the CCISUA mid-term meeting, report on lobbying efforts, the next CCISUA GA, update on the Languages Service, the Working Group on Racism.

Point 7 Any other business

A global townhall of Languages Services would be organized in the following days.

Bureau members were reminded that all communications should be transmitted to staff or groups of staff only by the leadership of the Council, including substantive information shared during EB discussions.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.