

## **Languages Service Sectoral Assembly (LSSA)**

### **Minutes of the tenth meeting of the Bureau<sup>1</sup>**

Held via videoconference on Thursday, 10 March 2022, from 2.30 to 3.30 p.m.

**Attendees:** Marine Acker (FTS), Anthony Alioto (ES), Anna Aleksandrova (RTS), Esma Belfalah (ATS), Jianjun Chen (CTS), Pablo González Silva (STS), Laura Johnson (President), Veronica Sainz Goutard (STS), Emily Šváchová (ETS).

**Main topics discussed:**

- Upcoming SMRG meeting
- Crediting of reprise
- gData 2.0 productivity report

**Decisions taken:**

1. *Upcoming SMRG meeting:* The Staff Management Relations Group of DCM (DCM Director, HR representatives and staff representatives) has a meeting scheduled. The Bureau agreed that the priority issues to raise for LS were the full crediting of reprise, issues with the new gData 2.0 productivity interface and possible solutions to address the problem of original word count being used as the metric for productivity for all language pairs, irrespective of linguistic distance, and remove the current incentive to work using relay, which is contrary to the principles of multilingualism and equal treatment of official languages
2. *Crediting of reprise:* A letter had been sent to the USG of DGACM by staff representatives from the four duty stations requesting that full crediting of reprise be continued.
3. *gData 2.0 productivity report:* The President had written to the Chief of LS passing on staff concerns (see annex for response).

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

Annex

### **Message from President to LS Chief about issues with gData2.0 interface**

I am writing at the request of the LSSA Bureau to follow up on the issues with the introduction of the gData2 system.

I appreciate that you are aware of many of the problems reported by staff and that in your communication in February you advised them not to worry about the new interface until they received further updates, reminding them that if they have always met the productivity standard, there is no reason they will stop during the next two months. I personally believe that it would be better for both individual staff and the Organization if they could forget about tracking their individual figures and focus on the actual work. However, the organizational culture is such that many staff members do put in extra efforts towards the end of the performance cycle to bring the annual averages up, for which they depend on the ability to see the figures.

I would like to know whether further updates on the system will be forthcoming.

In particular, I know that many staff members spent hours comparing the previous and new systems and found discrepancies. Others did not find the time to check. Could you inform us whether any issues will be fixed at the system level, or will it be dependent on people having found the specific errors in their own data?

One FRO reported to me that a reportee (P3) whose average output productivity when calculated to 2 decimal places was over 5.75 found that in the new interface using 1 decimal place, this figure became 5.7. Are all figures rounded down instead of up in the new system?

Finally, I think communication on the roll-out could have been much better. The information on the deadline for comparing the two systems was neither communicated directly by chiefs nor sent out to all staff in a centralized way, but was instead included in an email sent by EAMS, which was then forwarded to staff in some but not all sections. In addition, it was not all clear from reading the email that it would actually be impossible to compare the two systems after that date.

### **Response from LS Chief**

With respect to gData2, thank you for sharing your thoughts about the new interface and about tracking performance. The United Nations management structure is based on the principles of Results based management and we are all accountable to Member States. Staff own their performance and managers have to monitor it and report it. I went into the reports this morning and am pleased that the vast majority of staff continue to exceed the new workload standard as was the case on the Service level ever since 2020..

I have reached out to the gData team to get answers to your questions. The aim is for the system to be accurate on time for the end of cycle reporting conversations at the end of this month. I understand from the gData 2.0 team that they will be writing soon again to Language Chiefs to ask staff to test their data again, as they are on the verge of resolving the majority of outstanding issues. I will make sure you receive a copy of any such communications as soon as we receive it.

Issues are currently being resolved at the system and individual levels. The gData 2.0 team has been working hard to identify issues. The individual feedback has also greatly assisted in identifying systematic issues such as those found with the synchronisation of the Leaves information from UMOJA. Leaves are no longer being read from gDoc1 but directly from Umoja. The gData 2.0 team is also working on resolving isolated individual issues that staff members reported such as the impossibility to access, or dual accounts appearing due to several email accounts being associated with one staff member. Many of those that were reported either have already been or will be resolved soon. We expect that isolated issues may continue to be found during the next reporting cycle but the gData 2.0 team will work diligently to resolve them as quickly as possible. The team is now confident that they have been able to identify the majority of issues that could be expected and are implementing standard fixes that can be applied when required.

Rounding is done upwards and the issues associated with it should now be resolved. That same staff member should now be able to read the 5.75 they expected to see.

The gData 2.0 team fully recognizes that communication could have been better considering the challenges staff members encountered during the transition. Many factors were incompressible and unavoidable but the team has

committed to learn from this experience and strive to do better in future. They are very appreciative of the efforts of colleagues to provide feedback and detailed observations which have gone a long way to getting us so much closer to our collective objective. As a reminder, colleagues can still access Today for Translators to compare their gData 2.0 reports with the productivity report in Today. The data was last refreshed on 31 January 2022. Data for any period after 31 January 2022 would not be available nor accurate.