39th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council
39éme Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

Le Bureau exécutif | The Executive Bureau

Minutes of the 29th meeting

held on 18 January 2022 at 9 a.m. via MS Teams

Members of the Executive Bureau	BALI Mohamed	Present
	DUPARC Philippe	Present
	JOHNSON Laura	Present
	MEYER Olivier	Present
	POPA Gabriela	Present
	RICHARDS Ian	Present
	SMITH Bradford	Present
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 the minutes of the 28th meeting

The minutes of the 28th meeting were adopted without changes as recorded in the Council secretariat.

Point 3 Next Council meeting

EB members recalled the next Council meeting would take place on 20 January at 1.15 p.m.

Point 4 Working Group on Racism

The EB was briefed on the recent meeting of the (Geneva) Working Group on Racism the week before, which was planning two townhall briefings for staff on racism and how it manifested in the workplace, one to be focused on informal tools to address it, and the other focused on formal tools. The Working Group was still waiting for the SG to issue his strategic plan on racism which would be the overarching guideline of the Working Group.

Point 5 Staff Management Committee (SMC)

An ad-hoc SMC meeting was expected to take place on 26 January. The only document so far received in preparation for the meeting, i.e., a working group paper on staff selection, had already been circulated to all Council members for their information and feedback. The ad-hoc SMC meeting was also due to discuss the issue of deferred home leave in the Covid context, where the staff side intended to request for management to extend its accrual.

Point 6 Update on mandatory vaccination

The EB took note that management informed staff representatives of their decision to order mandatory vaccination against Covid-19 for a limited number of staff in very specific services due to the higher risk of exposure and impossibility to implement full mitigating measures because of the functions. These included several positions in UNOG, e.g., the DG's office, UNIS, the Medical Service, the Division of Administration (technical/logistics staff), and interpreters; whom would be informed directly by management of their decision. SSS staff were not included in the mandate as the Administration considered sufficient mitigating measures were effectively in place in the context of their functions.

Point 7 **Home leave issues**

The issue was raised whereby a number of staff members, who in the context of Covid, were still not able to take home leave, particularly because of very tight quarantine restrictions in certain countries. Some had raised the possibility of seeking certain accommodations from the Organization, which could possible include being able to telework from outside the duty station beyond two weeks in connection with home leave, to simplify the procedure to request home leave in Umoja, or eventually be allowed to take home leave more than once a year and be allowed to take home leave in a different country.

A discussion ensued. Caution was raised not to focus the issue on one nationality, but rather keep a staff-wide perspective. The accrual of home leave points and the relaxation of the one-year limit were already being raised at the SMC level. Staff rules already were noted to already contain provisions to allow staff to take home leave in a different country under certain circumstances. For additional telecommuting time outside the duty station, staff should be advised to discuss it with their supervisors as it was provided within the staff rules.

The EB agreed to prepare a draft response to the colleagues who raised the concerns and relay the issues to HR for their due follow-up.

Point 8 **Any other business**

The EB was informed that, following the communications of staff representation denouncing the discrimination stemming from recent requirements put in place for eligibility of their staff to go on missions, SSS management retracted the requirement of not having used sick leave days before missions, and instead would gather the Medical Service's opinion when required. Management, however, did not recant on the requirement to have a certain working level of f English as it considered it necessary for international missions, but agreed with the suggestion of staff representation and would put in place English courses for SSS colleagues interested.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.25 a.m.