



37th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council **37^{ème} Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG**

Minutes of the 12th meeting

held on 23 January 2020 at 1.15 p.m. in Room VIII

Council members present: APOSTOLOV Mario; BALI Mohamed; CHAOUI Prisca; CHANTREL Dominique; DUPARC Philippe; GAZIYEV Jamshid; JAMES Elizabeth; KALOTAY Kalman; KELLY Paul; MEYER Olivier; PECK ARIF Cathy; POPA Gabriela; RICHARDS Ian; SAMA ITOUA Nzété Da; SMITH Brad; STANOVIC Marko.

Council members absent: ALMARIO Francis; BALD Iain; BULYCH Yaroslav; DAN Lin; JAQUIOT Cédric; LEONI Brigitte; NGUYEN Ngoc; RUHANA MUKAMUSONI Angelique; TAPORAIE Amos.

The meeting opened at 1.20 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 9th, 10th, 11th meetings

The minutes of the 9th and 10th meetings were adopted with changes, and the minutes of the 11th meeting without changes, as recorded in the Council secretariat.

3. Report of the Finance Commission

The FC reported that payments had been regularly processed. All documentation required by the auditors was submitted to them in due time and it was waiting to receive their audit report.

Gabriela Popa joined the meeting at this point.

4. Report of the Executive Bureau

The EB reported on its activities since the previous Council meetings, with the exception of matters covered under separate agenda items below:

- *SAFI*: the SAFI committee had been looking into its potential business plan for the following years vis-à-vis the Palais renovations. The DG's office would be approached to find a temporary space inside Palais buildings to avoid moving to containers outside. Once clarity on the situation is provided the Council would take a decision on the best course of action.
- *Pension Fund*: the D1 post in Geneva was eliminated and a new one created in NY for the Pension Fund Board. The EB regretted this as the post ensured better management directly in Geneva.
- *Security and Safety Service*: a meeting was held with the DG and the participation of the SSS head of sectoral assembly, where issues of disfunction in the service and lack of career prospects were noted.
- *G-to-P*: UN Secretariat staff unions launched a petition to remove G-to-P barrier and called on the SG to consider the recommendations of the ACABQ and the relevant SMC working group to establish an internal programme targeted at improving the career opportunities of the GS and related categories.
- *Council investments*: the FC looked at the possibility of placing funds in UNFCU but was considered not viable due to currency exchange issues. The Mutuelle would be contacted to inquire about placements with them.
- *Long Service Awards*: over 350 emails had been received concerning the awards, many of staff complaining about the strict eligibility periods established by UNHQ which did not allow them to be eligible despite having achieved a threshold for the awards. Following the feedback, UNOG HR accepted the Council's proposal to include those who fall in-between the eligibility periods at the following awards in October. It was also agreed with management to divide the upcoming January ceremony in two due to the number of awardees.
- A series of *departmental townhalls* to address specific issues pertaining departments would soon begin with ECE and UNOG DCM, followed by OCHA, UNCTAD and others.

5. Equal Pay Campaign

The plenary recalled the townhall with the SG of 16 December, disappointed with the SG for affirming that, whilst he supported the Geneva staff equal pay campaign, he was unable to do anything to address it. A letter would be addressed to the ICSC in light of the GA resolution in December. The ICSC's following session

would be in Paris where Ian Richards would attend as President of CCISUA, at which the review of the post-adjustment methodology would be reviewed and hopefully finalized.

On the WMO staff case against the pay cut, the lawyer engaged by the Council rejected the case to be returned by the UNAT to the WMO Joint Appeals Board, whilst the lawyer engaged by the WMO staff union had agreed. Concerning the case of Geneva staff at the UNDT, the Council's external lawyer was invited for a case management meeting that should have taken place on the week of 6 January but the Tribunal never came back to him and it did not take place. OSLA was of the view that that was a positive sign as it probably meant things were moving and the judgment could be issued soon. Staff engagement would be built up to ensure they can be mobilized when the judgment is out, whether to protest it if negative or to pressure the SG not to appeal it if positive.

The Council noted a new UNOG circular was issued prohibiting gatherings in the Palais if not authorized by DG. Staff was not consulted on this and a message was sent to the administration requesting clarifications. Council members suggested this should be looked at under the light of the staff rules and regulations which simply establishes that the work of the Organisation should not be interfered with. It was agreed to escalate the situation if needed.

6. Strategic Heritage Plan

A letter addressed to the DG was being drafted requesting to meet with her and inform her staff are not being duly consulted on the SHP project, but rather being presented before *fait accompli* that cannot be changed. The Council recalled its goal was to ensure the best possible working environment for staff it was trying to diminish any negative impact as much as possible. The letter to the DG would be broadcasted.

The issue of internal mobility in the Palais was raised, noting no solutions were being offered to staff – especially those with disabilities – on the difficulty in mobility in the increasing distances. It was added that the SHP initially had plans to create an underground passage between E and H buildings, but not anymore.

Dominique Chantrel left the meeting at this point.

7. Update on the Pension Fund

The plenary recalled the abolition of the D1 post in the PF management in Geneva and creation of a new D1 post in New York at the PF Board. This was regretted as it was in detriment of the Geneva office. The Council would continue pushing the head of PF investments for transparency.

8. Ordinary General Assembly

The Council agreed to hold the Ordinary General Assembly of the staff on 30 January 2020. The annual report of the 37th Council would be circulated via broadcast.

Elizabeth James and Catherine Peck Arif left the meeting at this point.

9. UN Port

A Council member raised that the approval of the bridging loan to UN Port at the previous Council meeting had not been transparent as it lacked documentary evidence of the request of the loan by the UN Port Committee, not allowing the Council members to take an informed decision and therefore not respecting due process. Said decision was accused as having approved a loan to a private facility.

The claim was contested noting that the purpose had been clearly explained at the previous meeting as confirmed by the minutes, i.e. to bridge preparation costs at the start of the season (namely dredging of the port and installation of a new pontoon) with the membership fees and other forms of income UN Port would receive later in the Summer season. UN Port was not a private facility but rather under the joint management of the Council and UNOG Administration, as per its statutes which were published in its website – a facility aimed at providing staff welfare to UNOG staff and open to the wider international Geneva family. The proposal for the bridging loan was made by the members of the Council who were also members of the UN Port Committee alongside the management representatives. Reference was made to the previous bridging loan the Council approved in 2018 which UN Port paid on time fulfilling all conditions.

The meeting was left without quorum at 2.05 p.m.

10. Staff magazine

This item was postponed due to lack of quorum.

11. Any other business

This item was postponed due to lack of quorum.

The meeting was adjourned at 2.05 p.m.