



## **37<sup>th</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council** **37<sup>ème</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG**

### **Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting**

held on 28 May 2019 at 1.15 p.m. in Room XXVII

**Council members present:** ALMARIO Francis; BALD Iain; CHANTREL Dominique; CHAOUI Prisca; CHIRAZ BALY Mohamed; DAN Lin; DUPARC Philippe; GAZIYEV Jamshid; JAMES Elizabeth; JAQUIOT Cédric; KALOTAY Kalman; KELLY Paul; MEYER Olivier; PECK ARIF Cathy; RICHARDS Ian; SMITH Bradford; STANOVIC Marko; TAPORAIE Amos.

**Council members absent:** APOSTOLOV Mario; BULYCH Yaroslav; LEONI Brigitte; POPA Gabriela; RIOUKHINA Evelina; RUHANA MUKAMUSONI Angelique; SAMA ITOUA Nzété Da.

*The meeting opened at 1.20 p.m.*

#### **1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted with changes as reflected below.

#### **2. Adoption of the minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting**

The minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting were adopted with changes as recorded in the Council secretariat.

#### **3. Report of the Finance Commission**

The plenary was informed that, as preparations for the December 2019 staff gala and children's party began (for the 2019-2020 financial year), a provisional budget needed to be agreed upon. The recommendation of the EB was to allocate envelopes of **CHF 40'000 for the staff gala** and **CHF 30'000 for the children's party** (collectively lower than for the previous year by CHF 10'000). An additional proposal was raised to allocate **CHF 2'000 for the traditional garden party** to be held on 28 June (current financial year 2018-2019 – also considerably lower than in the previous year by CHF 8'000).

It was clarified that organizing committees would do the necessary to cap expenses at the mentioned amounts and the Council would be kept informed. It was argued that a detailed proposal should be presented before an actual vote on the allocation could be carried, to which it was replied that the organizing committee should be given first an envelope and then come back to the Council plenary with the detailed plans.

With 17 votes in favour and 1 abstention, the Council agreed on the above allocations.

#### **4. Report of the Executive Bureau**

The EB reported on its activities since the previous Council meeting, notably on the following items:

- CCISUA GA delegation, to be discussed under a separate agenda item.
- Harassment cases in UNCTAD: an email was sent to UNCTAD staff informing them of the exchange with the UNCTAD SG and upcoming meeting with the DSG, to be held the following day.
- UN budget (start of one-year cycles): meetings would be requested with heads of departments as they were preparing their budgets and look into possible negative effects on staff.
- Internal Justice Council: it held a meeting attended by staff representatives where various issues and ways to improve the justice system for staff were discussed.
- A meeting between UNJSPF Management and staff was suspended as Management preferred to meet groups separately, to which staff unions refused.
- A request was received from AFICS to formalize relation between them and the Council and they would appoint a focal point.

- A staff member whose legal representation was paid by the Council the previous year won the case before the UNAT.
- The tailored Summer camp for children of UN staff was mentioned to be successfully underway; even better options would try to be sought for next year.
- UN Port was noted to be doing well since the beginning of the season.

The Council agreed that pressure needed to be mount on UNCTAD Management to seriously address harassment cases, not excluding the possibility of taking cases public. Prisca Chaoui will represent the Council at the expected meeting with UNJSPF Management.

## **5. CCISUA General Assembly**

The Council was briefed on the recent CCISUA GA (Beirut) where various issues were discussed, namely: travel policy; locally recruited staff compensation review; post adjustment review and margin management; ICSC reform; offshoring; disabilities in the workplace; communication and knowledge management; whistleblower protection; security of staff in the field; mobility; personnel on consultancy contracts; Pension Fund issues; harassment; parental leave.

It was noted that CCISUA met and held positive exchanges with senior managers of the ICSC. The ICSC agreed to the review of the post adjustment system; technical details would be looked at by the statisticians sent on behalf of CCISUA; two groups would work in parallel, one on rules and the other on calculation/methodology.

It was further noted that Ian Richards was re-elected President of CCISUA and Olivier Meyer to CCISUA's procurement committee. The official report of the CCISUA GA (which would include the substantive account of the Council members' mission) would be made available as soon as it was ready.

## **6. Policy on harassment**

The Council was informed that the joint working group on wellbeing agreed to hold a workshop in June to help staff deal with potential cases on harassment and would work with Management on a campaign against harassment.

The Council was also briefed on the activities of the SMC working group on harassment whose mandate was to revise the related policy. Following the recent SMC in Sarajevo, the working group had been reopened for to take on further revisions of the policy based on the CCISUA survey of the previous year. Since then the working group had met four times and was able to agree on new provisions to expedite the complaints process, add guarantees, protective measures and support, and data tracking. The Administration would present the working group report to C for agreement.

It was mentioned that the revised policy should include protections against retaliation, namely for those denouncing harassment and taking the Administration to court. There was overall agreement that the current system was cumbersome. An idea was raised suggesting automatic reassignment of staff in cases where harassment was denounced.

Reference was made to the importance of implementation of the policy, notwithstanding the need for better policy. The new policy was expected to avoid weak responses to harassment complaints and egregious actions, thus improving implementation. Staff in the working group also lobbied for automatic preventing measures in extreme cases of sexual harassment.

## **7. Staff selection and mobility**

Agenda item postponed pending input from the Administration.

## **8. Fitness in the Palais**

The Council was briefed on the preliminary results of the recent survey on the use of the new fitness space following renovations, which showed 70% of staff would favour installing an externally-managed fitness centre in detriment of space allocated to staff fitness clubs. However, a majority would not pay more than CHF 400 per year. A suggestion was raised whereby the Council should actively operate the fitness centre if installed. It was replied that operating a gym was expensive and a cumbersome task,

whereas externalisation seemed more efficient and risk-mitigating. In the meantime, the Administration would call for expressions of interest. Once final results were released the Council would resume the discussion.

## **9. UN Special**

The Council recalled its partnership with the WHO Staff Association concerning the UN Special magazine, as well as the current financial and operational arrangements. It was noted that relations with WHO SA over the management of the magazine had been problematic for several years, and that content was mostly contributed by the UN side. It was further added that the current financial situation of the Council, namely the uncertainty of income from SAFI in the coming years, made it necessary for the Council to seek ways to increase its revenue.

Bearing the above in mind, the EB presented a proposal to end the UN Special partnership with WHO SA effective at the end of 2019 and continue producing a magazine of its own, whereby all the income generated from the Council's magazine would go to the Council in its entirety. The EB would study any legal ramifications of the proposed separation as revert to the Council if necessary. Following a discussion, the Council agreed to begin the process of separation from WHO SA with respect to the magazine UN Special, and to mandate the EB to look into any potential implications.

## **10. Staff gala and children's party**

Council members were called upon to volunteer for the staff gala and children's party organizing committees, resulting in the below nominations:

For the staff gala: Amos Taporai, Ian Richards, Elizabeth James, Brad Smith, Mohamed Bali.

For the children's party: Catherine Peck Arif, Kalman Kalotay, Marko Stanovic, Amos Taporai, Mohamed Bali, Prisca Chaoui, Dominique Chantrel.

## **11. Garden party**

The Council recalled it had approved CHF 2'000 for the 2019 garden party. Having discussed potential formats for the event, the Council agreed to retain the traditional one (self pic-nic at the park with music plus Eldora catering options). The event was said to be potentially an opportunity to give exposure to the Council and gain new dues-paying members. Council members were invited to volunteer to organize it.

## **12. E-voting**

A discussion was held on the possibility to introduce e-voting in a way that ensured the integrity of the election process. It was mentioned that Polling Officers were already exploring the idea. Arguments were raised on the importance of motivating staff to vote independently of the method of voting. Following a discussion, the Council agreed to encourage Polling Officers to study potential alternative ways of voting that may be acceptable under the Regulations, including e-voting.

## **13. Missions**

It was noted that substantive reports of missions would be systematically presented to the Council (which could take the form of individual written presentations or collective reports).

## **14. Any other business**

No other business was raised.

*The meeting closed at 3:15 p.m.*