

Languages Service Sectoral Assembly (LSSA) **Minutes of the eleventh meeting of the Bureau¹**

Held via videoconference on Wednesday, 31 May 2023, from 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Attendees: Marine Acker (FTS), Esmá Belfalah (ATS), Hassan Harrafa (ATS), Laura Johnson (President), Lyndsay Nash (ES), Cristina Parrondo (STS)

1. **The Bureau** discussed the outcome of the latest DCM Staff Relations Management Group (see annex).
2. **The President** briefed the Bureau on the latest developments regarding the implementation of the translators' workload standard, including the presentation of the paper at Staff-Management Committee (SMC), referral to the New York Joint negotiating Committee (JNC) and subsequent referral to Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance. **The Bureau** discussed possible next steps.
3. **The Bureau** was informed of unofficial machine translations resembling UN documents being used in some client meetings. It was agreed to raise the issue with the acting Director of DCM.
4. **The Bureau** agreed to call a General Assembly and gather signatures for the constitution of a new sectoral assembly.

¹ 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

Summary sent to DCM staff

As you know, the latest meeting of the DCM Staff Relations Management Group (SRMG) took place last Thursday 27 April. This was the occasion to identify and discuss issues of concern to you, in order to prevent escalation and to promote a better working environment.

Here follows a summary of the most relevant issues discussed:

- We received an update on the business continuity measures, which allow for remote simultaneous interpretation (RSI), an ongoing occupational health concern for interpreters. DCM Management informed us that, in principle, these measures will be in place until 30 June. There is, however, a strong interest from Member States and some bodies and entities in maintaining some degree of remote participation. Although some measures have been taken at UNOG to assess the effects of these working conditions on interpreters, a wider, more systematic survey seems to be taking place in New York. DCM Management has not been successful in obtaining details about this survey. We will keep monitoring this issue which has serious health impacts on our interpreter colleagues.
- Regarding the issues with the Reprise Calculator and its reported discrepancies with eLUNA, DCM Management assured us that the logic employed by both tools is the same, while recognising that there is still work to be done. DCM Management asked staff members to keep reporting anomalies, despite our insistence that you have been doing this to no avail so far. We will keep monitoring this issue, which is of great concern given the planned discontinuation of the current crediting of reprise on 1 July.
- We discussed the need to regulate the assignment of monitored self-revision to avoid the systematic allocation of such assignments to temporary staff who are not ready for the extra responsibility. When this happens, it has repercussions on the workflow and places unnecessary pressures on revisers. It is also a point of interpersonal friction. The Staff Union would like to see this practice discontinued. It was agreed that this would be discussed more in depth in a bilateral meeting between the Union and the Chief of Languages Service. This meeting has already taken place and we will keep monitoring this issue.
- We raised concerns regarding the unequal distribution of desks amongst translation sections in the framework of the renovation of the historical buildings, but welcomed the reports that negotiations were underway to solve these. We conveyed to DCM Management our belief in the principle equal working conditions for all translation sections according to their size, and our view that this is also in line with the General Assembly's mandate to treat all languages equally.
- Finally, DCM Management expressed support for the continued relevance and necessity of the role of Desktop Publishing Units (DPU), and reassured us that there are no plans to reduce the number of staff performing these functions nor to outsource or delocalize DPUs. We welcomed the reassuring message regarding the DPU and their continued relevance, and we underlined that they were indispensable for the delivery of DCM's mandate.

We hope the SRMG will keep meeting regularly and look forward to constructively engaging with DCM Management on the issues that concern staff.