



41st Staff Union Council 2023-2024

Executive Bureau Minutes of the 3rd meeting

Held on 9 March 2023 at 9 a.m.
via MS Teams

Adopted on 15 March 2023.

Ref. SU-41-EB-3

Members of the Executive Bureau:

ABDELLAOUI Naima	<i>Present</i>	GONZALEZ Pablo	<i>Present</i>
BALI Mohamed	<i>Present</i>	HERMELINK Ursula	<i>Present</i>
MARTINEZ Begoña	<i>Present</i>	JOHNSON Laura	<i>Present</i>
DUPARC Philippe	<i>Present</i>		

President of the UNOG SU:

RICHARDS Ian *Absent*

Vice-President of the UNOG SU:

SMITH Bradford *Present*

The meeting began at 9 a.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with changes as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 2nd meeting

The minutes of the 2nd meeting were adopted without changes as recorded in the Union secretariat.

3. Parental leave

EB members recalled the new parental leave policy was to be applied non-retroactively as of 1 January 2023, contrary to what had originally been assured by management. The SMC staff side had discussed possible ways forward; the New York and Vienna staff unions would be checking with lawyers for legal advice on challenging the administrative issuance.

4. Programme of work

The EB discussed the content of the draft programme of work for 2023-2024. A link would be circulated for EB members to input comments/suggestions directly with the aim of carrying out a final review at the next EB meeting and later review/adoption by the Council.

5. Security – Appendix B

EB members raised the matter of lack of review since 2016 of work hours and shifts policy for SSS staff. Issues included the organization of night shifts, the obligation for security guards to remain on premises and with their radio on during breaks and the lack of remuneration thereof, and the impossibility to have annual leave approved with sufficient time in advance.

A discussion followed. The possibility of doing a survey among SSS staff was suggested in the context of the meetings with departmental heads that were being planned. An overall point was made as to the treatment of staff by management contradictory to what the Organization would predicate, and the inequality of power between managers and staff. The legitimacy of the 2016 policy was put into question, about which SSS management was asked but was yet to provide a clear answer; OSLA could be consulted to that effect.

The EB noted that the issue of Appendix B was generally related to well-being and health. Different fora where these issues could be raised included the Joint Committee on Health and Safety at the Workplace, the UNOG Working Group on Staff Well-being and Mental Health, and the joint working group of staff representatives and SSS management. The EB agreed to renew the Union's membership to the latter at the next Council meeting and then request a meeting with SSS management to raise the issues.

An overall discussion followed concerning joint bodies, working groups, and the role of staff representatives therein. The EB reaffirmed the important role of the joint bodies and working groups in different contexts, where one did not intend to replace the other.

6. G-3/G-4 promotions

The EB was informed that the recruitment exercise for seven G4 posts in SSS finalized with granting of six internal promotions and one external recruitment. The fact that not all of the posts were kept for internal candidates when many staff had been many years waiting for a promotion, was a source of tension among staff. The EB agreed to request clarifications from management.

A point was raised against the fact that promotion in itself was not a right, nor foreseen as such in the staff rules and regulations, nor tied to length of service. The EB noted with regret that promotions were indeed not guaranteed for UN staff as decided so by the Member States, however, the EB would push for management in Geneva to review and reclassify G3 posts to reflect the passing of time and evolution of functions; to be raised with the DG at the next meeting with her.

7. Languages Service

The EB was briefed on recent events concerning the workload increase of translators. Following a vote of no confidence in DGACM senior management, staff representatives from the different duty stations wrote to the SG on 27 February 2023 copying all senior managers concerned. A response from the SG or from DGACM senior management was yet to be received. A global townhall meeting of translation staff would be held later that day to gather their feedback and inputs following the vote and letter. A paper for discussion at SMC would also be presented in that forum to follow-up on SMC's previous agreement to follow-up on staff health-related issues.

A point was made about the calculation of productivity of translators where management had asked staff to double check that leave and special assignments were correctly reflected, which created stress by putting responsibility on the shoulders of the staff, arguing it was management's responsibility to ensure all systems worked properly. This was noted to have been subject of a question to management at a recent townhall meeting, where they recognized there were potential issues and were willing to look at every case that presented any inconsistency. It was further noted that if ever any inconsistency in the calculation of productivity was the cause of a negative performance appraisal, this could be rebutted.

8. Meeting with ECE

The EB was informed that the Chief of Administration of ECE invited the ECE-based staff representatives of the 41st Staff Union Council for a meeting the following week. Subjects for discussion were yet to be provided but would normally concern staffing, coordination, and communication issues. The EB agreed that officeholders should also attend; the DES and VP would be available.

9. Meeting with the Director of Administration

The EB was briefed on the courtesy meeting held earlier that week with the newly appointed Director of the UNOG Division of Administration (DOA). Issues discussed included the following:

- Staff representation asked to set up a meeting with the DG; one would be set up soon.
- DOA looked forward to having more frequent JNC meetings for ongoing consultations.
- Staff representation raised the fact that a number of joint bodies were not operating; this would be discussed at the next JNC.
- The issue of air quality in the H building was raised; this had been referred to the health and safety committee.
- The issue of delays by DOA to send out Union broadcasts was raised. DOA agreed to a trial period of 6 months where Union broadcasts would be sent out without any review by DOA.
- Concerning the Tennis Club, DOA would be replying in writing to the Union about the proposal to transition into a UN Port-like administration arrangement, noting such arrangement would have to be preceded by a dissolution of the Club whereby the Union became its successor.

EB member Naima Abdellaoui expressed her wish to be invited to JNC meetings.

10. Any other business

- An issue was raised concerning seeming delays in the approval of special post allowances in UNCTAD and other related SPA concerns. The EB would stay tuned to staff feedback.
- Concerning continuing appointments, it was confirmed that having gone through a central review panel upon recruitment was a condition for eligibility.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.