



42nd Staff Union Council 2024-2025

Executive Bureau Minutes of the 10th meeting

Held on 27 June 2024 at 1:30 p.m.
via MS Teams

Adopted on 29 July 2024

Ref. SU-42-EB-10

Members of the Executive Bureau:

ABDELLAOUI Naima	Absent	LEWIS-LETTINGTON Nicole	Absent
DUPARC Philippe	Present	MARTINEZ Begoña	Present
JACQUIOT Cédric	Present	PUHALOVIĆ Janet	Present
JOHNSON Laura	Present		

President of the UNOG SU:

RICHARDS Ian Absent

Vice-President of the UNOG SU:

Catherine Louise Present
Peck Arif

The meeting began at 1:35 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 9th meeting

The minutes of the 9th meeting were adopted without changes.

3. Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC)

The ES informed the Bureau that the JNC meeting would be held the day after. ES, DES and VP would attend the meeting. As agreed in the previous EB meeting, the SU would raise the following issues: liquidity saving measures, practical issues following the moves (medical desks, air quality in H, acoustics in D), security staff issues (follow-up on Appendix B and a break room at Pregny gate) and mass unwanted emailing, in addition to issues that management wanted to discuss. The JNC agenda was shared with all EB members. EB members questioned the possibility of making substantial savings when the lights were on in the E building; some staff indicated that the electrical sockets no longer worked. Concern was also expressed about the significant amount of money spent on office renovations for UNCTAD's Head of Entity in E building. It was also suggested to urge management to increase cleaning of bathrooms, carry out a survey of air quality, more evenly distribute standing desks, and provide disinfectant supplies to clean shared desks as they were accommodating more staff because of move. The members also indicated the constant lack of information regarding moves and agreed to ask the management about upcoming planned moves of OHCHR to H in January and the moves of UNCTAD, ECE and other staff to S buildings in September; sharing the information on the contingency plans if there is a summer heat wave, conditions in the renovated buildings and the possibility of visiting the S building before the actual move also was requested.

4. Staff-Management Committee (SMC) updates

An ad hoc SMC meeting was held the day before. A paper prepared by the SU President was discussed that questioned the persistence of liquidity crisis measures in light of new data showing that the financial situation was better now than a year ago and the use of liquidity situations as a reason not to follow the rules, mandated by UN General Assembly resolutions and staff management agreements. The paper further proposed to agree on the framework and criteria for establishing a liquidity crisis. The paper was not supported by the management side. Management informed that the UN Secretary General (SG) would

communicate with staff next month to share updates on the liquidity situation and the comptroller would have another town hall on the issue.

Another paper was presented on arbitrary implementation of alternate working arrangements (AWA) and flexible working arrangements (FWA) in similar situations. While under FWA, staff could voluntarily request management to work outside of the office, the UNOG DG's decision to close the Palais at the end of 2023 to save money due to the liquidity crisis, forced staff to work in an alternate work arrangement under the guise of FWA. Management reassured that they would revise the relevant AWA guidance and clarify the differences between AWA and FWA to the HR network and offices which were not in compliance.

In addition, the staff side presented its response to the management paper on special post allowance (SPA) , which aimed to limit the duration of payment of SPA. However, management assured that exceptions would be possible for those who occupy higher level positions beyond the one-year limit. The staff-side strongly advocated to explicitly clarify exceptions in the policy, and are waiting to see what language is included in the draft policy. Staff-side also disagreed with the removal of SPA panels and the management informed that it would launch a survey of SPA panel members to see how they could be improved.

A final item discussed was the report from the working group on financial incentives for mobility. It was noted that the incentives provided under the new policy would be beneficial to staff as many provisions include family and dual career support to encourage mobility.

5. Management report on working groups (WGs)

UNOG Administration prepared and added the report on WGs to the agenda of the JNC meeting. The report was an attempt to map all WGs, joint bodies, committees, boards, and other bodies that exist at the UNOG and it was shared with the EB for comments. EB members were asked to share their inputs on the report before the JNC meeting, otherwise the ES could ask management to provide more time to review the document.

6. OHCHR national staff detained in Yemen

OHCHR staff called the ES that day and informed that there were 13 UN system staff members who were arbitrarily detained by the Houthi de facto authorities in Yemen since the beginning of the month and there were others who have been detained even longer. The DES offered to find out more information from OCHA leadership to see what (if any) advocacy efforts could be helpful, given that hostage situations normally are very sensitive and information cannot be shared broadly with staff; a letter from CCISUA to the UN Secretary General could be considered if it does not negatively impact the status of those detained.

7. Possible engagement of consultant for evaluation of the translation system

Translators had complained that the report on eLUNa commissioned by management was biased, attributing all increases in output to the management decision to commission the tool and requested a truly independent report taking into account the views of actual users. The New-York and Vienna staff unions agreed to contribute to the costs. EB members pointed out that the consultant for this work should have the necessary qualification and be a well-known specialist in the relevant field to counter the flawed conclusions of the management report. The issue would be discussed at the following meetings once a potential consultant and costs are identified.

8. AOB

- A security staff was injured at work and requested sick leave which was reduced in length by UN medical service. Even though the staff member had a medical certificate issued by a doctor, the UN medical service claimed that according to the international rules for this type of injury the request of 5 days of sick leave was not possible. EB agreed to follow up with the management of the medical service to get more information on this case.

The meeting was adjourned at 3.10 p.m.

Acronyms and abbreviations:

SU: Staff Union of the UNOG

EB: Executive Bureau of the Staff Union

ES: Executive Secretary of the Staff Union

DES: Deputy Executive Secretary of the Staff Union

VP: Vice-President of the UNOG SU

UNOG: United Nations Office at Geneva

CCISUA: Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations