



42nd Staff Union Council 2024-2025

Executive Bureau Minutes of the 5th meeting

Held on 9 April 2024 at 1:00 p.m.
via MS Teams

Adopted on 23 April 2024

Ref. SU-42-EB-5

Members of the Executive Bureau:

ABDELLAOUI Naima	<i>Present</i>	LEWIS-LETTINGTON Nicole	<i>Present</i>
DUPARC Philippe	<i>Present</i>	MARTINEZ Begoña	<i>Present</i>
JACQUIOT Cédric	<i>Present</i>	PUHALOVIĆ Janet	<i>Present</i>
JOHNSON Laura	<i>Present</i>		

President of the UNOG SU:

RICHARDS Ian *Present*

Vice-President of the UNOG SU:

GONZALEZ Pablo *Absent*

The meeting began at 1:05 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 4th meeting and modified 3rd meeting

The minutes of the 4th meeting and modified 3rd meeting were adopted without changes.

3. Currently unrepresented staff

UN Staff regulations and rules state that every staff member has the right to be represented by a staff union at the duty station unless they were represented by another staff representative body. However, there are some entities (e.g., OCHA, UNDRR, UNCTAD) with project or satellite offices with a small number of staff that report to Geneva but are not represented by a union at their duty station. Creation of a separate union for these staff is not feasible due to a limited staff pool and lack of infrastructure in remote locations.

The EB members highlighted the importance of making these 'orphan' staff members' voices heard, who could also provide key information and different perspectives on the system and policies. The members agreed to identify the entities with non-represented staff and discuss with polling officers on the ways to have them represented by the UNOG SU. Issues of keeping in contact with these staff members were discussed since they were not part of UNOG and hence not included in the UNOG mailing lists. The EB could set up a special mailing list just for these colleagues to keep in touch and send out SU broadcasts. Also, the ES would request a meeting with the polling officers once the list of non-represented staff was prepared.

4. JIU report on mental health

Ms. Abdellaoui presented the JIU report "Review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations". She noted that the report lacked staff perspectives, did not mention accountability of managers for creating toxic working environments, did not present a link between increasing mental health issues and the recent changes in management methods including delegation of authority, did not provide reasons for increased mental health cases among UN staff. The Annex II of the report listed the psychosocial risk factors to mental health, which was highlighted by Ms. Abdellaoui as very pertinent to the UN and those factors to be accentuated by the measures to address the liquidity crisis, including planned staff squeezing in the H building. The EB members were called to use that report as a reference for advocacy against the management decisions particularly those related to liquidity crisis,

destruction of E building, and switch from annual to biannual budget. The EB recalled that a broadcast was sent to all staff on that particular report highlighting its findings, and agreed to make use of its findings in its advocacy work.

5. Survey

During the 4th EB meeting it was agreed to carry out a staff survey on the prevalence of non-respect of rules and regulations, humility, humanity, organization culture, lack of respect towards colleagues and UN values. Questions from previous similar survey were shared with ES which was a short one and narrow in scope. As the Staff Engagement Survey did not take place presumably due to liquidity crisis, the EB members agreed to broaden the scope by including more questions not only on prohibited conduct but also micromanagement, favouritism, and abuse of authority, while keeping the survey concise. The EB members reiterated the continued persistence of these issues in the UN and the complains reported to them by the staff. DES would prepare the questions and share with EB.

6. Any other business

- Palais partial closure: The EB members noted that at the townhall held a week ago, different views were expressed, which made it difficult to take decisions that would satisfy everybody. ES invited the members to share the experiences of their respective entities on planned moves due to partial Palais closure scheduled on 22 April 2024. The members noted lack of specific logistical information regarding the move despite the fact that less than 2 weeks were left.
- The EB member raised the issue of impact of Palais partial closure on security staff: the imposed opening and closing hours made security staff to come earlier and leave later than their official working hours to change uniform, to go to the post assigned. At the same time the security staff, due to the nature of the job, cannot telework, while the overtime compensation payments were not approved due to liquidity crisis. The EB members referred to the Joint Committee on Health and Safety at the Workplace which could examine the case and suggest appropriate actions. The Security Staff Assembly could also be organized in that regard.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 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

CCISUA: Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System

JIU: Joint Inspection Unit