



42nd Staff Union Council 2024-2025

Ref. SU-42-EB-6

Executive Bureau Minutes of the 6th meeting

Held on 23 April 2024 at 1:30 p.m.
via MS Teams

Adopted on 1 May 2024

Members of the Executive Bureau:

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

President of the UNOG SU:

RICHARDS Ian Present

Vice-President of the UNOG SU:

Vacant

The meeting began at 1:49 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 5th meeting

The minutes of the 5th meeting were adopted without changes.

3. Approval to launch 2023 audit

As per the usual practice, an external audit of the SU accounts was carried annually to support the work of internal auditors. The audit cost was CHF 3,800 and would be carried out by Fidexpert SA, a company that carried out the audit the previous year. The EB approved to launch the audit of 2023 accounts.

4. Palais closure

Palais closure was ongoing, but not all buildings that were supposed to be closed were done so. The SU launched a survey on the matter and 466 responses were received. 79 per cent of the respondents did not support the DG's decision to close large parts of the Palais and 76 per cent said that the closures will have a negative or strongly negative impact on their work.

The EB members indicated that there has been little clear information and many sections and units felt that they have been left to themselves. It was reported that management did not show much interest to organize well the moves and make sure the staff receive full support in the process. Specific challenges included shortages of boxes for moving, insufficient lockers and cabinets in the H building, among others. In some instances, that led to staff members negotiate among themselves to get lockers and other needed items.

The members also discussed the medical insurance issues that might arise due to flexible working arrangements implemented by the management. The members agreed to call on managers to extend maximum flexibility to staff, given the well-known challenges of the H building and that those who need to come into the office to work should not be pressured to telecommute.

The EB agreed to send out a broadcast to share the survey results and on the issues faced by staff during the move.

5. Report back from SMC

The EB was briefed on the recent discussions at the SMC meeting held over the previous week:

- No objection to the management proposal to submit only factual reports on continuing appointments to the General Assembly (GA) with no recommendations as decisions taken by the GA could be against staff interests.
- Agreement with the management proposal to change the classification appeals process from a one-tiered to a two-tiered process. Staff members who disagree with a classification decision concerning the post they encumber should be able to request an additional independent review of the grade of their post, which would be reviewed by two classification experts who were not involved in the original classification.
- No objection to the management proposal to implementation of temporary special measures to accelerate progress towards equitable geographical distribution to bring unrepresented and underrepresented Member State within its desirable range which would apply only to external candidates. In that case, if a selected external candidate was from Member State which was within range or overrepresented, the head of entity is required to submit a written analysis to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources with appropriate supporting documentation.
- Disagreement on special post allowance (SPA) changes proposed by the management. The proposed changes included, among others, limiting SPA duration to up to 1 year (with some exceptions) and eliminating SPA panels. Limiting the duration would negatively affect staff members who would have to temporarily take on higher-level functions for longer than one year.
- A lot of staff papers were not accepted by the management as the GA might take the decisions that would not be in favour of staff members.
- Management agreed to recommend the GA to reword the term “misconduct” in the Appendix D of ST/SGB/2023/1 to remove the clause referring to self-harm or suicide as grounds for exclusion from cover.
- The staff paper on overtime noted that there were no limits set for overtimes. The management agreed that excessive overtime might impact staff wellbeing and health and overtime limits would be developed in agreement with safety and health specialists and staff representatives.
- Management did not agree with staff-side proposal to amend the Flag Code to lower the UN flag at half-mast when a staff member is killed in the line of duty. The staff representatives would lodge an official disagreement to the UN Secretary General.

A detailed report would be produced on the SMC proceedings to be shared with the EB members and a broadcast would be sent to inform all the staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 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
DG: Director-General of the UNOG
UNOG: United Nations Office at Geneva
SMC: Staff-Management Committee