

UNITED NATIONS STAFF UNION
SYNDICAT DU PERSONNEL DE L'ORGANISATION DES NATIONS
UNIES

45th STAFF COUNCIL/45ème CONSEIL DU PERSONNEL

Minutes/Actes

Meeting No: 45/15
Date: 20, 24 July 2017
Time: 1:15 - 2:30 pm
Venue: CR A, CR F
Quorum: 12, 6 /16 Units

45th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate at 1:22 pm with 12 Units present. Deputy Chair Andraz Melansek chaired the meeting and Kathryn Kuchenbrod took notes.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted with the deletion of item 11 of the draft agenda (Audit Committee).

2. Adoption of Minutes of previous Council meetings

Minutes of meetings 12, 13 and 14 were adopted unanimously.

3. Executive Board report and President's report and summary of communications

The Executive Board had not met and therefore no report was submitted.

The Second Vice President introduced the President's report and summary of communications, including a meeting with the Secretary General prior to his presentation on management reform. Unit 39 Rep. considered it a missed opportunity that Council had not been informed of the meetings with the SG and had not been provided an opportunity to give input and forge a united stance on issues. VP2 stressed that this was a first contact and that further consultations would follow.

The Chairman recalled two motions from the 14th Meeting that had not received an answer from Leadership. VP2 stated that Leadership had been absent from New York or busy with other matters. She also insisted that the Council should address the Leadership with respect if they were to feel welcome at meetings.

The Assistant Treasurer requested a reply to the Council's query to receive a copy of the GA resolution on nationalisation of staff cited by the President, as well as mission reports on Addis and Entebbe. VP2 referred the

Council to documents circulated by FSU for information on Entebbe and to ODS for the resolution. Unit 39 Rep. regretted the lack of trust and called for greater collegiality between Leadership and the Council.

4. UNSU finances

The Treasurer provided his updates. MetLaw enrolment had concluded successfully with 301 registrations (the highest ever) for a total of USD 75,852 to be transferred to the Company. Regarding the Audit Report, he restated the position he had transmitted to Leadership, essentially identifying three issues: the document as submitted was not in order, since there was no formal reply from the former Leadership on the auditors' comments; the President would have to certify payment of the invoice, without which he would not proceed to payment; there was no budget line from which to pay, since the previous Council had not informed him of the liability they transferred to the 45th Council. Unit 25 Rep. and Unit 27 Rep. pointed out that internal differences between the current and previous Councils did not exempt the Union from its legal liabilities. Unit 39 Rep. recalled that the Council held powers over the Union's finances, so the Treasurer should raise his issues with the Council, not Leadership. The Treasurer regretted a lack of cooperation from the Auditors and from the previous Council. VP2 expressed that Leadership's concern that the previous Council had operated without a proper budget for over 3 years and had commissioned an audit covering more than five years, whereas the Regulations require an annual audit. Unit 29 Rep. did not object to Council and Leadership looking into possible shortcomings by the previous Council, but that these concerns should not impede payment of the dept.

Unit 25 submitted a motion, which was voted on paragraph by paragraph, the first:

"The Staff Council mandates that the Treasurer and/or Assistant Treasurer pay the Auditor's bill within a week."

was adopted with 6 votes in favour, 5 against and one abstention. The Treasurer recorded his objection, stating the motion was irrelevant.

The meeting was suspended at 2:30 pm.

The meeting resumed on 24 July in Room F. It was quorate at 1:50 pm (6 units present) with Kathryn Kuchenbrod in the Chair and the Secretary taking notes. The meeting resumed at item 4.

Unit 39 Rep. recalled ST/AI 2000/12 establishing the personal responsibility of staff members who enter into contractual obligations with third parties. He called for Council to take financial issues back from Leadership.

Unit 25 Rep. underlined that the contract was signed on behalf of the Union, which exists as a legal entity. He introduced a resolution authorising a budget line to cover the Audit expenses, in response to the Treasurer's concern. He also recalled the Council's previous decision to pay the outstanding fee. Various members suggested simplifying the resolution, which was subsequently adopted unanimously as Resolution 45/14.

A debate ensued about the distinction between personal liability and commitments acquired on behalf of the Union. Members agreed to research the issue further.

In addition to the Resolution, and in order to allow Leadership and Council members with doubts regarding the audit procedure to properly state their concerns, the Council unanimously adopted the following motion:

"The Staff Council requests the Treasurer and/or Leadership to provide a report in writing of any substantive concerns they may have to explain their objections to paying the Auditors, by 27 July 2017"

5. Security briefing

Unit 39 Rep. requested that his draft resolution be resubmitted as the first item after procedural items on the agenda of the next meeting.

6. Unit reports

The Secretary raised the issue of uncertainty regarding the criteria applied by the Medical Service for approving Certified Sick Leave beyond the 20-day threshold after which a diagnosis is required. It would be worthwhile obtaining the rules applied by HR and MS, and if required putting together some guidance for Staff Members. Units 28 and 29 volunteered to work on the issue.

The meeting adjourned at 2:42 pm.

Items remaining on the agenda for the following meeting were:

7. Communications

8. The use of Staff categories in the UN and related future ICSC/GA plans

9. Flexible working space

10. Tasks related to the Council Work Plan