

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

45th STAFF COUNCIL/45ème CONSEIL DU PERSONNEL

Minutes/Actes

Meeting No: 45/17
Date: 24 August 2017
Time: 1:15 pm
Venue: Room 1525
Quorum: 8/16 Units

45th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate at 1:30 pm with Deputy Chair Andraz Melansek in the Chair and Secretary Aitor Arauz taking notes.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The draft Agenda was adopted with a change in the order, moving item 8 up before 2.

2. Update on various issues, including Staff Day preparations, Election of the Polling Officers, creation of the Arbitration Committee, etc.

Unit 6 Alt reported on sales of raffle tickets, which she was coordinating. The meeting adopted a motion requesting the Staff Day Committee for an update on preparations via the Secretary.

Unit 25 Rep and the Deputy Chair reported that Unit chairs were meeting the same day. There were sufficient volunteers to polling officer. Unit 28 Rep expressed concern that electoral rosters could change by the time elections were convened. Unit 30 Rep, who had experience as a polling officer, said he did not expect that apportionments would be changed for the coming by-election.

3. Adoption of Minutes of previous Council meeting

The draft minutes for meeting 16 had been distributed informally, but would be redistributed for formal adoption at the next meeting.

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

5. UNSU finances

6. Security

In the absence of Leadership, Treasurer and Unit 39 Rep, no reports were submitted. The Secretary informed the meeting that the Auditor's bill had finally been paid.

7. Issues raised by Units

Unit 17 Rep reported on a unit meeting he and his alternate had held on Flexible Workspace. He confirmed that implementation of Flexible Workspace was backed by an AG resolution. They would hold another unit meeting and would be involved in rebuttal panels and SPA panels.

Unit 24 Rep had held a unit meeting. Unit members were concerned mainly about Mobility, as well as the related changes in hiring practices. For DESA it was not clear how the reform of the Development pillar was expected to play out. On the upside, she reported that the new USG for DESA had taken time to meet with staff.

Unit 25 Rep had held a unit meeting with a participation of 50% of staff members. They discussed various issues of relevance to the Arabic translation service. He suggested various measures to attract staff members to the Union, including social days to encourage SMs who were involved in various roles as Union Officers. Unit 28 Rep recalled the initiative to make UNSU lanyards.

Unit 28 Rep reported on her personal outreach with each of the departments covered by her diverse unit. Personal interaction was very much appreciated by staff members, and given the composition of her unit, made more sense than a full unit meeting. Flexible Workspace, timekeeping and overwork were specific concerns.

Unit 26 Rep was waiting for Staff Members to return before holding a Unit meeting. She was concerned about the application of G staff rules on PTO to P staff, which would contravene the new rules adopted by the Executive Office after consultation with staff. She was working with her Director (DD) to clarify the misunderstanding.

Unit 30 Alt stated that issues were similar to those mentioned by other DGACM colleagues. Timekeeping and overtime policies would be a particular concern during the upcoming GA season. The issue had been raised by MPD Director at quarterly meetings; all MPD reps would be working together on the matter.

Unit 29 Rep was planning a meeting for the following week. Flexible workspace had been fully implemented for the IS, though it did not affect the majority of interpreters, who work primarily in the booth.

Unit 26 Rep regretted that she was not kept in the loop regarding Flexible Workspace. She was aware that a survey was launched, but she had received no details.

The meeting agreed that in future, Unit reports would be considered as the last item of the agenda before AOB. The Deputy Chair suggested that Units could submit brief reports in writing, in order to save time.

8. Preparation for the forthcoming SMC

The Deputy Chair regretted that the Council had received no information regarding the forthcoming SMC. Of particular concern was the Mobility working group, where Management had admitted they lacked a solid basis for the new aptitude tests they intended to implement. There had been reports of staff members failing the aptitude tests for positions they already held. The Secretary shared a brief exchange he had with 1st VP the previous week. She had explained that the SMC VTC would be tackling the pending issues that remained on the agenda from

the previous meeting in NYC. While it was past the deadline for submitting position papers, Council members could still contribute comments. The Secretary would follow up in particular on the issue of equality between UN working languages, which is especially relevant to DGACM staff.

The Deputy Chair and Unit 25 Rep submitted 3 draft resolutions:

Draft Resolution A on facilitating information sharing in the UN Staff Union.

The aim of the resolution was to designate Council liaison officers to SMC and CCISUA. Unit 30 Rep expressed his concern that many Council members who might be interested were not present at the meeting. The draft was amended to designate the Chair and Secretary as ex-officio liaison points, along with other members to be designated at the following meeting. The draft was adopted unanimously as Resolution 16.

On the point of liaison officers to AFT, the Secretary regretted that the President had repeatedly refused to provide him a contact at AFT. Unit 28 Rep had a contact, but had been reluctant to use it unilaterally. The meeting authorized her to coordinate with the other three liaison officers and proceed to contact AFT on the Council's behalf.

Draft Resolution B on the issuance of broadcasts

Various Council members were concerned by Leadership's unilateral approach to the issuance of broadcasts. The Council should be able to communicate directly with staff without Leadership's interference. However, involving DM in matter would be counterproductive. After a debate, the resolution was withdrawn and the Council mandated the Executive Board to resolve the issue of Broadcasts at its following meeting.

Draft Resolution C on facilitating information management

The resolution was not considered due to lack of time, but its key elements were endorsed: the Secretary would draw up a table of all Staff Council decisions (motions as well as resolutions) and make it available to all Union members. Staff Council meetings would be publicized more widely, including via Facebook and Twitter, and non-represented units would be invited to attend as observers. Council members would initiate more informal gatherings to work on specific topics, so decisions could be matured in advance.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 pm.