

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

45th STAFF COUNCIL/45ème CONSEIL DU PERSONNEL

Minutes/Actes

Meeting No: 45/23
Date: 19 October 2017
Time: 1:15 pm
Venue: CR 12
Quorum: 11/16 Units

45th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate at 1:30 pm with Camille McKenzie in the Chair and the Secretary taking notes. The meeting was recorded and a copy deposited with the UNSU Administrator.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Unit 25 Rep. requested that the item on Retention of the Legal Advisor be removed, since the requirement to submit 3 candidates had not been met. The Council voted to keep it on the agenda by 8 votes in favour and 2 against.

2. Adoption of Minutes of previous Council meeting

Minutes for meeting 22 were adopted unanimously.

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

The EB report was deferred in absence of the Rapporteur and Assistant Rapporteur.

The Chair requested that the President submit her summary of communications in writing prior to the meeting. The President ran through her summary providing further details on certain items.

Unit 6 Alt. requested an update on the letters that the Council had agreed to write regarding consultation with Unions and Board of Inquiry after the killing of two experts in DRC. The Secretary would draft the letter to the SG on consultations and would follow up with Unit 39 Rep. on the other.

4. UNSU finances

No update was provided in absence of the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Unit 6 Alt. suggested that in future the Staff Day account should be retained under the umbrella of UNSU accounts, and that the remaining balance in the current Staff Day account should be returned to UNSU reserves.

5. Security

No report was provided in absence of Unit 39 Rep.

6. Retention of Legal Advisor

In reply to Unit 25 Rep's concern, the President explained that it was difficult to find alternative candidates. Two others had been identified for the position of Legal Counsel, but Carmen Artigas was the only person available who met the requirements. Unit 6 Alt. believed that a proper procedure should be followed for the position of litigator. She also recalled a presentation given to the previous Council on insurance for UNDT and UNAT cases. The President reported that Leadership had received a presentation for a litigation insurance, but it was considered too expensive at the time. She would invite the company to brief the Council.

Unit 25 Rep. believed that a call should be issued to reach out for legal counsel and litigator candidates amongst the Organisation's broad pool of expertise. Unit 28 Rep. suggested that candidates be invited to meet with the Council. Unit 33 Rep. believed that Leadership should be allowed to proceed, since it was essential to have legal support. Unit 6 Alt. stressed the importance of due process. Unit 27 Rep. suggested a temporary extension until the process was completed.

The Chair submitted a motion to extend Carmen Artigas' temporary engagement for 3 months while the Council committed to carry out a due process. The motion was adopted unanimously. The resolution on retaining the Services of a Legal Counsel, amended to reflect the 3-month extension, was adopted unanimously as RES/45/19.

7. Travel to MINURSO

The President presented the documents she had submitted in support of her travel. Unit 17 Alt. inquired about the outcomes of the VTC with the mission staff, and if the travel was still relevant in view of the latest developments. The President replied that VTC had been postponed by a day, but she felt the travel was still warranted. DFS has promised that somebody from HQ would be present at the negotiations. Unit 39 Rep stressed that it should be somebody at the level of Director or above. Unit 27 Rep. asked that in future, when submitting requests for travel, Leadership should provide a brief background document with the position as presented by both sides,

field staff and management. Unit 13 Rep. recalled the need to make sensible financial decisions and not delay the issue further. Various members declared that they did not object to the travel, but that for the future they hoped more information would be provided.

The Council adopted RES/45/20 authorising the President's travel to MINURSO, by 9 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.

The Council chair appealed to Leadership to communicate more openly with the Council, in order to avoid misunderstandings.

8. Reform Strategy

9. Update on work with AFT

Unit 6 Alt. reported on her work with AFT surrounding the Pension fund. She would be requesting Council members to convene Unit meetings on Pension issues and counted on their support.

10. Suspension of 2014 continuous appointments exercise.

Unit 27 reported that some staff members had received a notification indicating a reversal of the administration's position regarding the suspension of 2014 continuous appointment exercises. The issue would be kept under review.

11. Reports by Units

Unit 27 Rep. raised an issue faced by a staff member in his unit who required flexibility to attend to the needs of a child with disabilities. The President invited him to raise the issue with VP2.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.

Items remaining on the agenda for the following meeting were:

12. Special post allowance on UNDT judgements on equal pay for equal work

13. Conference Room signage showing Staff Council meetings as [Closed]