

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

45th STAFF COUNCIL/45ème CONSEIL DU PERSONNEL

Minutes/Actes

Meeting No: 45/36
Date: 1 March 2018
Time: 1:15 pm
Venue: CR D
Quorum: 12/16 Units

45th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate with 12 units present at 1:30 pm, with Deputy Chair Andraz Melansek in the Chair and Secretary Aitor Arauz-Chapman taking notes. The meeting was recorded and a copy deposited with the UNSU Administrator.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Unit 25 Rep. added a brief resolution intended to bring AFT into the work of the G4 visa group. The issue was added as item 10. "Resolution on support to working group for G4 visa issues".

Unit 25 Rep. requested that Staff Day be removed from the agenda, suggesting that it not be considered until the Council's main priority was resolved: all energy be invested in the essential work of giving all staff a voice and ensuring their full representation on the Council. Second Vice-President Cristina Silva objected, saying that Staff Day was an interest of the staff at large. The motion was adopted by 6 votes in favour and 5 against. Jason Charles (Unit 13) stated that he felt that certain individuals had arrived at the meeting with an agenda, and felt ashamed of his Council colleagues. Eugenia Beldo (focal point for OPPBA) took the floor to express her concern regarding Council divisions, felt it was important to reinvigorate staff and was disappointed that minor issues could derail the Council's work.

The agenda was adopted as amended.

2. Adoption of Minutes of previous Council meeting

Minutes of meetings 34 and 35 were adopted without changes.

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

Executive Board reports remained pending in the absence of the Rapporteurs.

The Second Vice-President added to the President's report that she and the President would be meeting with the President of the General Assembly and Ombudsman in the afternoon. Mériem Harbi (Unit 28) inquired why the President and Second Vice-President were meeting with the PGA without the First Vice-President, and what they were planning to raise with him. The Second Vice-President replied that it was a courtesy call, and that the UNSU President had received the invitation but not forwarded it to the First Vice-President on the assumption that she would be busy.

Kenneth Rosario (Unit 39) noted a reference in the summary of communications to a meeting on evacuations. He recalled the Council's resolution requesting Leadership to reach out to staff representatives when they meet with their Department heads, and said it was embarrassing to hear of these things after the fact.

Unit 25 Rep. enquired about a reference in the Summary of Communications to a UNSU Gift Shop, asked why the Council had not been informed and what we were going to sell. Neither the 1st or 2nd Vice-President had any information to share. Unit 25 Rep. requested further information in writing from the President.

4. UNSU Finances

No report in absence of the Treasurer.

5. Security

Kenneth Rosario (Unit 39) regretted that a resolution adopted by the Council had been forwarded in an email to the USG for Management along with a copy of the Staff Council minutes, thus singling out the names of specific staff members and undermining the Council's a collective voice. The Secretary clarified that he had emailed a copy of the resolution to the President, along with the fragment of the minutes where the Council called on her to forward the resolution to the USG. He was not privy to any further communication and could not be held responsible for how the President had handled it.

Kenneth Rosario recalled an issue he had raised at a previous meeting regarding an aggression against a security officer. He was disappointed that the Council was not following up on the matter due to individual members' requests for further information. A debate ensued on the Council's working methods. Unit 25 Rep. would work with Kenneth to draft a resolution on how the initial incident was handled.

6. Resolution on UNSPC

Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) introduced her resolution and highlighted ongoing systemic problem with non-payment to beneficiaries. It was important to get as many representatives as possible to the table. Assistant Treasurer Rosemary Lane pointed out that the two representatives whose travel the Council was being asked to fund were from UNICEF, who should be making at least an equivalent effort to bring members in. She also

suggested that UN VTC be used for conference calls instead of skype. Michelle Rockcliffe had approached UNICEF, but their Leadership was away from HQ and there was no time to wait.

The Second Vice-President recalled that there are three federations (CCISUA, FICSA, UNISERV) who should be contributing, why were they not? UNSU contributes USD 37,000 to the CCUSIA budget, and they have USD 500,000, of which USD 70,000 are set aside for travel. She asked Michelle Rockcliffe if she had reached out the federations, and thought it was reasonable that they each contribute USD 5,000. Michelle Rockcliffe replied that there were agencies who would not support CCISUA funding this travel.

Camille Beydon (Unit 26) expressed her unit's support to the two representatives. It was a shame that no better arrangements were in place, but she understood the urgency. Unit 25 Rep. expressed his support, but requested that the group devise a healthier funding mechanism for the future. The Second Vice-President asked the Assistant Treasurer if the Union had the funds and what budget line would they come from. She also asked that the rationale from other federations be communicated. The Assistant Treasurer confirmed that there were funds under the travel budget. The Assistant Treasurer supported moving to a vote, with an addition of language calling in UNICEF to make an equitable contribution. In reply to questions, Michelle Rockcliffe explained the request was for USD 15,000 for two participant representatives travelling from Jerusalem and Nairobi.

The resolution was adopted unanimously as RES STC/45/25 with the addition of the following:

“Further decides to approach other affected Unions for reimbursement”

“Decides to look into a sustainable mechanism for funding future meetings of participant representatives”.

The meeting was extended to 14:45.

7. Resolution on Driving Licence issues for NJ residents

Guozhong Cao (Unit 25) recalled the difficulties faced by New Jersey residents in renewing their driving licenses and introduced a resolution calling for support from the UNSU President and from the Secretary General. The resolution was adopted unanimously as RES STC/45/26.

8. Elections

The Secretary submitted a resolution confirming the Council's choice of electronic voting for the coming Arbitration Committee elections; asking the Polling Officers to select an electronic polling company amongst three options and submit their choice to the Council; and inviting them to report to the Council.

The draft resolution was amended to describe the procedure more accurately and to delete a fragment that was unclear. The resolution was adopted unanimously as amended as RES STC/45/27.

Michelle Rockcliffe recalled, and the First Vice-President confirmed, that CCISUA was looking into a group contract with a single electronic election company to manage all elections for federation member unions. The information on CCISUA's initiative would be transmitted to the Polling Officers.

9. Follow up on Tuesday's events

Camille Beydon recalled that a number of constituents, after the Tuesday event, had called for more and stronger actions of this kind. Since the ICSC was due to meet on March 19 – 29, and suggested the establishment of a Council organising committee. All Council members would be members of the committee. It would agree on an action strategy, communication and action strategy, and attribute tasks to volunteers. She suggested that the First Vice-President act as liaison between Council and Leadership. She asked the Council to pre-approve expenses of USD 500, as well as access to UNSU assets to organise the following event, including intern, affiliated partners, sister unions, legal advisor, etc.

Marie Delbecque (Unit 26) asked to place on record the Council's appreciation of Camille Beydon.

Kenneth Rosario recalled that management in Geneva had threatened disciplinary measures for protests in Geneva, which should be challenged by Geneva and CCISUA. He recommended a protest outside the UN, which would provide greater flexibility and media exposure.

Camille Beydon submitted a motion to create an organising committee to mobilise action around the coming ICSC session in New York. The motion was adopted unanimously.

10. Resolution on support to WG on G4 issues

Unit 25 Rep. introduced his resolution authorising the Working Group on G4 visas to request support from AFT. The resolution was adopted unanimously as RES STC/45/24.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.