

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

45th STAFF COUNCIL/45ème CONSEIL DU PERSONNEL

Minutes/Actes

Meeting No: 45/39
Date: 22 March 2018
Time: 1:15 pm
Venue: CR 9
Quorum: 14/16 Units

45th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate with 14 units present at 1:30 pm, with Council Chair Camille McKenzie 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

The draft agenda was adopted with the addition of a new item 7 regarding the message circulated by ASG OHRM.

2. Adoption of Minutes of previous Council meeting

Minutes of meetings 37 and 38 remained pending.

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

Executive Board report for previous meeting was pending.

First Vice-President Patricia Nemeth reported that she had been sitting on ICSC meetings all week and had received no other information from the President or Second Vice-President.

Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) asked about the interviews for litigator and asked if the Staff Council could expect a shortlist. The Secretary reported that the EB had interviewed a number of candidates, of whom three were deemed qualified. He confirmed that the EB would submit a shortlist to the Staff Council before a decision was made.

4. UNSU Finances

No update in absence of the Treasurer.

5. Security briefing

No update in absence of Kenneth Rosario.

6. Long Service Award

The Secretary introduced the draft Resolution as prepared by the Executive Board. Unit 25 Rep. felt the Union was a third party in the relationship between employer and employee. He felt it was the administration who should be issuing the award. Michelle Rockcliffe recalled that it had always been the Union who had managed the Award. The Administration had the resources and the information to do it, and yet they had not. Mériem Harbi (Unit 28) felt it was clumsy for the Union to organise a ceremony to honour the “survivors” in a context where people were losing their jobs. Ahmad Ismail (Unit 20), who was generally cautious with the Union’s expenses, expressed his support for the award. Chandana Mutucumarana (Unit 30) expressed his support. Camille Beydon (Unit 26) suggested holding the ceremony in combination with Staff Day, in order to save costs. Mériem Harbi supported lobbying the administration for the recognition to come from them and expressed reservations on the final price tag. The First Vice-President recalled that in Security they organised a similar initiative. Marie Delbecque (Unit 26) recalled that we would have a better idea of the number once staff replied to the emails.

The Staff Council decided to wait on the final numbers and in the meantime lobby the Administration to get involved. The First Vice-President would inform the President on how it was done by Security and ask her to lobby the Administration.

7. Message circulated by ASG OHRM

The Chair read out the President’s message to ASG Martha Helena López. Mériem Harbi asked for the message to be broadcast, so it could be received by all the same staff members who had been threatened. Ahmad Ismail believed that the SG should be asked to confirm if he had given instructions for the message to be issued, and if it reflected his own position. He also regretted that the President’s response had not been consulted with the Staff Council. He called for a public Broadcast stating that the Union will take any means necessary to protest the deterioration of conditions and future of jobs. He also called for an Emergency General Meeting in defence of Staff’s Right to Assemble. Council members expressed concerns regarding the recent withdrawal of the Union’s access to broadcasts. It was decided to use the situation to test the administration’s willingness to cooperate.

The Staff Council decided, with 11 votes in favour and 3 abstentions, to convene an Emergency General Meeting on Tuesday 27 March to reaffirm staff’s right to strike and work stoppages.

The Council agreed to meet the following day to agree on the details for the meeting.

8. GS staff salaries living and working conditions

Sherif Mohamed (Unit 27) shared the concerns of GS staff who had approached him. He suggested a survey to measure GS staff's perception regarding their remuneration, increasing work load, cost of living, cancellation of overtime and other concerns. Approaches should be coordinated with a view to the next cost of living survey.

Rosemary Lane (Unit 23) suggested a meeting to help Council members understand the cost of living survey, which was extremely technical and hard to understand. The Council agreed to invite colleagues with sufficient knowledge to explain the issues. In parallel, Sherif Mohamed would work on a survey to collect views and concerns from staff members.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.