

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

45th STAFF COUNCIL/45ème CONSEIL DU PERSONNEL

Minutes/Actes

Meeting No: 45/45
Date: 3 May 2018
Time: 1:30 pm
Venue: CR D
Quorum: 14/16 Units

45th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate with 10 units present at 1:30 pm, with Council Chair Camille McKenzie in the Chair and UNSU Secretary Aitor Arauz-Chapman taking notes. The meeting was recorded and a copy deposited with the UNSU Administrator.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted no changes.

2. Adoption of Minutes of previous Council meetings

Minutes for meetings 42, 43 and 44 were adopted.

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

The President had distributed a summary of communications via email. Camille Beydon (Unit 26) asked for specific examples of changes that could be attained under parental leave. The President explained that definitions of parenthood and possible cases of leave entitlements had changed. She had proposed changing the policy to a "family care policy" to take into consideration changing demographics. Currently 56% of staff are single. There is a WG examining the issue of single staff members. The conversation had just started, and the Union would remain proactive on the matter.

Assistant Rapporteur Thomas Chacko announced that the EB report from the previous week was pending adoption since there had not been a meeting in the current week. Unit 25 Rep. requested a report from the EB on the work they had done after their first year, including attendance levels. He would suggest addressing the issue at the following week's meeting.

4. Resolution for CCISUA yearly contribution

The First Vice-President Patricia Nemeth introduced a resolution to authorise a pledge to CCISUA in the same terms as the previous year. Kenneth Rosario (Unit 39) restated his concerns regarding the services and support that UNSU was receiving from CCISUA, including the occasion when he was object of retaliation. He felt that the delegation should consider the level of support during the meeting, up to a limit authorised by the Council. Rosemary Lane (Unit 23) and Andraž Melanšek (Unit 17) agreed that the authorisation was an upper limit and that the delegation should be strategic about the aims we intended to achieve. The President recalled that at its previous GA CCISUA had denied UNSU the position of VP for Conditions of Service. She felt it was a slap in the face to our Union. The First Vice-President recalled that the team was new and CCISUA members were probably weary of offering important positions to people they didn't know. Andraž Melanšek pointed out that it wasn't exclusively about filling important positions – our aim should be to fill positions with the best candidates, and also focus on the issues and not on personalities. Jason Charles (Unit 13) asked the President and First Vice-President if they felt we were obtaining value for the USD 36,000 we had contributed. The President said no. The First Vice-President could not qualify the value in terms of money, but she felt we had obtained support. Rosemary Lane (Unit 23) suggested we draw up a list of all the constant work that the federation does in representation of its members. Unit 25 Rep. recalled that positions should not be up for the highest bidder. Sherif Mohamed (Unit 27) felt that CCISUA's range of activities were valuable and should be supported. Candidatures would obtain support if they were presented solidly.

The resolution was adopted with 11 votes in favour and 1 abstention as RES/STC/45/38.

5. Elections

The Chair recalled updates from the polling officers that she had shared by email. She would follow up on questions from Council members regarding whether the elections for Arbitration Committee and by-elections would be held simultaneously.

6. OPPBA

No updates from OPPBA representatives.

7. Reports from Units

Aitor Arauz-Chapman (Unit 29) shared a recent experience regarding low-cost airlines being used for entitlement travel. The organisation was buying tickets under the lowest fare category, which did not provide reserved seats, checked luggage or meals in flight. The issue had been escalated to ASG OCSS, who had agreed to review the matter and issue clearer guidance as to the minimum conditions that should be covered by a ticket.

Kathryn Kuchenbrod (Unit 28) shared her concern that managers were forcing members of her unit to work during their lunch hours, which made it impossible for them to take part in Union business. The First Vice-President would follow up with the administration regarding participation in Union activities.

8. AOB

Ondré Baronette (Unit 33) transmitted a request from a staff member regarding the possibility of watching the 4th July fireworks from UNHQ. Leadership had raised the issue with the Administration, but it was deemed to be a non-starter.

Leadership had asked to include Security integration and Pension Fund issues on the agenda for the JNC. The administration had requested that both issues be transferred to SMC. GSDM remained a standing item on the JNC agenda. The President asked OPPBA representatives to attend the coming JNC Meeting on 8 May.

SMC VII has been moved from Vienna to NYC. UNSU had submitted a number of papers: misconduct and investigation ST/AI; occupational safety; retaliation; parental leave. Council members would be able to attend as observers. She asked Council members to submit inputs on any of the items of the agenda. Ahmad Ismail (Unit 20) asked what the specific proposals were regarding parental leave, aside from a change of name. The President clarified that this was an SMC working group that they were asking to be revived. We did not want to lose the benefits currently available, but there was a consensus that the policy needed to be broadened. Ahmad Ismail asked that any specific proposals be brought back to the Council before they were submitted. Camille Beydon suggested that volunteers for the working group be sought amongst staff members who had recent experiences with parental leave. The President recalled that SMC working groups were established by the Unions, but she suggested that the Council establish a WG at HQ to gather inputs.

The President asked Council Members to examine documents circulated for consultation and to provide inputs, including the Staff Rules and Regulations. We often had a brief window to comment on documents that, once adopted, would remain in force for a long time.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.