

UNITED NATIONS STAFF UNION
SYNDICAT DU PERSONNEL DE L'ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES**45th STAFF COUNCIL/45ème CONSEIL DU PERSONNEL****Minutes/Actes**

Meeting No: 45/53
Date: 19 July 2018
Time: 1:30 pm
Venue: Room B
Quorum: 13/16 Units

45th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate with 18 units present at 1:20 pm, with Deputy Council Chair Andraž Melanšek in the Chair and UNSU Secretary Aitor Arauz Chapman taking notes. The meeting was recorded and a copy deposited with the UNSU Administrator. Units present were: 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 30, 34, 37, 38, 39.

The Chair welcomed new members and gave an overview of the procedure he would follow, based on Robert's Rules.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

An item "Legal Advisor" was added as item 6. Ahmad Ismail (Unit 20) requested to discuss a "session for new units and facilitating the election of unit chairs" for those units that did not have them. The item was included under "Reports by Units". Eugenia Beldo (Unit 38) suggested adding an item on "Management Reform" to the agenda as item 7. The Secretary suggested making it a standing item on the agenda. The Council agreed, and adopted the agenda as amended.

2. Adoption of minutes

Minutes of meeting 52 were adopted with no amendments.

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

There had been no Executive Board meeting that week. The Secretary made a statement expressing his disappointment that the last EB meeting could not be held due to a lack of quorum. While a number of members had justified absences, both the President and Second Vice-President had left the Union premises prior to the meeting with no apparent justification. François Charlier (Unit 3) raised a point of order, considering the topic was drifting from the agenda item under consideration. Either the debate should stick to the topic, or the Council should agree to add a separate agenda item. The Council voted by show of hands to hear an explanation from

Leadership. Second Vice-President Cristina Silva referred the Council to her emails on the matter, in order not to take up more time.

The President had circulated her report and summary of communications. Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) asked about the reporting gap since the last report dated 23 May.

UNSU President Bibi Kahn welcomed new members and recalled that we were here to serve the interest of staff. Regarding Management Reform, she referred the Council to an email she had sent to USG DM transmitting her concerns regarding the lack of adequate staff consultation as promised, regarding important issues such as reprofiling and restructuring, in which staff were not receiving adequate information. Work was ongoing and she asked Reps to provide as much feedback as possible on the matter.

She also reported she had liaised with the new legal counsel regarding the potential for legal action before the MEU and if necessary the Tribunal. His advice was shared with the Council. He was also working on two templates (one for fixed-term and one for permanent / continuing contracts) for staff to be able to file with the MEU as soon as they were notified of negative effects resulting from management reform implementation. She would share any further information on the matter.

Regarding training for staff reps, she had asked AFT to provide training to help staff reps in the exercise of their roles and responsibilities.

The President also reported on her 10 July meeting with the office of the Ombudsman regarding OHRM staff members' concerns regarding problems they encountered with the G-to-P exam. The staff members were working on proposals on how to improve things in the future. She would report on any progress.

The SMC WG on 2008/5 met on 10 July.

Kenneth Rosario (Unit 39) made reference to the recent tribunal ruling in the case *F. Nouinou vs. the SG* that found that OHRM and OIOS had worked in tandem against staff members, in violation of OIOS's mandate. The SG had announced that OIOS would now investigate all cases of harassment and retaliation. Was this brought up at the WG meeting, and if not why? Staff members should not be allowed to step into this trap. It was important that WGs be centralised in a small number of people, but with broader inputs. Leadership's timetable and workload could clearly not handle the volume of work involved in these issues. A letter should be sent to the SG regarding the risks to staff members of retaliation from the head of the Investigations Division.

Assistant Secretary Daniel Burden asked about progress on the WG on health and wellbeing at OCHA.

Christian Clark (Unit 7) recalled that the case of OCHA had been specifically raised at the CCISUA meeting in Bangkok in June. They had established a staff-management group on downsizing. They had received severe budget cuts the year before and the USG had announced additional cuts for next year. OCHA staff had no faith in management that last year's cuts were strategic. There was an all-staff meeting scheduled for the following day. He would report on outcomes at the following meeting.

The President replied that no summaries was submitted due to the CCISUA meeting at the end of May. The following week was Eid, the following week was SMC, the following week she had reported verbally and this week a written report was submitted.

On the WG on harassment, work was ongoing. SMC WG are made up of staff reps from across the system. She had asked for Kenneth Rosario's help in view of his institutional memory on the items discussed, including harassment. The CEB was focussed on sexual harassment, but staff representatives were asking that it be examined in the broader context of abuse of authority. Leadership had asked OLA for an expanded list of definitions, including mobbing, discrimination and other behaviours not codified in the policy. She suggested discussing the issue of the tribunal case separately, given its complexity.

On health and wellbeing at OCHA, the Mental Services Division was conducting a series of training sessions on the question of mental health in the workplace, on the basis of an alarming survey on the state of mental health in the organisation. The Staff Counsellor's office had alerted about an explosion in the number of cases. The Second Vice-President had called for volunteers amongst staff reps to take part in mental health training.

Kenneth Rosario followed up saying that the CEB had its own narrative, which should not dictate our agenda. In terms of the particular case – it changes the paradigm of how sexual harassment and retaliation are investigated. We needed to express our unhappiness to the SG. Had the issue of accusations of retaliation against USG Jan Beagle been addressed?

Fátimazöhra Nouinou (Unit 10) reported on her case. She had been subject to retaliation from the head of OIOS, including unjustified abolition of her post, after 15 years of service at the organisation with exceeding expectation performance. The ruling stated that OIOS had colluded with OHRM to retaliate against her. As a staff representative, she could not advise any staff member to turn to OIOS, in view of their lack of integrity. She recalled that the current Staff Union had not helped her in her case, which she had won without a lawyer. Something needed to be done about the lack of integrity displayed by OIOS.

Kenneth Rosario would draft a letter to the SG on behalf of the Council on the matter, which he would submit for approval at the next meeting.

4. Payment of outstanding financial obligations

The Secretary recalled resolution RES/STC/45/44, whereby the Council decided that UNSU's contribution to CCISUA in 2018 would be USD 36,500. He asked the President if she intended to comply with the resolution.

The President recalled a prior resolution of 3 May (RES/STC/45/38) and a debate in the Council regarding the pledge to CCISUA were it was determined that the delegation could make a pledge "up to" an amount. She believed that any payment made by the Union should be based on performance. She asked for anybody in the Council to justify why the Union should pay USD 36,500.

Sherif Mohamed (Unit 27) pointed out that the pledge system was an anomaly, since there was no way of determining the exact amount of the contribution. The second resolution adopted specified an exact amount and also called for a more objective system to be adopted in the future. Determining the amount of a contribution should not be a matter of personal preference, but a decision arrived by majority. Once that decision was made, it should be respected.

Eugenia Beldo stated that her constituents at OPPBA were concerned about the amounts given to CCISUA because they were not seeing the benefits. The decision made had to be honoured, but we did need a better procedure to determine the amount. Resources were direly needed to deal with the many issues faced by staff in NY.

Assistant Treasurer Rosemary Lane suggested a separate meeting to talk about Federation issues: what it does, what we pay for, what other unions contribute. She did not feel there was a budgetary contradiction between taking care of all staff before ICSC through CCISUA and taking care of staff in New York. In any case, the matter at hand was honouring the decision and the Council's resolution.

The Assistant Secretary was worried that we were handing over a blank cheque to the Federation without oversight or accountability. He hoped a consensus decision could be reached.

The Second Vice President recalled the resolution of 3 May said "up to" USD 36,500. Once at the Assembly, certain issues arose, including the fact that CCISUA had failed to follow up on a resolution tabled by Ken Rosario. We wanted to see value for money.

The debate became circular, with the President and Second Vice President insisting that they had applied resolution 45/38 stating "up to USD 36,500", and a number of staff representatives insisting that the first resolution was superseded by 45/44, which should be honoured. They also suggested a separate meeting or committee to determine how to deal with CCISUA contributions in future. The President offered to take the issue to referendum. The Secretary pointed out that the President's refusal to apply a majority decision of the Council undermined her credibility.

François Charlier called for civility in Staff Council debates and asked members to abstain from shouting and to respect time limits.

5. Staff Day

Michelle Rockcliffe spoke as a member of the Staff Day committee, noting that the rest of the committee had been invited but had not attended. She reported that she had performed her due diligence as chair of the Raffle committee. She also reported that the raffle tickets had been delivered to another member of the Staff Day Committee against her explicit instructions. The tickets subsequently disappeared. The tickets were worth the USD 60,000 printed value. Interception of the tickets was a violation of her fiduciary duty. The Treasurer's rules for internal control had been disregarded. Last year we had done a good job of recovering Staff Day. She had

discovered anomalies in the previous year's accounts. She called on the Council's assistance in resolving the problem.

In reply to a question from Sherif Mohamed she explained that there was a security risk that could amount to fraud. Sherif Mohamed moved that:

Raffle tickets be placed immediately under the custody Michelle Rockcliffe and a procedure be established for the sale of tickets.

The motion passed with 9 votes in favour, 2 against and one abstention.

The Assistant Secretary requested a recorded vote after the procedure. The Chair turned down his request.

Eugenia Beldo made a closing statement recalling that Management Reform had been adopted two weeks ago. Staff members would be losing their jobs. The agenda needed to be better prioritised.

The meeting adjourned at 14:50.