



**Minutes/Actes:**

Meeting No: 46/12  
Date: 25 July 2019  
Time: 13:15 - 14:30  
Venue: Conf. Room D  
Quorum: 10/17 Units

## 46<sup>th</sup> Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate with 10 Units present at 13:35. Staff Council Deputy Chair Ramona Kohrs chaired the meeting and Secretary Sherif Mohamed took notes. Units present were: 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 27, 29, 33. The three members of the leadership team were in attendance.

### 1. Adoption of the agenda

Agenda adopted with an additional item regarding summer recess. It was decided that the additional item will be discussed under AOB.

### 2. Adoption of previous minutes

Minutes for meetings 9, 10, 11 are still pending.

### 3. President's Report and Summary of Communications

A copy of the President's Report was distributed at the meeting. The President Patricia Nemeth went through the different activities mentioned in the report with emphasize on their meeting with the Controller and announced that a townhall meeting with the Controller is being prepared to answer the staff many questions regarding the financial situation of the Organization.

The 1<sup>st</sup> VP Aitor Arauz Chapman updated the Council on his meeting within the SMC staff-side on the review of the ST/SGB/2008/5 on "Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority". He mentioned the concerns raised by staff representatives regarding the common practice of forming panels to investigate allegations of discrimination/harassment, and the risks associated to this practice. The SMC staff side also discussed how to connect the policy on "Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations" (ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1) to the framework of the aforementioned (ST/SGB/2008/5).

The Deputy Chair shared similar concerns regarding the integrity of the investigations panels in different duty stations, and the possibility of retaliation against whistleblowers/staff who raise allegations of prohibited misconduct.

#### **4. Executive Board report**

The Deputy Chair raised concerns regarding including the index numbers or UN ID numbers on the intended Union rewards/discounts cards. The President explained that the rewards card will contain only the name and picture of the staff member and can be accompanied with the UN ID for verification purposes.

#### **5. Resolution for Staff Day**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Francisco Brito explained that the purpose of the draft resolution is to give instructions to the Union treasurers to disburse the funds approved for the expenses of the Staff Day. A few changes were suggested and discussed by the Council members before they were approved.

The Council moved to vote on the draft resolution as amended.

The resolution was adopted unanimously as RES/STC/46/13 with 10 votes in favour.

#### **6. Reports by Units**

Ms. Sindhoora Lehuri (Unit 33) inquired about how to encourage managers to release staff to attend the different activities of the Staff Day. The President and 2<sup>nd</sup> VP confirmed that they will reach out to USG/DMSPC, CDC, or DSG for a possible broadcast encouraging managers to allow staff the opportunity to participate.

Sebastian Cervantes (Unit 22) mentioned that most of the scheduled activities fall outside the core hours, and therefore attending these events can be negotiated with managers.

On a different topic, the 1<sup>st</sup> VP briefed the Council about a potential reorganization of the structure of OCHA which apparently intends to send OCHA staff from HQs to cheaper locations, using different techniques, including the use of extra budgetary resources, so it doesn't fall under the deferred GSDM policy. The term "HQ in the Field" was used as a motive for the initiative, which imposes risks on current staff, especially those with families whom some of them might be left with no other options than resigning to avoid relocating to other duty stations.

He also raised concerns regarding using such practice as a selective process to send specific staff members away or force them to resign. The 1<sup>st</sup> VP reported that 56 staff

members are currently expected to be affected by the risks of this initiative. He also raised concerns regarding using this example as a precedent to enforce mobility policies as well as similar concerns regarding the role of the delegation of authority in such decisions.

On a different topic, the Team Assistant Marian Fadel presented a template of a weekly report to be filled by staff representatives to document the different activities of each Unit. Questions were raised by the Council members about the content of the template and other concerns about including staff information in a formal form were raised. Karina Loktionova (Unit 29) questioned the feasibility of reporting information about the work of each Unit in every Council meeting and the complications associated to implementing such practice, especially in terms of the limited time of the Council meetings.

The Deputy Chair praised the idea of including records of the activities of the Union especially if associated with accurate data and suggested to have a combined copy of this template at the Union's office to give Staff Reps the opportunity to fill the template with important data relevant to their work. She also found that collecting such data would be helpful in tracking if there are any systematic issues addressed by any given Unit to transfer lessons learned to other Units for similar actions.

## **7. AOB (Summer Recess)**

The 1<sup>st</sup> VP introduced the EB proposal to have the Union's summer recess from 29 July to 16 August 2019 and made a motion to the Council to approve the proposed recess which was seconded by the Assistant Rapporteur Shirley Abraham. The motion was adopted with 9 votes in favour, 0 votes against, and 1 abstention.

The Deputy Chair inquired about updates on the work of the Communications Committee. The 1<sup>st</sup> VP mentioned that a resolution was adopted by the council to form a working group on communications, with a membership of several staff representatives and other volunteers from the staff-at-large who have different sets of technical and communications related skills.

*The meeting adjourned at 14:45.*

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