



Minutes/Actes:

Meeting No: 46/29
Date: 30 January 2020
Time: 13:15 - 14:30
Venue: Room B
Quorum: 12/17 Units

46th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate at 13:30 with 09 Units present. Staff Council Chair Camille McKenzie chaired the meeting and Secretary Sherif Mohamed took notes. Units present were: 06, 13, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 27, 29, 30, 31. The 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents were in attendance.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without a change with 9 items.

2. Adoption of previous minutes

Amendments to minutes for meeting 26 were received from the President Patricia Nemeth, the 1st VP Aitor Arauz Chapman, and Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 06). Other amendments were made by the Deputy Chair Ramona Kohrs at the meeting. Minutes for meeting 26 were adopted as amended.

Amendments to minutes for meeting 27 were received from the 1st VP and from Michelle Rockcliffe. Minutes for meeting 27 were adopted as amended.

Minutes for meeting 28th were pending.

Michelle Rockcliffe stated that the changes she requested to the style of the minutes were not only about how to identify speakers and called for adhering to specific set of standards to ensure such official documents were of the highest quality.

The 1st VP mentioned that he studied this matter when served as a Secretary of the 45th Staff Council and identified two main methods for writing meeting minutes. The Anglo-Saxon tradition, reflected in Roberts' Rules, is objective and procedural but includes limited information on what was said at a meeting, reflecting merely the outcome of decisions. The French model of "compte rendu analytique" is the standard amongst UN deliberative bodies. It incorporates more details on the substance of debates and

constitutes a richer record but is more prone to controversy. It was up to the Council to decide what type of record they wanted.

The Deputy Chair and the Rapporteur Coralie Tripier called for the Council members to study different methods and to decide what type of minutes they wanted (lengthy and detailed vs short and focused).

The Secretary thought that the method followed by the former Secretary was sufficient and called for the Council to continue using it.

Sergio Pires Vieira (Unit 24) called for the Council to consider the simplest method.

3. President's Report and Summary of Communications

The Deputy Chair was glad to learn from the President's report that an SMC working group on the delegation of authority (DoA) was established. In this regard, she requested that the Union convey to the SMC presidency that lists of active working groups, their composition, as well as other relevant documents should be published on a dedicated SMC website to enable staff members to follow the deliberations of these important staff-management working groups.

The 1st VP mentioned that a decision was made to establish the working group in the SMC VIII plenary in Sarajevo in April 2019 and the President and the Secretary represented the UNSU on this working group. He stated that he would share all the documents related to the DoA and its accountability framework on the Council's Microsoft Teams space.

4. Executive Board Report

Michelle Rockcliffe inquired about the reasons of the disagreement on the terms of reference of the WG on DoA.

The Secretary explained that the disagreements between staff and management representatives revolved around the focus of the WG. He stated that while management representatives insisted to focus on the implementation of DoA, staff representatives of the other Sister Unions recalled about the lack of consultations prior to the issuance of the Secretary General Bulletin and were more concerned about the ambiguities in the application of the accountability framework.

The 1st VP explained the background of the issuance of the ST/SGB. He stated that because the authorities were being delegated from the SG to managers and so forth, management decided not to consult with Staff Unions prior to the issuance of the Bulletin. He further explained that the new policy was announced in a way that gave the false impression that all delegated authorities were to be published on a public online platform

in a transparent manner, which would provide staff representatives and staff members the ability to identify exactly which authorities were delegated to whom. He explained that after the implementation of the ST/SGB, it was found that only managers had the ability to access this information. He stated that the Secretary General's answer to the President's question in this regard at the town hall was positive, as he clearly stated that the practice of delegation of authority was to be handled in a fully transparent manner.

The Deputy Chair mentioned that in a recent DGC case, senior managers did not do what they were required to under delegated authorities. In this regard, she thought that a strict accountability framework was urgently needed to hold managers responsible for the misuse of the delegated authorities, as well as for the lack of use of such authorities.

Michelle Rockcliffe called for a strong Union position on this matter.

The 1st VP called for Council members to carefully study the ST/SGB and the relevant documents that he committed to share, and to report all incidents related to misuse/lack of use of the delegated authorities to enable the members of the working group to suggest best practices in the application of the ST/SGB based on concrete examples.

The Assistant Secretary Sarah M'Bodji inquired whether there were any legal grounds to challenge the issuance of the ST/SGB without proper consultations with the Staff Unions. The 1st VP mentioned that all Unions had discussed the matter and eventually it was found that the issuance of the ST/SGB could not be reversed on legal grounds.

On a different note, Michelle Rockcliffe inquired about the selected candidate for the Union's staff assistant post. The 1st VP mentioned some of the selected candidate's educational background, her previous experience, as well as her languages and other technical skills that made her a suitable candidate for the position.

5. UNSU Finances

The Treasurer Jaime Garreta mentioned that he received an invoice of USD 8,989.50 to pay for services offered by the Department of Operational Support (DOS) to install the water fountains. He further explained that he expected further invoices in this regard which would be covered by a series of deposits (contributions) to be made by the sponsor of the water fountains project: United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU). There would be no gain or loss to the Union from the project.

Michelle Rockcliffe requested further details on the project and its finances.

The 1st VP explained that an agreement was reached between UNSU, DOS, and UNFCU in which UNFCU pledged to cover the procurement and the installation costs of the water

fountains (installation of water fountains was one of the requests raised by staff members in the survey on workplace satisfaction).

The 2nd VP Francisco Brito also explained that the agreement was reached in the context of discussions that took place between UNSU and UNFCU on practices to support the Organization's environmental goals.

The Deputy Chair requested copies of the signed agreement and called for Union officers to follow due processes that govern receiving and spending donations. Michelle Rockcliffe seconded this request.

6. ST/AI on appointments terminations

Guest speaker Marian Fadel addressed the Council on ILO conventions and their uses by other unions (the relevant ILO Conventions include: *Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention*, 1948 (No. 87); *Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention*, 1949 (No. 98); and *Collective Bargaining Convention*, 1981 (No. 154)). She drew attention *inter alia* to the Resolution of the 44th Council's Emergency Meeting RES/GM/44/01 on the New "Business Plan" for the Organization and the minimum standards that the ILO convention called for.

The Council debated the status of collective bargaining rights in the UN and whether the ILO convention should or could be referred to in UNSU resolutions in view of the fact that even while UN Staff Regulations and Rules seem to be based on the principles outlined, the convention was actually ratified by countries and not the UN.

The Council deferred any motion on the draft resolution in accordance with its prior decision to review the matter over a few weeks.

7. Staff Day

This item was deferred.

8. Reports by Units

Michelle Rockcliffe mentioned that she received worrisome reports from her constituents that the Pension Fund was in the process of changing its regulations and rules and mentioned that such changes were not discussed in the meetings of the Pension Board.

The Assistant Rapporteur Shirley Abraham mentioned that during a section meeting, her manager asked the payroll staff to assess their workload and to identify what kind of duties could be handled remotely from other UN duty stations. On a question regarding the use

of overtime to overcome the Unit's backlog rather than sending tasks outside HQ, she stated that the manager's response was positive, however, he repeated his requests to identify the workload/duties/tasks that can be transferred to other duty stations.

9. AOB

The 1st VP mentioned that some staff on the professional and higher categories would notice slight reductions in their January payslip and explained that this it was a recurring issue that happened annually and that staff on these categories should expect a raise in February. He asked staff representatives to convey this information to their constituents in case they raise concerns regarding the January adjustments mentioned above.

The Assistant Secretary transferred to the Council members the news regarding the cyber-attack that the UN was recently subject to, which resulted in more than 400 gigabytes of staff members' information being unlawfully acquired by hackers. She called for the Council members to advise their constituents to change their passwords and insisted that the cyber-attack was a direct result to the UN's decision to replace the IBM Lotus Notes highly secured servers by those of Microsoft Office 365.

The meeting adjourned at 14:50.
