



Minutes/Actes:

Meeting No: 46/39
Date: 09 April 2020
Time: 13:15 - 14:30
Venue: Virtual (MS Teams)
Quorum: 15/17 Units

46th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate at 13:20 with 09 Units present. Staff Council Chair Camille McKenzie chaired the meeting and Secretary Sherif Mohamed took notes. Units present were: 06, 13, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33. All members of the leadership team were in attendance.

1. Adoption of the agenda

Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 06) requested to replace the “Pension Fund” agenda item with “Delegation of Authority”. The agenda was adopted as amended with 10 items.

2. Adoption of previous minutes

Minutes for the 38th meeting of the 46th Staff Council were adopted with changes introduced by Michelle Rockcliffe and the Deputy Chair Ramona Kohrs.

3. President’s Report and Summary of Communications

The 1st Vice President Aitor Arauz Chapman briefed the Council on the recent SMC meetings in which participants discussed issues like the membership of the 3x3 group of the SMC and the elections of a new vice president in light of the postponement of the SMC plenary.

He stated that SMC was focusing on advancing the following items, given the current global circumstances: Downsizing Policy, Mobility and Staff Selection.

The Deputy Chair Ramona Kohrs repeated her previous request to have a dedicated page on iSeek/u-Seek for updates on the work of the SMC as well as the composition of its different working groups to keep staff informed.

4. Executive Board Report

Michelle Rockcliffe referred to the EB's discussion regarding the Cafeteria staff whom were let go by their employer, Culinart. She thought it wasn't the Union's mandate to fight for these staff as they were not UN staff members and because they had their own Union.

The 1st VP stated that besides the issue of Culinart staff, the EB discussed other matters such as subsidizing Culinart for their losses and the fate of their contract.

The President stated that the current contract with Culinart was up in the air, and that the EB discussed alternatives other than using Culinart.

The Deputy Chair thought it was inappropriate that Culinart closed its operations in the Secretariat without proper consultations with staff, especially in the presence of staff members who work on-site. She inquired about the situation with these staff after the closure of the Secretariat's cafeterias. Jesus Parado (Unit 33) supported Ramona's opinion and stated that Culinart should have maintained a minimum number of staff on-site in return to being subsidized for their losses.

A discussion took place about the role of the Catering Committee in decisions related to the cafeteria and catering contracts, including the possibility of initiating a campaign to make adjustments to the way how decisions related to cafeteria and catering services were made.

The Deputy Chair made the following motion: "***the Council to write a letter to DOS and the Catering Committee regarding the issues with the cafeteria and catering services***". The motion was seconded.

The Council moved to vote on the motion.

The motion was passed with 11 votes in favour, 0 votes against, and 2 abstentions.

On a different note, the Chair inquired about the number of Secretariat Staff who tested positive with Covid-19. The President indicated that the number was 12 so far and that she would get back to management for an updated number and report back.

5. UNSU Finances

The Assistant Treasurer Yogesh Sakhardande updated the Council on the work of the auditors and that as per the auditor's latest communication, the auditing process should be concluded by the end of the week. In response to requests for the financial statements, the Assistant Treasurer stated that the financial reports would be prepared and shared with the Council once they regain access to the financial files located at the Union's office,

but agreed that since frequency of the financial statements were legislated by UNSU regulations, the Treasurer could provide some preliminary numbers based on the UNFCU bank statements which were available on-line.

6. Covid-19 Update

The President stated that the Medical Division was working on antibody testing for UN personnel in NY to check their immunity systems and accordingly make decisions regarding who can work on-site. The President thought the latter might lead to ambiguities and uncertainties.

The 1st VP stated that the latter was one of the Medical Division's ideas to decide when staff can return to normal operations, however it wasn't the Medical Division's call, but the OHR and that the Union should be actively involved in this regard.

7. Update on the Townhall with the Controller

The 1st VP updated the Council on the meeting with the Controller. He stated that the key message was that even though we're a little below the cash levels that we should be at, the Organization was implementing some measures to ensure the regular delivery of salaries and other benefits until September. One of these measures was freezing all the new regular budget recruitments.

The Deputy Chair stated that questions raised in the meeting were not answered and asked that the Leadership follow-up with the Controller to circulate answers to all the relevant questions to staff-at-large.

Sergio Pires Vieira (Unit 24) inquired whether staff representatives had the right to be involved in the planning of any exceptional measures to manage the cash situation. The 1st VP stated that from his experience representing staff at DGACM, the consultation process was essential before the implementation of any measures that might have effects on staff. He referred to the importance of adhering to the formal consultation process in accordance with [ST/SGB/274](#) "*procedures and terms of reference of the staff management consultation machinery at the departmental or office level*".

The Secretary Sherif Mohamed called for staff representatives to avail the opportunity and ask to be part of the decision-making process in their departments and to request to be consulted before any decisions that might have effects on staff were made. He also reminded the staff representatives to report any incidents in which program managers ask staff to work more to deliver the full mandate in light of the current cash flow crisis. He explained that – as stated in the townhall meeting – such requests contradict the Secretariat approach in highlighting the areas affected by the lack of necessary cash.

Michelle Rockcliffe asked that the Union take a collective measure to enforce the implementation of [ST/SGB/274](#).

The 2nd VP Francisco Brito indicated that compliance with ST/SGB/274 was always problematic and that some USGs didn't even know that they should consult with their Departments' staff representatives and that a Union action should be taken to address this matter.

Michelle Rockcliffe made a motion that “***leadership liaise with DMSPC to send a broadcast to explain the purpose of ST/SGB/274 and to request managers to comply with its provisions***”. The motion was seconded.

The Council moved to vote on the motion.

The motion was passed unanimously with 14 votes in favour, no votes against, and no abstentions.

8. Delegation of Authority

Item deferred to next meeting.

9. Reports by Units

Nothing was reported.

10. AOB

The Assistant Secretary Sarah M'Bodji updated the Council with the dates of the upcoming SCO training on psychological first aid.

The meeting adjourned at 14:50.
