



Minutes/Actes:

Meeting No: 46/EM3
Date: 10 August 2020
Time: 13:00 - 14:57 PM EST
Venue: Virtual (MS Teams)
Quorum: 13/17 Units

46th Staff Council Emergency Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate at 13:10 with 13 units present.

The meeting was recorded.

Staff Council Chairperson Ms. Camille McKenzie chaired the meeting and in absence of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary Ms. Sarah M'Bodji took notes.

Units present were: 6, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

All members of the Union leadership team were present.

1. Adoption of Agenda

The Chairperson Ms. Camille McKenzie adopted the Emergency Meeting Agenda with one item: a resolution proposed by the Leadership and Executive Board (EB).

2. Resolution in response to recent events in Beirut, Lebanon

The Chairperson thanked the Assistant Secretary, EB, President and Vice Presidents for sharing the draft resolution and turned the floor over to the leadership.

The President Ms. Patricia Nemeth addressed the Council and thanked them for attending during the Council recess. She explained the current situation after the explosions in the port of Beirut, according to their reports from staff on the ground. She proposed a fundraising effort, which required a Staff Council resolution. The proposal was endorsed by the Executive Board. She also pointed out that the budget line for staff relief efforts was almost unused for the budget cycle.

Ms. Nemeth added that she had been in touch with UNHQ Senior Managers and that the Permanent Representative of Lebanon had agreed to chair the relief committee.

The First Vice President Mr. Aitor Arauz Chapman clarified that any Union contributions would go to United Nations staff working at the Beirut duty station in various capacities. He elaborated that local and national UN staff there were facing immediate challenges. Ms. Nemeth agreed and elaborated that the idea was to be joining efforts with the local staff unions, the unions of Agencies, Funds and Programmes with a local presence, as well as the Field Staff Union, because there is a variety of staff working in Beirut.

The draft resolution ***“Resolution on the Establishment of a UN Staff Relief Committee in Solidarity with ESCWA and UNIFIL Staff in Beirut, Lebanon”*** was shared with the Council on screen.

Ms. Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) asked for clarifications and raised concern of the unusually large amount request of \$20,000. She underlined that the Staff Council should be equitable when assigning funds in response to other disasters around the globe.

The First Vice President addressed the concern stating that no staff member had come forward to work on relief committees for other countries.

Ms. Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) further clarified her concerns reminding the Council that in the case of Comoros there were at maximum 3 staff in the entire UN Secretariat and that these were the occasions that called for the most help and where Union’s leadership should use its good offices.

Ms. Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) made a motion to change the amount to \$10,000 in view of her previous interventions and the fact that once needs became clearer the Council could return and increase the amount if necessary, especially in view of the GoFundme event that was taking place simultaneously and which had already raised more than \$30,000. This motion was seconded by Mr. Jesus Parado (Unit 33).

The Chairperson announced the vote for the amendment, and the vote was taken virtually by the Assistant-Secretary and announced as four (4) Units voting “yes”; eight (8) Units voting “no”; and two (2) Units abstaining.

The Chairperson announced that the suggested motion to reduce the amount was denied.

A few Staff Council members requested the inclusion of language on accountability from beneficiaries and requesting that the Relief Committee report to the Council. The text was edited accordingly.

The Chairperson asked for final vote on the draft resolution

The Chairperson announced the final vote on the draft Resolution ***“Resolution on the Establishment of a UN Staff Relief Committee in Solidarity with ESCWA and UNIFIL Staff in Beirut, Lebanon”***. The vote was taken virtually by chat by the Assistant Secretary and announced as 14 Units voting for, no Units voting against, and no Units abstaining.

The chairperson announced that the resolution was adopted as **RES-46-28** and wished the Council members great recess in the fundraising efforts.

The virtual meeting adjourned at 14:57 PM EST.
