



Resolution No.: 48/5

Meeting No.: 48/7

Date: 13 June 2024

Resolution on the establishment of the Staff Legal Assistance Committee

The 48th Staff Council,

The Staff Council,

Recalling Article 7.1 of the Statute of the United Nations Staff Union whereas the Council shall be the legislative body of the Union and shall determine its operational policy, except where such policy is determined by General Meeting or referendum;

Recalling Article 7.2 of the Statute of the United Nations Staff Union whereas the Council shall establish working groups, panels and committees and receive such reports as it may require.

Recalling its Resolution 48/4 on the establishment of the Committees of the Staff Council;

Recalling Article 1.1. a) of the Regulations of the United Nations Staff Union whereas staff members have a right to advice, assistance and protection regarding all matters within the Union's competence;

Recalling also that the Union traditionally supports the litigation of individual cases deemed to be of relevance to staff as a whole, or likely to establish jurisprudence relevant to staff,

Noting also that all requests for legal assistance require a detailed assessment on the part of the Union before funds can be committed,

Noting further that expenditures that exceed USD 1,000 must be approved in advance by the Council (United Nations Staff Union Financial Rule 2 a); and expenditures between USD 200 and 1,000 must be approved in advance by the Executive Board (United Nations Staff Union Financial Rule 2 b),

The Staff Council hereby,

1. *Decides* to establish a Staff Legal Assistance Committee composed of the following members:

Ms. Shirley Abraham
Ms. Gabriela Conti
Mr. Stéphane Jean
Ms. Katy Joseph
Mr. Patel Noble
Mr. Ryan Stevenson

2. *Decides* also that the Staff Council Secretary and Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of the Committee.

3. *Charges* the Staff Legal Assistance Committee with assessing requests for legal assistance received from staff by means of the respective form, and in line with the attached Terms of Reference.

4. *Decides* that financial support for litigation shall be limited to staff members who are dues paying members of the Union and remain so for the duration of the litigation.

Adopted	Yes
For	20
Against	0
Abstention	0

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE STAFF LEGAL ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

Remit

The Staff Legal Assistance Committee is tasked with reviewing cases submitted by staff members who request financial assistance from Union funds to litigate against the Administration. Criteria for recommending support shall be: agreement in principle on the grounds for a complaint, reasonable prospects of success, the expectation that the ruling may establish jurisprudence that is relevant to matters under the Union's competence or of interest to a broader constituency of staff, and confirmation that the issue is not taken up by the Office of Staff Legal Assistance.

Membership

The Staff Legal Assistance Committee shall be made up of six members elected by the Staff Council from amongst its members. Additionally, the Staff Council Secretary and Treasurer shall be ex-officio members.

Meetings

The Committee shall elect a Chair at its first meeting. In the Chair's absence, a meeting may be convened by any other member, who shall be acting chair for that meeting.

Meetings shall be quorate with any six members present and decisions shall be taken by a majority vote. In case of a tie, the meeting chair shall cast a deciding vote.

A meeting shall be held ex-officio within a week of receiving a request through the Staff Council or Executive Board.

The Committee shall report:

- a) to the Executive Board within a week of receiving a request when recommending the case for review by a lawyer (fee up to USD 1,000);
- b) to the Staff Council within two weeks of receiving a request when recommending the case be referred to a lawyer for litigation. If litigation is recommended, the Committee shall request an estimate from the litigator, to be attached to its recommendation; and
- c) to either the Staff Council or Executive Board, whichever meets first, when recommending a case not to be taken up by the Union.

Reports

Reports from the Committee shall be anonymized using the applicant's initials and avoiding any details that could identify them. The Committee shall retain a record of all cases considered for purposes of invoicing and follow-up.