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**REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE REFORM PROCESS**

PART I – STAFF POLICY

ADDENDUM

OUTLINE

In conformity with item 2805.7 of the UNESCO Administrative Manual, the UNESCO Staff Union (STU) submits its observations on the report by the Director-General.

1. The UNESCO Staff Union wishes to draw Member States' attention to the fact that, contrary to the complacent finding reflected in document 33 C/25, staff morale is at its lowest and this is reflected in the work within the Secretariat. The discontent is general from top to bottom of the hierarchy and urgent measures need to be taken, since the current management of human resources and the reforms undertaken are jeopardizing the calibre and dignity of UNESCO staff.

A. STAFF POLICY

New human resources framework

2. The ten new human resources policies were defined on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Council on Personnel Policies (ACPP) and in consultation with the staff associations. We note with satisfaction that the Director-General has, for the most part, followed the recommendations of the Council. However, it should be pointed out that the members of the Council themselves proposed a reform of ACPP's rules of procedure that would make for its

improved functioning and genuine independence vis-à-vis the Bureau of Human Resources Management. So far there has been no follow-up of these recommendations. One wonders whether the Director-General has been informed of them.

3. While not necessarily innovative, the texts of these ten policies should in principle lead to an improvement in the management of human resources. But no tangible results can be expected while an outward show of “regular procedures” continues to mask disreputable practices. All the bodies involved in the implementation of these policies pretend to respect them to the letter while, in practical terms, there is still no accountability. Thus, the most unacceptable failings in the management of human resources remain uncorrected, even when they have been officially noted.

4. With regard to the **results achieved in the matter of recruitment**, it is inaccurate to assert that the process has become more rigorous and more transparent. The persons sitting on the newly established panels are often encouraged by supervisors to reach predetermined conclusions and account is rarely taken of the observations of the observers representing the Associations. It would be interesting to know on the basis of what indicators the Bureau of Human Resources Management can claim that recruitment has been improved.

5. Overqualified persons are recruited externally to posts to which staff members could be appointed. This kind of situation is increasingly common and is all too often explained by the personal interests of a given official or by a poor assessment of the real needs of the Organization. The consequences are harmful since staff members entertaining hopes of career advancement are demotivated and new recruits inevitably become rapidly discontent with their own professional situation.

6. If the recruitment process remain too lengthy, this is often because posts are not advertised sufficiently far in advance and because, in some cases, the sectors and bureau prefer to pay retired staff members against the budget allocated to the post in question rather than speed up recruitment. The Bureau of Human Resources Management takes no steps to put an end to such practices.

7. The post vacancy announcements published externally are so vaguely worded that it is understandable that the number of applicants is so high. This has been acknowledged for a long time and, to our knowledge, no measure has ever been taken to specify more accurately the professional profile required for the posts to be filled.

8. It is doubtless right and proper that the permanent staff should be regularly renewed, but it is unacceptable that the career development of members of the Secretariat should not be taken more fully into account. Promotions too often remain a matter of chance or depend on the personal relations of staff members with their line managers. The ACPP has, for over two years, wished to look into the redefinition of a merit recognition policy, but the Bureau of Human Resources Management has opposed this.

9. The General Service post reclassification process, apart from the fact that it was in general unfair and ineffective – as evidenced by the large number of contestations and subsequent appeals – has been particularly disadvantageous for the secretaries. Many of them, having worked in the Organization for 20 or 30 years (or even longer), have been blocked for years at the ceiling of their current grade with no career prospects. Whereas an excellent secretary with sound training and long experience has no hopes of any career development, people are being recruited with university qualifications in various fields, but without any specific training for the job in question.

10. The ratio of Professional staff to the so-called “support” staff as calculated by the Bureau of Human Resources Management does not correspond to the real situation in the Secretariat. Indeed,

there are many cases where persons occupying GS posts carry out duties that are typically professional in level. Budgetary considerations and those relating to geographical distribution impede recognition of the quality of the work performed. The Bureau of Human Resources Management has drawn up generic post descriptions that are out of date and take no account of the evolution of work in the Secretariat. Consequently, analysis of the figures can give the impression of a greater mass of so-called “support” staff, whereas modern technologies have minimized the number of persons carrying out traditional tasks.

11. The gender imbalance is flagrant among senior-level staff and while there is, unquestionably, equality between the sexes in the Secretariat in terms of working conditions, the fact that women are more or less confined to posts of lesser responsibility helps to perpetuate sexist attitudes. Consequently, even though the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules guarantee identical working conditions for women and men, the hierarchical imbalance and the tolerance of racist practices taint staff relations in the course of our everyday activities.

12. The principle of geographical mobility, while interesting and useful in theory, is much more complex in practice than it appears and can certainly not be addressed simply through the rotation policy that has been introduced. Because its personnel policy lacks coherence, the Organization continues to hire professionals with highly specialized skills on long-term contracts. For example, in the summer of 2005, the Culture Sector advertised a P-3 level post for which the stipulated requirement was “postgraduate degree in the field of visual anthropology”. Since it is known that the professional in question is scheduled to be posted to the field in five years’ time, there are grounds for questioning the usefulness of such a recruitment. This proves not only that the mentality of those in charge has not been miraculously changed by the issuing of a well-drafted policy, but also that the Bureau of Human Resources Management fails to carry out any checks in the matter of recruitment.

13. With regard to the performance appraisal policy, this is not applied and is currently no more than a virtual procedure that has no impact on the management of human resources. Supervisors are not more responsible for the individual development of their staff in the interest of the smooth progress of work than they were before the issuing of this regulation.

14. As for training, the only available indicators are budgetary ones. There is no doubt that increasingly large sums have been spent. However, the effectiveness of such expenditure remains to be demonstrated. The proposed training is sometimes pleasant and enriching for staff members on a personal level, but does nothing to improve the performance of the individuals who have received it. STU takes the view that so long as the sole indicator taken into account remains the increasingly high budget outlay, it is risky to assert that there has been the slightest improvement in this area.

15. STU has drawn the attention of the Bureau of Human Resources Management to the fact that in one field office locally recruited staff had passed language tests organized by the United Nations system as a whole and held in the UNDP office. These tests, recognized by all the organizations in the system, are not recognized by UNESCO, which is prepared to spend money to organize its own language tests. That is only a minor example of the inconsistencies in this area. So long as reliable indicators of effectiveness are not used, training efforts at UNESCO will continue to be ineffective.

16. Harassment has become a standard method for managing human resources at UNESCO. Even in well-known cases that are denounced publicly, measures are not always taken – or are taken too late – to prohibit such practices. Harassment is aggravated by racist, sexist and homophobic practices. STU has been obliged, in particular, to denounce publicly the fact that there is one service within the Organization where the majority of the staff members are constantly bullied. “Zero tolerance” is no more than a slogan that masks the total emptiness of the approach to that

matter and explains to a great extent the staff's frame of mind. Various annoyances in the daily life of UNESCO staff can be explained on budgetary grounds. In the case of harassment or, more generally, lack of respect for human dignity, it is quite simply a matter of unacceptable negligence and a total failure of human resources management.

B. MEDIUM- AND LONG-TERM STAFFING STRATEGY FOR UNESCO (2008-2013)

17. This strategy was never discussed with STU and, while its aims are praiseworthy, we doubt that satisfactory solutions can be found so long as the Bureau of Human Resources Management itself is not reformed. Most staff management activities are carried out by General Service staff and the amount and quality of their work is not taken into consideration. Some of the Bureau's services function very well, notably the section responsible for drafting new policies. But this intellectual production is rarely matched by practical application and there is no kind of follow-up.

18. Moreover, the trend towards diminished job security for UNESCO staff hardly heralds an improvement in the Secretariat's functioning. As far as the renewal of professional staff is concerned, this is a legitimate objective, but there is no consistency in this area. Many colleagues with a long career behind them wish to leave the Organization before the statutory retirement age. But the Bureau of Human Resources Management does not ensure that the conditions provided for in the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules are extended to them, with the result that they are prevented from leaving. Staff members who can rightfully expect 18 months of indemnities find themselves offered only three, i.e. a sixth of the amount. That is characteristic of the staff management policy: a fine and attractively ordered show masking a certain disarray.

19. Still, STU welcomes the clear improvement in its relations with the Bureau of Human Resources Management. Unfortunately, the quality of those exchanges depends on personal affinities between union officials and the Director and Deputy Director of the Bureau. It would be healthier if more precise rules were defined by way of genuine collaboration between the Bureau and staff representatives. Moreover, we have noted with regret that the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs refuses to provide any assistance to the Advisory Council on Personnel Policies (ACPP). This condescending attitude towards such an important consultative body is prejudicial to the reform process.