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

PART I

ADDENDUM

STAFF POLICY

SUMMARY

In accordance with Item 2805.7 of the UNESCO Administrative Manual, the UNESCO Staff Union (STU) presents its comments on the report by the Director-General.

A. STAFF POLICY

Recruitment, promotion and training

1. The UNESCO Staff Union (STU) wishes to point out at the outset that although the Director-General is envisaging a restructuring of the Secretariat and a cut in staff numbers, 125 posts in the Professional category and above were filled in 2004, more often than not in disregard of the principles of recruitment set out under the new policy (Administrative Circular No. 1291 of 29 September 2003).
2. STU has drawn the attention of Administration officials, in particular in the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM), to all the irregularities committed but no remedial measures have been taken. The staff feel that, in fact, it is HRM that maintains irregular practices. For many years now, STU has said that it is not the regulations (old or new) that are at fault, but that poor staff management in UNESCO stems from the non-observance of the texts.
3. Despite changes in promotion procedures, due to their non-application, most often staff members who do benefit from a promotion obtain it (whether it is merited or not) thanks to the sympathy of their supervisors and not on an equitable basis.
4. As decisions are decentralized to sectors and bureaux, staff training and advanced training are granted, like promotions, according to irrational, subjective and unfair criteria. The training for 180 senior staff in supervision and management should have led to a drop in moral harassment (bullying), a practice that is widespread in the Secretariat and which systematically goes unpunished.
5. UNESCO staff members are keen to improve their skills and can only hope for a fair policy based on quality and not quantity. It must be pointed out that there is no follow-up to assess learning and its effects on work output in the Secretariat. Furthermore, account must also be taken of the fact that many colleagues have such a heavy workload that they no longer have time to attend training courses.

Implementation of the Human Resources Policy Reform Framework

6. Between 2002 and 2004, the Advisory Council on Personnel Policies (ACPP) had to work under constant pressure from HRM to formulate recommendations to the Director-General. STU is pleased to note that more often than not the Director-General follows the advice of the ACPP, but – unfortunately – HRM obstructs the circulation of information directly between ACPP members and the Director-General. For instance, ACPP had to work as a matter of urgency during a very busy session in November-December 2003 on the draft anti-harassment policy but in June 2004 the Director-General had still not received the ACPP report and the Administrative Circular has still not been published.
7. In spite of a clear improvement in policy, the non-application of staff management regulations has had disastrous results and led to the demoralization of the staff. STU informed the Executive Board of this state of affairs in the statement of its President to the Finance and Administrative Commission (FA) at the 170th session.
8. If STU has decided to stop regular contact with its usual counterparts, it is to draw the attention of the Directorate to the failings of HRM. Thanks to the Chairperson of the FA Commission, whom STU thanks for the sincere interest he has shown in the distress of the staff, and to the undeniable will of the Deputy Director-General to restore dialogue between the staff and

senior officials, the Union hopes to be able to continue to contribute to the establishment of genuine transparency and equity in human resources management, which is far from being the case at the present time.

B. MEDIUM- AND LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR UNESCO STAFFING

9. The UNESCO staff are perfectly aware that the Organization has to adapt to increasingly rapid and universal changes in the world today. Nevertheless, we cannot share the pessimistic vision that the future of humanity will above all be characterized by a succession of natural disasters and wars. Emergency interventions cannot be the main justification for the restructuring of the Secretariat and the Organization's programmes; security and the fight against terrorism are necessary, but they must not be used as a pretext for such reform.

10. We are preparing to celebrate the 60th anniversary of UNESCO, but the Organization has been able to remain young because it has never stopped adapting to major changes in the world, and even anticipating them. As an "intellectual" organization, UNESCO has often been the global forum that has plotted developments in the international community. On reading the Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the meeting of heads of State and government in September 2005, it would seem that the restructuring of Secretariats throughout the United Nations system is imperative and that we cannot oppose the restructuring of the UNESCO Secretariat. What the staff wants is for the restructuring to take place openly and above board.

11. STU would like to contribute to improving the effectiveness of the UNESCO Secretariat but cannot accept that it should take place without consulting the three staff associations and with a total lack of transparency. The current staff management policy is felt to be a systematic denial of the skills of the staff in post and is leading to increased precarity for those working in the Organization.

12. Stalin used to say that people were the most valuable form of capital. It is surprising to say the least to find the same vision in the UNESCO Administration and it is paradoxical and troubling to see that HRM manages human resources in the same way as financial resources. To give but one example, without waiting for a decision from the General Conference, HRM considers that the posts proposed by sectors and bureaux are already abolished and is putting pressure on persons occupying those posts to make them leave the Organization without taking account of their rights or their interests. Staff members, before being a valuable form of capital, are human beings who deserve to be treated as such. STU trusts that the Director-General in his wisdom will ensure that the colleagues occupying the 20 or so posts that might be abolished are treated with dignity, justice and equity.

13. Many staff members have negotiated an early separation from the Organization in view of the announced restructuring, which is a sign of clear dissatisfaction. The United Nations Secretary-General advocates this kind of action to renew human resources. What is to be deplored at UNESCO is the system of double standards applied to the staff members in question. The separation indemnities on offer are inversely proportional to the grade of the individuals. The indemnities proposed to some go far beyond what is provided for in the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, while others are offered ridiculously low indemnities.

14. In a context of globalization, UNESCO's role should grow so as to take part in the prevention of negative effects and the safeguarding of cultural and biological diversity. More than ever, the quality of staff members must be of the highest level. If the redefinition of the Organization's role in the international community increasingly calls for a permanent staff of "generalists", the new

staffing policy must not be an exercise in drafting good texts, but a real exercise in human resources management. On the one hand, the current members of staff who, having served a significant part of their career in international cooperation, have become professionals of the international civil service and deserve indeterminate contracts (as suggested by the elected members of ACPP); on the other, the recruitment of new members on the basis of extremely precise post descriptions tailor-made for individual applicants should have been halted a long time ago.

15. If the weak point in the skills of the staff currently in post at UNESCO really is too high a degree of specialization, the excessive use of consultants at Headquarters can no longer be explained. In order to justify its non-management of human resources (especially at Headquarters), HRM invents specific theories for each problem: there are too many specialists at Headquarters who must be got rid of in order to deal with globalization, or, on the contrary, there are not enough specialists at Headquarters and consultants and other contractors must be employed in order to meet the needs of the programme. So, for example, in paragraph 42 of document 171 EX/6 it is stated that “it is difficult for [core] staff to retain their cutting edge” in the Organization’s fields of competence. STU would like this statement to be deleted and a survey to be carried out. If professionals are no longer genuine programme specialists, specific measures must be taken as a matter of urgency.

16. Why, instead of consolidating core staff with indeterminate appointments, is the option “short- or mid-term temporary contracts and external service providers” being selected? How can this trend in employment ensure equitable geographical distribution?

17. The renewal of human resources, thanks in particular to modern technologies, should not necessarily lead to the loss of “institutional memory” but it does endanger the international civil service, if the conditions of recruitment of a high-level professional staff, independent of national authorities, are not guaranteed. The growing precarity of people working at UNESCO and recruitment that does not comply with the regulations in force have already led to a loss of value in the field of independence and professional quality of the Organization’s staff. The institutional memory can be easily preserved by training new members of staff in the “culture of the House”, but the disparagement of long-standing staff members, who are constantly marginalized, harassed and blamed, has created a new culture, that of the “spontaneous generation” best at everything. This rupture within the Secretariat itself causes tension and could produce increasingly widespread conflict.

18. It may be obvious that the Secretariat cannot cover all the skills needed for every kind of mission in UNESCO’s fields of competence, and whereas the logic of globalization may call for the division of staff working for UNESCO into permanent staff and staff employed on an ad hoc basis, the right balance must be struck between the two categories. This is not an innovation, as the Organization has always worked in this way. The current staff of UNESCO are concerned at two aspects of the issue: the lack of foresight in the current management of human resources, and the opacity of that management. The latent threat looming over the staff in post feeds the sense of insecurity and dissatisfaction that today characterizes the members of staff.

19. Among the most blatant signs of HRM’s disdain for the skills of UNESCO staff is its way of treating General Service staff. According to an old habit, instead of responding to the natural need of this category of staff for career prospects, HRM proposes to change the names of duties, by compartmentalizing even more the various trades where – it would appear – the Organization no longer needs “generalists”.

20. Furthermore, STU is concerned at the silence on the future of “technicians” (GT posts), who are essential to the smooth running of the Organization’s work and who convey UNESCO’s institutional memory just as much as any other staff members.

21. The College of Assistant Directors-General, a body that has no administrative definition but which seems to be the expression of democratic management in the Secretariat, never meets either the members of ACPP (whose recommendations it analyses) or representatives of the staff associations. STU would like to suggest to the Director-General that staff representatives should take part on a regular basis in the meetings of the College. In that way, the transparency and effectiveness of reform could be ensured. In general, STU urges the representatives of Member States and the Directorate to involve staff representatives in the management of the restructuring of the Secretariat, to give ACPP more freedom of expression and to take into account the proposals made by the three staff associations.