



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# Executive Board

Hundred and eighty-second session

# 182 EX/6 Part I Add.

PARIS, 10 September 2009  
Original: English

## Item 6 of the provisional agenda

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

#### PART I

#### STAFF POLICY

#### ADDENDUM

##### SUMMARY

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

*“The Organization has well-established staff regulations and rules for the management of human resources ... significant deviations have occurred in recent years in the implementation of existing regulations and rules ... Only through a determined effort to respect the Organization’s policies, regulations and rules fully will the administration regain the confidence of the Member States and the staff.” (United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, 2000, page v).*

Over the past nine years, UNESCO’s staff policies have grown increasingly removed from their practical implementation. In 2000, the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit produced an assessment of administration and management with recommendations for the incoming Director-General on their reform.<sup>1</sup> It called for a strengthening of the independence and authority of the human resources arm of the Organization in its capacity to ensure absolute respect for staff rules and regulations, and the objectivity of all recruitment, promotion and career development including that of senior management. It also called for the staffing of the human resources arm with the most qualified professionals.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Joint Inspection Unit. Review of Management and Administration in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Geneva, 2000.

The opposite trend has taken place with decentralization of personnel matters to the sectors, lack of independent oversight of senior management recruitment and promotion, and de-professionalization of the human resources staff and its role.

The sole stakeholder body for some quality control in the recruitment process, the Personnel Advisory Boards, only provides recommendations to the Director-General, which in turn, may be countermanded by the Director, HRM, or ignored by the Director-General.<sup>2</sup>

The policies and measures reported in 182 EX/6 (35 C/26 Part I) on staff policy regarding recruitment, promotion, merit-based promotion, assessment and training, staff mobility, and ethics should be read in conjunction with the External Auditor's reports on investigations of recruitment, merit-based promotion, and use of temporary staff, particularly 182 EX/42 and 182 EX/48. Also, IOS has produced a report on merit-based promotion contained in 182 EX/24. The External Auditor's earlier investigation of rotation and geographic mobility in 179 EX/31 remains timely.<sup>3</sup> The External Auditor's findings confirm Staff Union experience that there is limited transparency, objectivity or credibility among staff for the recruitment, transfer and promotion processes in the Organization. As in the year 2000:

- recruitment procedures are only cursorily respected by sectors and HRM does not consider itself responsible to guarantee systematic quality control, indeed to an even lesser extent than in 2000, as it considers itself only a policy adviser;
- confusion has increased since 2000 regarding the use of temporary staff of all categories including ALD, to carry out core functions of regular international civil servants;
- implementation of promotion policy is "opaque";
- performance assessment is arbitrary and does not serve its intended purpose;
- overlap in alternative promotion schemes leads to arbitrary staff promotion and in some cases, irregular promotion of the same individual several times and exclusion of consideration of others;
- the merit-based promotion scheme was carried out with little transparency or objectivity. Both the IOS and External Auditor investigations found that there is no demonstrable relation between staff motivation or a culture of performance and the actual implementation of this scheme.

With respect to the United Nations-wide commitment to establish an Ethics Office on the exact model of that created in January 2006 at United Nations Headquarters in New York, UNESCO has been the most recalcitrant of any United Nations agency. As of September 2009, there is still no effective recourse for UNESCO staff, no whistleblower or retaliation protection, no financial disclosure programme for senior management, and no independent grievance handling system. The reference to recruitment of an ALD to begin to establish such a programme at UNESCO as

---

<sup>2</sup> See recent example with 181 EX/39 Part II regarding non-implementation of the External Auditor's recommendation concerning the absolute independence of Administrative Officers, particularly in the Education Sector and the role of Director, HRM in the recent recruitment process.

<sup>3</sup> References 182 EX/46 External Auditor's report on the awarding of temporary contracts; 182 EX/48 External Auditor's report on the evaluation and promotion of staff; 182 EX/39 Report on implementation of the External Auditor's previous recommendations; 182 EX/24 IOS report on evaluations and scenarios for an external comprehensive evaluation of the Organization, see in particular its external evaluation of the Pilot Phase of the Merit-Based Promotion Scheme. In the 179th session of the Executive Board (179 EX/31 Part I, page 31), the External Auditor presented his investigation of staff rotation and staff movement in the framework of the reform process reminding that the obligation of staff mobility needed to be matched by staff confidence in the assignment system and in individual career management, not currently the case.

announced in 35 C/26, who should have arrived in July 2009, demonstrates the lack of commitment to this United Nations-wide obligation and necessity.<sup>4</sup>

**Staff morale is at an all-time low in 2009. And as found by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit in 2000, without staff confidence in senior management's commitment to ethical, professional and politically neutral conduct, there is little solid ground on which to rebuild UNESCO's contribution to education, science, culture and communication worldwide.**

---

<sup>4</sup> The creation of an independent Ethics Office headed by a D-1 was recommended in September 2005 by the Independent Inquiry Committee of the Iraq Oil for Food Programme in which UNESCO as well as eight other United Nations agencies and its Headquarters were involved and investigated. The United Nations Secretary-General mandated all United Nations agencies to create such a body by 2008 or allow their staff to refer to the United Nations Ethics Office in New York. See ST/SGB/2005/22 Ethics Office – establishment and terms of reference; ST/SGB/2005/21 Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations; ST/SGB 2006/6 Financial disclosure and declaration of interest statements.