



FICSA Council

59th Session – UN New York – 6 to 10 February 2006

REPORT OF THE 59TH SESSION OF THE FICSA COUNCIL



FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATIONS

FEDERATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DE FONCTIONNAIRES INTERNATIONAUX

Geneva, 10 March 2006

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Report of the 59th session of the FICSA Council UN New York, 6-10 February 2006

Opening session (Agenda item 1)

1. The President of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA), Mr. Robert Weisell, opened the fifty-ninth session of the FICSA Council and welcomed the participants to New York. In the course of preparing for the session, FICSA had enjoyed the full support of the local staff representatives, their colleagues in the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA), as well as the United Nations Department of Management and the United Nations Department of Safety and Security. He wished to place on record the Federation's gratitude for that support. Twenty-four years had elapsed since the Council was last held in New York; it thus offered a unique opportunity to renew and strengthen ties with the FICSA members in New York, as well as with CCISUA and the local staff unions.

2. The President then invited Mr. Larry Brown, Secretary-Treasurer, National Union of Public and General Employees of Canada, and Chairman, Public Sector Working Group, Public Services International (PSI), to take the floor and deliver his keynote address. After thanking the Federation for the honour and privilege of addressing the Council, Mr. Brown pointed out that despite coming from a national union, albeit the second largest in Canada, he was more than familiar with the difficulties of dealing with fourteen different governments representing the ten provinces and three territories of that country. He was equally familiar with the vagaries of reorganisation that, over the past fifteen years, had adopted numerous different guises: reform, restructuring, reinvention, reorientation, privatisation, downsizing, right-sizing, restraint, downloading, devolving, decentralisation, revamping and even regurgitation.

3. In the course of those years, he had observed an enormous growth in what was termed the 'contingent' work force comprising temporary, casual, part-time or contractual labour. The shift was governed by the fact that 'non-permanent' staff were not only cheaper as they received fewer benefits, but they were also much less secure and thus unable to assert themselves vis-à-vis their employers. In his union, one third of the employees fell into the non-permanent category even though they were performing full-time jobs. Furthermore, given the insecurity factor and lack of benefits, the use of contingent workers contributed markedly to ineffectiveness in the workplace: something that employers would have to come to recognise.

4. In the case of 'essential' employees, it was argued that their jobs were so crucially important that the withdrawal of their services could prove dangerous; hence, they could not take any action to defend themselves. Given the essentiality of the jobs they performed, it would seem rational to assume that 'essential' employees were the best paid and enjoyed the greatest benefits. In reality, however, they were not only deprived of the right to take action, but they were invariably badly paid and were even subject to lay-off. None the less, it could not be gainsaid that the worst paid employees could bring a company to a halt. Management often took recourse to designating jobs as essential: to such an extent that most recently 110% of the workforce had been designated as too important to warrant taking job action! Unions were advised to: (a) argue that if the workers were so important, they should be paid accordingly; and (b) to negotiate a reasonable level of essential positions that would remain covered while the group as a whole had the right to defend itself.

5. His own union had learnt much from such institutions as bar or medical associations whose members had demonstrated the benefits of a firm collective response when faced with the threat of reorganisation. Professionals were among the strongest union members. However, it was not professional capability, but the application of collective pressure that was the most effective employee response to employer power.

6. When faced with restructuring or reorganisation in the workplace, public sector unions had to be aware of ten basic principles.

- Do not get trapped into defending the status quo;
- Do not accept management's definitions;
- Defend the right of the public to effective public services;
- Do not stay behind closed doors;
- Draw on sources of unbiased research to strengthen arguments;
- Identify allies in the ranks of management;
- Define your own reform goals;
- Assert your collective authority;
- Secure genuine and effective 'whistleblower' protection; and
- Uphold your ethos.

7. The risks associated with defending the status quo (invariably yesterday's compromise) was that unions might find themselves upholding a system that was under-funded, poorly managed, inflexible and subject to outside political interference. Unions should make reform their issue; employees who knew the system from the ground up had a crucial role to play in the reform process. The overwhelming majority of employees wanted active (as distinct from defensive) staff involvement in the process. Management often used private-sector terminology that was quite inappropriate in a public sector setting and contributed little to achieving the objective of providing a more effective public service. Reform in the private sector was often aimed at weakening a company with the ultimate aim of eliminating it completely. It was thus essential that unions did not accept management's imposition of objectives as a given. The union's aim was to make the system more effective in doing what it was designed to do.

8. Unions in the public sector should position themselves as defenders of public services, defying any moves to reduce those services. Little stood to be gained from holding polite discussions behind closed doors. Unions should move out into the public arena, seeking support from the general public, allying themselves with other organisations and entering into coalitions in order to raise general awareness of the issues at stake. Arguments could be effectively bolstered by citing independent research findings; his union had benefited greatly from research undertaken by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, a leading progressive research/policy organisation. Those findings added legitimacy to the union's claims, thus making them harder to ignore. Unions should also seek out allies in the ranks of management. Reform was often the brainchild of senior management or the result of external pressures whose sources were not so conversant with the organisation; it might thus well be that middle management did not share those views. A commonality of interest in genuinely improving things was a good source of support and alliance.

9. As a counter to the imposition of private-sector goals on public-sector organisations, unions should define its own reform goals within the overall goals and objectives of the organisation. Furthermore, any involvement in a reform scheme should be at the organisational level, not at the individual level with management selecting participants of their own choosing. Unions should exercise their collective authority. They should not fall into the trap of getting involved in a foregone managerial conclusion. Partnership had to be genuine, given that management was too important a task to be left to managers alone.

10. Employees could guard against the abuses of reform if they were assured genuine 'whistleblower' protection. In the absence of such protection, unions should act as spokespersons for employees who were aware of wrongdoings. Furthermore, any employer who claimed a desire to

improve the organisation, yet would not agree to grant 'whistleblowers' the necessary protection, was simply being disingenuous.

11. It had to be recognised that people working in the public sector had a different ethos. They had chosen of their own free will to get involved in an organisation that served the public good. They believed in their work and they 'owned' the issues. Ability to do their job well was paramount in their minds; hence, the goal was to create working conditions that contributed to getting the job well done. It was essential to create an effective working environment. To that end, unions should fight against malicious or misguided reform and struggle for real and true reform with the same measure of courage, conviction and dedication that their members brought to their jobs every day.

12. Mr. Brown questioned the ability of major commercial operations to develop and endorse an undertaking akin to the Millennium Development Goals that sought to make a better world for all its peoples. FICSA, however, did not stand alone in the struggle against the imposition of different value-systems in the work place. Others such as PSI stood ready to walk with the Federation. In closing, he quoted the well-known Saskatchewan politician Tommy Douglas: 'Courage, my friends, it's not too late to make a better world'.

13. In the ensuing discussion, Mr. Brown encouraged the Federation and its members to break away from traditional patterns of thinking. It should not be ignored that reform was sometimes used as an instrument to weaken an organisation. Furthermore, he cautioned against staff assuming the role that management invariably assigned them. The Federation should go public, seek the support of friendly governments and move around existing systems. As he had stressed earlier, 'whistleblowers' had to be afforded protection and employee organisations should raise issues on a collective basis.

14. It was agreed that FICSA could work more on the ethos issue, while working and walking with others (local trade unions) was already practised by certain member associations/unions. In answer to a question about the main features of the UN reform process that was highly political and short-termist with established posts being reduced, temporary posts being created without full benefits and hybrid contracts being introduced whose holders were denied union membership, Mr. Brown stressed the need to publicise the loss of service that such reforms entailed and the threat it posed. The general public, he felt, were mostly unaware of what UN staff really did. It was equally important to challenge the fundamental assumptions behind any reform plan.

15. In response to another question about the current situation facing staff marked by an abuse of the rule of law, a management intent upon divide and rule and a lack of coherence and harmonisation, Mr. Brown said that work disruptions were not always the most effective solution. Staff representatives should learn to manoeuvre within or circumvent existing systems. They should go to the core of the problems, invariably a lack of forthrightness on the part of management, and commission an independent study. Difficulties had to be analysed very carefully. The crux of the issue was either to figure out what had to be done or give up.

16. A further question related to allowing managers to manage alone and staff to get on with their job. In his reply, Mr. Brown stressed that challenge was essential to good management. Managers abhorred unions, yet it had been scientifically proven that a strong and effective union challenging management was good for managers.

17. It was pointed out that short-term staff did not speak up for fear of not getting an extension of their contracts, while a distressing sub-culture of the haves and have-nots was emerging and strike action often involved non-payment of salaries. Concepts from the private sector were being

increasingly introduced: outsourcing, off-shoring, pay-for-performance and merit pay. In his response, Mr. Brown stressed that outsourcing devalued the work being done. In any competition for jobs, there was always one person in favour of seniority being the decisive factor: the person with most seniority! To his mind, merit pay merely rewarded those employees whom the employer did not consider aggravating!

18. Given the public image of the United Nations with the allegations of mismanagement, nepotism, corruption and embezzlement and the difficulties of safeguarding the interests of staff in such an environment, Mr. Brown stressed that representing staff was by definition ‘a difficult job’.

19. Andres Castellanos del Corral (FAFICS) welcomed FICSA to New York. Representing more than 50,000 former staff members of the United Nations and specialised agencies, FAFICS was fully committed to the concept of one international civil service encompassing both active and retired staff. It was unrelenting in its efforts to uphold the independence, integrity and security of the international civil service as one of the principal assets of the United Nations. The President of FAFICS, who unfortunately was unable to attend the Council, had made a statement to that effect at the informal interactive hearings with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations and the private sector on strengthening the United Nations in June 2005 [copies of the statement were distributed]. FAFICS looked forward to contributing to the deliberations at the current Council, especially in areas related to pensions and health issues such as long-term care.

20. At a special morning session on the second day, Mr. Brian Gray, President, WFP/PSA, and Chief, Administrative Services and Travel Branch, WFP, gave a presentation on field issues.

21. Mr. Gray opened his presentation by describing the genesis of the Professional Staff Association in WFP. In an organisation with 1,153 Professional staff with fixed-term or continuing appointments, some 400 staff members had already signed up. Still at the stage of negotiating a recognition agreement with administration, the Association attached prime importance to ensuring active cooperation within an organisation that had already provided such amenities as a hotline, ombudsman and a tangible measure of management support for the launching of the staff initiative (\$US 200,000). At the same time, it was indisputable that WFP was undergoing a perceptible shift from being a humanitarian organisation to a quasi-US ‘corporation’ with performance rewarded by swifter promotion; it was genuinely intent upon becoming the employer of choice in the United Nations.

22. At the present juncture, the concerns of the association were related to institutionalising policy management from the viewpoint of staff, safeguarding the interests of long-term consultants and national officers and ensuring that changes brought about by the harmonisation of UN policies were not to the detriment of WFP field staff. Minimising the burden on staff was an overriding concern of particular pertinence given the new WFP reassignment policy. Despite the principle of equal opportunity whereby everybody was to serve at some stage in field duty-stations, a headquarters elite whose members had never had to leave Rome had established itself. The upshot was that those without any access to power found themselves being posted to the worst duty stations in the field. Other disconcerting elements were the number of established posts currently occupied by consultants, while the broadbanding and merit pay schemes were deficient for want of a sophisticated performance assessment system.

23. The WFP Professional Staff Association shared issues in common with FICSA such as insufficient education grants and inadequate pensions. At the local level, it was working closely with FAO-APS and FAO-FSA; it would also strive to establish a similar working relationship with FAO/WFP- UGSS.

24. In the first round of comments in the ensuing discussion, a number of statements were made. It was pointed out that all the issues that had been raised as WFP issues were also FICSA issues. Over and above those issues, a major FICSA concern was the fate of local General Service staff in the field; it was hoped that the WFP Professional Staff Association would ultimately embrace local General Service staff. In fact, one delegation failed to understand the need for an association to segregate its electorate: its union represented staff at all levels, including short-term staff and consultants. It was also reported that the WFP management was intent upon reducing the influence of FAO/WFP-UGSS on the WFP General Service staff, while local General Service staff in the field were not 'captured' by a staff representative body of their choice, but by one of management's choice. Mr. Gray's comments on the shortcomings of the merit pay scheme were welcomed. The scheme had initially been hailed a great step forward. General Service staff had wanted to be included, only to be told that they had been excluded by their union (whereas the culprit had been UNDP). It was thus hoped that the WFP Professional Staff Association and FAO/WFP-UGSS might issue a joint statement on the scheme. Another delegation pointed to the contractual and other problems that the new country offices would cause.

25. In his reply, Mr. Gray reported that he welcomed the comments about the need to safeguard the interests of local General Service staff in the field. Regrettably, the afore-mentioned elite group had never served in the field-determined policy. That notwithstanding, he saw the concerns of General Service staff in the field as being distinct from those of Professionals in the field. Almost as a matter of course, reform always impacted on those most vulnerable. Hardly anybody spoke on behalf of the junior Professionals in the field. To his mind, joint offices and common services in the field could yield efficiencies, even in the case of a small duty station such as Cape Verde. He cautioned against undertaking common and joint activities solely for the sake of doing something joint and common.

26. In the second round, comments focused on the membership of different staff associations/unions. In the case of the World Bank, the staff association represented all 11,000 staff, including those who did not pay their dues. Persons on contractual services such as catering were the sole exceptions. The same held true for the World Bank's 'off-shore facilities' where those working there were staff members as distinct from those persons working for outsourced services. While it was urged that UGSS be recognised as defender of the rights of WFP General Service staff in the field, it was reported that in the absence of their own staff association, WFP field staff were represented by the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Staff Association. The need to ensure effective representation took on especial importance given that the common field office concept was going global and re-profiling was 'in full swing'.

27. The issue was very much a challenge of inclusion, particularly in view of the fact that General Service and Professional staff had more interests in common than was generally assumed. Most disconcerting was the situation facing those contractual staff who enjoyed no recourse to justice, lacked medical and social coverage and were denied any career opportunities. The current proliferation of contract modalities, the frontal attack on the definition of an international civil servant, the rumoured privatisation of the Pension Fund and the adoption of a private sector corporation approach made it all the more important to strive for a common system contract with acquired rights, job security, dignity, respect and the rule of law.

28. In his reply, Mr. Gray described his comment on WFP having adopted a US corporation approach as being more in terms of 'artistic licence'. That notwithstanding, the approach adopted, with its results-based management and business-process review, stood in stark contrast to the European model. Furthermore, if services were in demand, they had to be paid for. If outsourcing

proved to be the cheaper option, those services should be provided by outsiders. Funds were finite; pressure to find innovative solutions was omnipresent.

29. He discounted the rumours about the privatisation of the Pension Fund. The real issues were the definition of staff, agreement on the contractual framework and the protection of staff in the field, including national staff.

30. At a special morning session on the third day, Mr. Jan Mattsson, Deputy Administrator, UNDP, addressed the Council. He opened by commending the Council for its punctuality. He welcomed the opportunity to address issues that were close to his heart. In times of change and with outside pressures prompting change, staff/management relations were put very much to the test. Over the years, UNDP had experienced the highs and lows of the struggle for relevance. Voluntary contributions had plummeted at one juncture from \$US 1.2 billion to \$US 600 million which had necessitated downsizing both at headquarters and in the field, changes in business processes and a re-profiling of staff. Throughout that period, management had benefited from close collaboration with staff and given the more recent upswing in the fortunes of UNDP, staff representatives were involved in the design of new elements in the mode of operation.

31. For example, a toolkit for managing change and improving the way UNDP worked had been designed. It was based on the programme's own experience of change, the advice it gave to governments and best practices derived from the literature. The due process of change management with an emphasis on transparency and accountability was designed to reassure staff. Furthermore, through the mechanism of the annual staff surveys, staff had an opportunity to voice their views on critical aspects of management. Whereas the ratings were high in respect of the programme's attempts to get a firm grip on accountability, misgivings had been expressed about human resources management and recruitment. The surveys had also revealed that despite such facilities as an ombudsman and whistleblower protection, staff still felt uncomfortable about reporting on instances of harassment and other misdemeanours.

32. The problems associated with inordinate workloads and the related stress were being addressed by 'staffing up' offices so that the increased volume of work could be handled effectively. On a related plane, the problems caused by the different types of staff contract called for harmonisation. For his part, Mr. Mattsson was convinced of the merits of broadbanding and performance-related pay. Performance standards had been set for different levels and appropriate learning and certification systems put in place. Standardised operations backed up by appropriate training were being introduced for project management, procurement, selected areas of finance and human resources management. It had become apparent that people on certain jobs had not been selected properly at the outset and failed to meet the required standards: a finding that had been corroborated by a recent consultant study into the programme's response to the tsunami disaster that had revealed a lack of financial skills in the field. A further initiative to strengthen field capabilities had been taken with the new policy being finalised on national officers who played a key role in the programme's activities.

33. In the first round of comments in the ensuing discussion, questions were raised about the lack of security structures for field staff and the reasons for the impassioned support for broadbanding that had proven to be an unmitigated disaster in the World Bank. A third comment related to the growing polarisation between agencies as resident co-ordinators assumed responsibility for other agencies' interests. In the recent classification of duty stations, for example, only 35 per cent of the ICSC questionnaires had been completed by the resident coordinators. It was asked whether UNDP would be undertaking steps to sensitise their resident representatives to their role as resident coordinators.

34. In his reply, Mr. Mattsson assured Council that security was not a mere afterthought. UNDP absorbed a large portion of the costs associated with security measures which were closely linked to those of UNDSS. Compliance with MOSS directives had led to a dramatic increase in the programme's traditional security investment. UNDSS would undoubtedly gain in strength, whereafter UNDP could reduce its direct security budget. Security was uppermost in people's minds as evidenced by the strict security measures at the recent meeting of resident coordinators and designated officials in The Hague. Broadbanding had been introduced to overcome the problems associated with promotion and reward systems. It was predicated on a strong performance assessment system. Management was aware of mixed experience elsewhere. However, as far as the pilot scheme in Copenhagen was concerned, a recent staff meeting had claimed that it was not being introduced swiftly enough.

35. Mr. Mattsson conceded that the low questionnaire return rate pointed to a problem. However, it had to be appreciated that the resident coordinators were burdened in terms of both coordinative and programmatic tasks. Moves were being made to free up the resident coordinators by appointing country directors who would take on specific UNDP duties. Furthermore, the much more interactive and inclusive performance assessment process would involve all agencies in the assessment of the resident coordinators.

36. In the second round of comments, a question was raised about the conflict between the trend towards decentralising decision-making, procurement and personnel and the pressure to harmonise. A second question addressed the issue of preserving the spirit and integrity of the international civil service despite the inroads being made by the new flexible contractual framework and recruitment policies. A further disruptive factor was the pressure for change from without. In one organisation this had led to an intolerable tenure policy and had proven devastating to staff morale and loyalty. Those and other difficulties were compounded by the tendency to consult staff only after the critical decisions had been taken. Interest was expressed in obtaining copies of the toolkit for managing change and the annual global staff surveys.

37. In his reply, Mr. Mattsson drew attention to the availability of both the toolkit and staff survey format on the Intranet. The latter provided revealing data on the performance of resident coordinators. He also remarked that in certain schools of management thought, all good change came from outside. He was fully committed to preserving the integrity of the international civil service, retaining its uniqueness despite all changes. That notwithstanding, he would plead for more rotation across agencies and provisions for spouse employment. The move towards simplification, harmonisation and decentralisation had been spearheaded by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to counter the difficulties that different agency reporting and other requirements caused the developing countries and national planning offices. He conceded, however, that decentralisation had been introduced without the requisite IT support, business process systems, manuals and training. UNDP had been endeavouring to catch up ever since.

38. In the third round, one question was raised on the assistance that UNDP would provide staff affected by the closure of offices following the decision to relocate UNOPS to Copenhagen and the need to involve staff representatives in the decision-making process, particularly in view of the short notice given to staff. A second question focused on the vulnerability and security of staff in isolated field stations who were witness to inconsistency of treatment, abuse of the code of conduct and other violations. It was asked whether the toolkit contained a definition of an international civil servant and the rights that staff enjoyed in terms of freedom of association, comment and due process. It was not enough to have a good system in place, if it was not fairly and optimally implemented. The issue

of bowing to outside pressure was re-visited as it invariably meant that for want of tenure staff were on a perennial job search. Senior management, it was felt, should stand up to Member States on the issue.

39. In his reply, Mr. Mattsson said that the first question was best addressed to UNOPS management. UNDP had a special responsibility towards its staff and openings were being looked for. He was aware of the traumatising effects that such moves had. None the less, statistically speaking the outlook was not so bad. He was equally aware of the contradictions at the country office level with the debilitating effects of isolation and vulnerability. By and large the policies in place were in order; the challenge lay in ensuring their proper implementation: no mean task. UNDP had started initiating training for human resources officers in the field; for many of them, the first time they had ever left their countries. At the same time, staff had access to information and websites; they could make their views known in surveys and draw on such amenities as the 'whistleblower' hotline and ombudsman. He was at a loss to provide advice on the impact of external pressure; it was very much an issue of balance. It only served to point up the need for UNDP to address its own contracts issue and the problems associated with retaining staff despite the unpredictability of funding.

40. At the same session, Mr. Eugeniusz Wyzner, Vice-Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), also addressed the Council. In his statement, which is attached *in extenso* (Annex 16), Mr. Wyzner provided an overview of the Commission's work in what was a very important and exciting time for the organisations of the United Nations common system as they continued to undergo an era of change. For its part and as mandated by the General Assembly, the Commission would continue to work hand in hand with all common system organisations and staff associations/unions in order to ensure the application of common personnel standards, methods and arrangements.

41. In his overview, Mr. Wyzner touched on the review of pay and benefits system and the pilot study on broadbanding and pay for performance. He went on to describe the reform of the general service and related categories and the total compensation comparisons under the Noblemaire principle to determine the highest paid civil service. Within the context of the latter study, it had been decided to collect information on the remuneration levels of the World Bank and the OECD as a reference check. He also reported that at the recently concluded session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ), in which the FICSA delegation had actively and constructively participated, consensus had been reached on all issues, including recommendations to the ICSC on the methodologies for surveys both at headquarters and field duty stations and, significantly, on post adjustment indexes in the eight headquarters duty stations. He also described the current status of the two General Service salary surveys in Rome and New York.

42. In the ensuing discussion, questions were raised in an initial round on: the impact of the ICSC contractual arrangement framework on the future of the international civil service; the continued failure to pay hazard pay to UNRWA area staff in Gaza and the West Bank; the perceived propensity of ICSC decisions to anticipate the political will of the Fifth Committee, rather than being based solely on technical considerations; the conduct of General Service salary surveys; possible shifts in the working methods of the Commission; and the process by which candidates were proposed for election to the Commission. In a second round, the questions focused on: the merits of broadbanding; compensation issues, more particularly the operational arrangements related to General Service salary surveys and the joint Working Group on General Service job classification standards; and compliance with the rule of law and the decisions of the Commission.

43. At a special morning session on the fourth day, Ms. Louise Fréchette, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations, briefed the Council on human resources management reform in the United Nations. The current reform process, which was focused exclusively on the UN Secretariat, pursued three main goals:

- An adjustment of regulations, rules and systems required to support an increasingly field-oriented Secretariat;
- A need to ensure that the Secretary-General had the management tools he needed to run the organisation efficiently and effectively; and
- An alignment with best practices in matters of accountability and transparency.

44. The need for the reform stemmed from the fact that the number of staff in the field outstripped the number of staff at headquarters. Peacekeeping missions, for example, had surged from a total complement of 25,000 in 1997 to a present level of 83,000. The volume of procurement and business activities had followed suit, as had the level of voluntary contributions.

45. In the earlier days of the United Nations, emphasis had been placed on the technical, linguistic or other forms of expertise. Management skills had received less attention. Robust management capacity was currently at a premium as recent serious problems with the changes in business processes had revealed major shortcomings. Issues relating to ethics and the code of conduct had come to the fore, emphasising the need for heightened transparency and accountability that extended even beyond the period of UN service ('cooling-off periods').

46. The reform of human resources management was also in response to the emergence of two distinct workforces within the Secretariat: (a) one group at headquarters working within a static and rigid system with mobility on a voluntary basis; and (b) another group working in the field on one-year contracts with but a tenuous link to the Secretariat core. The current system was both highly dysfunctional and complex, with a plethora of contracts and different ways of treating individual staff members.

47. Against this backdrop, the reform objectives were to preserve and strengthen the international civil service and integrate the management of headquarters and field staff into a coherent system. Key elements were:

- Reviewing the existing contracts regime with a view to simplifying the system and reducing the number of contracts;
- Adjusting the recruitment and placement system in favour of a more proactive approach and accelerated procedures;
- Moving towards a fully rotational system for a majority of Professional staff at headquarters and in the field; and
- Harmonising rules and benefits across the UN family.

48. The above would be paralleled by a simplification of current UN regulations, rules and policies. The present rigid procedures and processes were a combination of General Assembly procedures that had accumulated over time and the Secretariat's imposition of its own rules and regulations. In addition to the simplification of administrative processes, optimised training would be introduced for those at the managerial level, together with a set of measures to improve the selection, development and performance monitoring of senior management.

49. Other measures would include improving access to UN information, in particular rethinking the conditions governing the release of internal documents, as well as upgrading and modernising existing information technology infrastructure.

50. Within the context of the reform process, consideration would also be given to outsourcing or relocating activities to more cost-effective sites. Such a step, however, would only be undertaken subsequent to the conduct of a cost-benefit analysis. In any event, the transition would be orderly and carried out in consultation with staff.

51. A further proposal related to the design of a buy-out programme to: (a) facilitate the implementation of the reform package; (b) support the constant rejuvenation of the workforce; and (c) provide an effective response to the change in skill requirements. As a human resources management tool extending over the long term, it would help the organisation adjust to realities.

52. In the ensuing discussion a cautionary note was struck as budgets, it was suggested, did not seem to be expanding at the same rate as growth in peacekeeping and administrative services. The first round of questions touched on the 'ownership' of jobs, rotation and mobility within the common system and the treatment accorded to staff from other agencies in the common system applying for vacancies (i.e. that they were treated as external candidates). The example of the World Bank relocation policy known as 357 was cited: three years in position, after five years actively looking to relocate and in the seventh year relocation.

53. In her reply, Ms. Fréchette pointed out that one could not always correlate the size of a workforce to the budget. The solution lay in achieving synergies. On the issue of mobility, strategic reassignments should leave as much space as possible for individual choice while respecting the needs of the employer. Proactive recruitment should aim at ensuring the diversity and skills required. However, if either scheme were to succeed, firm commitment from the very top of the organisation was needed. Senior management commitment to gender equity was a case in point. The organisation needed to grow from within. That entailed, as she had already mentioned, simplifying rules and lifting restrictions on mobility, thus making it easier to offer attractive opportunities to staff from other agencies.

54. Concern was expressed over the differences between staff in the field and those at headquarters. The proliferation of short-term posts with reduced benefits called for a firm statement on the issue of protecting field staff, who did not always have a powerful staff association/union to back them up. Ms. Fréchette pointed to the complications arising from the unpredictability of voluntary contributions; however, it was essential that the notion of a core international civil service as enshrined in the UN Charter not be discarded.

55. Whereas the plans to increase outsourcing and its possible impingement on the concept of the international service and the principle of mobility were worrisome, the commitment to consultations with staff was reassuring. Moreover, Ms. Fréchette assured the meeting that were outsourcing to come into effect, the Secretariat would never contract out to companies that failed to observe labour standards. The Secretariat was already relocating, cf. UNOPS, and the money being saved was going straight back into the development programme: to the benefit of the poor.

56. Outsourcing was felt to ignore the skills available in the common system; the need for it could be offset by providing more training in the appropriate skills. It was also suggested that increasing mobility might impinge negatively on young women in the organisation who had already had to strike a balance between their work- and family-related roles, while insecurity might be seen by some as a good engine for performance. Ms. Fréchette replied that for the United Nations, the world

was the skills pool. She saw nothing wrong with relocating. No organisation was bound to one location for the delivery of services. The training budget in the United Nations was small compared to the public sector in Member States or in major corporations. Undoubtedly, more training was needed. On no account, however, should relocation be seen as analogous to privatisation. For all the fears being expressed about the UN Secretariat adopting business practices common to major corporations, the overriding aim of the reform process was to strengthen the core activities of the Secretariat. As a corollary, there would be a number of core posts in the field and at headquarters around which mobility could be planned and long-term resource requirements determined. Furthermore, mobility offered General Service staff greater opportunities to move upwards; furthermore, the problems associated with mobility were common to all foreign services.

57. In response to reservations being expressed about the harmonisation of benefits possibly leading to deterioration of the latter, Ms. Fréchette assured the Council that harmonisation would be in an upward direction. She also assured the Council that mobility was not used to compound the problem of poor management. The stigma of punishment or banishment did not attach to rotation and relocation. For instances of poor managerial performance or misconduct, the United Nations disposed of other forms of severe sanction.

58. The reform proposals aspired to put the Secretariat's house in order. It would look to other programmes and organisations for benchmarks; however, it would be a long process.

Credentials (Agenda item 2)

59. Ms. Vivien Joy Ponniah, General Secretary of FICSA, announced those delegations, whose credentials had been received, as well as those sending proxies and guest organisations in attendance. A definitive list of credentials, proxies and guests was read out in plenary.

60. Pursuant to Article 40 of the FICSA Statutes, the voting rights of the Staff Associations of WHO/SEARO and SCBD were suspended for the current session and would remain so as long as a sum totalling more than one year's contribution remained outstanding.

Election of the Chair, Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur (Agenda item 3)

61. Ms. Danièle Vallin (UNESCO) was elected Chair of the Council. Mr. Svend Booth (FAO/WFP-UGSS) and Mr. Varghese Joseph (ITU) were elected First and Second Vice-Chair, respectively. Mr. Richard Kerby (UN) and Ms. Carol Crichlow (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS) were elected Polling Officers. Mr. Peter Lillie (FAFICS) was nominated Rapporteur.

Adoption of the agenda (Agenda item 4)

62. The provisional agenda as contained in document FICSA/C/59/1 was adopted without change (Annex 1).

Organization of the Council's work (Agenda item 5)

63. Council agreed to the schedule of work as contained in document FICSA/C/59/INFO/CRP.2.

Constitutional matters (Agenda item 6)

64. In taking up the item, Council had before it document FICSA/C/59/4 containing the Statutes of the Federation, the Rules of Procedure of the Council and the Financial Rules as revised on 8

February 2005 following their approval by postal vote on 10 November 2004. Council also decided to refer the paper on the Federation's dues and voting rights as contained in document FICSA/C/59/CRP.5 to the Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

65. Pursuant to Rule 38 of the Rules of Procedure which stated that 'Nominations for election to the Executive Committee...should **normally** be submitted to the General Secretary not less than 20 days...before the opening of the Council session' [emphasis added], the IAEA Staff Association sought an interpretation of the term 'normally' which, it felt, had been used with the express intent of affording FICSA the flexibility it required to accommodate situations that did not fall within customary procedural parameters. In the light of the abnormal workload devolving upon the IAEA Staff Association in the wake of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize and given the late receipt of the nomination forms on 19 December 2005 immediately prior to the effective shutdown of operations over the festive season, the IAEA Staff Association requested that its belated nomination of a candidate for one of the Regional Representative posts be accepted. The IAEA Staff Association further requested that the nominations of any other delegations in a similar position also be accepted.

66. The Regional Representatives were seen to play a key role in the activities of the Federation. Sympathy was expressed for the abnormality of the situation confronting the IAEA Staff Association and its application was found deserving of support. A motion to that effect was proposed, seconded and approved. No other delegation submitted a similar request.

67. The CERN Staff Association sought limited voting rights pursuant to Rule 11 of the Rules of the Procedure of the Council. In keeping with the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Council concurred, except for an objection from the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Staff Association, with the request granted the Association limited voting rights for the duration of the session and for any postal votes held before the next Council session.

Questions relating to membership status in FICSA (changes in membership) (Agenda item 7)

68. The General Secretary informed Council of developments relating to the status of membership. She was pleased to report that the Federation had been able to welcome four new members:

- Staff Association of the International Treaty on the Law of the Sea (full member)
- Staff Association of the International Olive Oil Council (associate member)

She further reported that special status had been extended a further year in the case of two members:

- Staff Association of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
- Staff Association of the United Nations Logistics Base.

69. On the final day of the session, Council adopted by acclamation the Executive Committee's recommendation that the UNAIDS Staff Association be granted membership with special status.

70. The President drew Council's attention to one particular membership-related issue that had come up in the course of the past year: the settlement of the dues outstanding from the UNIDO Staff Union. Over the year, FICSA had discussed matters with the UNIDO Staff Union with the aim of overcoming the impasse following that staff union's failure to pay the arrears which had accrued over an extended period. It seemed probable that a settlement could be reached whereby half of the dues outstanding would be paid; an agreement to that effect was being worked on. Since Council had not seen anything in writing, it was felt that at the current stage it could only set the parameters within which an agreement might be reached. However, given the budgetary implications, it was

agreed that the matter should first be taken up in the Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

71. An explanation was also given for the withdrawal of Field Staff Association of the FAO from the Federation. The decision was not the outcome of that Association's dissatisfaction with FICSA. On the contrary, it had enjoyed a very fruitful relationship with the Federation. However, the Professional staff attached to the World Food Programme, who made up more than half of the Association's membership, had decided to set up their own association with effect from 1 January 2006. The field staff remaining with FAO would thus be merging with FAO/WFP-APS and would constitute part of that Association's delegation to the next Council.

72. UNRWA explained the complex situation that its various associations faced. At the time it was located in Vienna, UNRWA staff had been part and parcel of one entity and reflected as such in the CEB figures used to determine the scale of contributions. On moving to the field, however, those statistics no longer held true. Furthermore, several of the agency's sub-organisations had since joined FICSA as discrete entities, viz. UNRWA/ISA, UNRWA/ASA and UNRWA/ASU-West Bank. Others, however, that were included under the umbrella of UNRWA/ASA had not: for example, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Gaza. The net outcome was a skewed set of statistics that would have to be studied in the Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

Report of the Executive Committee for 2005-2006 (Agenda item 8)

73. The President introduced the Report of the Executive Committee for 2005/2006 (document FICSA/C/59/3/Rev.1). In the course of his introduction (contained in document FICSA/59/3/Add.1), he stressed that the past year had been very positive for the Federation and its members. FICSA had received the René Maheu International Civil Service Award and the staff of IAEA had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He paid tribute to the active and cooperative spirit that had prevailed in the Executive Committee and commended the Geneva and New York offices for the unflagging support that they had provided throughout the year. More had indeed been produced with less.

74. Thanks to its aggressive and constructive contributions to the debate, the Federation had asserted itself in the sessions of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). It had also participated in numerous other bodies such as the Human Resources Network (HR Network), High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM), ACPAQ, Chief Executives Board (CEB) and the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN), as well as numerous working groups. The training that FICSA had provided on General Service salary survey methodology at HQ and non-HQ duty stations had proved very popular and financially rewarding. It boded well for a similar initiative being mooted in respect of training in staff representation, such as the support recently given to the newly-elected staff representatives in ITU. However, if training in that and other essential fields was to be effective, FICSA would require more trainers.

75. The Federation had also come up against the negative aspects of reform and short-termism that Mr. Larry Brown had highlighted in his keynote address. Numerous organisations were under threat and FICSA had been called upon to intervene. One example was the Federation's successful mediation in a dispute between the UNRWA staff and their administration that had culminated in a 42-day strike. Another pervasive trend was the erosion of the administration of justice. Although targeted at the United Nations Administrative Tribunal, the recently created 'redesign panel' on the administration of justice would undoubtedly have an impact on the UN judicial system as a whole.

76. With CCISUA representing the interests of the UN Secretariat staff and those of a few non-UN Secretariat staff and FICSA representing those of the UN agencies and funds, a number of former

FICSA members still remained outside the fold despite FICSA having gone a long way towards resolving the primary reasons for their departure: delinquency in the payment of dues and general discord within the membership. For all that, the President spoke of a 'crescendo' of interest in joining FICSA among a number of smaller non-UN system organisations. The composition of membership within the UN itself was becoming increasingly complex: a development that might well call for a revision of the criteria for joining the Federation. That inevitably raised the dual issue of membership status and the calculation of dues, with a ripple effect in terms of reviewing and revising the Statutes.

77. Member associations/unions were receiving only limited support from their employers. He recalled that support was not merely limited to the provision of physical facilities and release time. More importantly, it also encompassed the provision of an enabling environment for responsible and effective staff representation. Together with the CEB, FICSA had initiated a dialogue with various administrations on staff/management relations. A questionnaire would be circulated to staff associations/unions and administrations alike to establish the extent to which support was given to staff representation. He encouraged all member associations/unions to respond as their responses would be key to the dialogue being continued.

78. A number of delegations expressed their thanks to: (a) the Executive Committee for the comprehensive report; (b) the secretariat for their work throughout the year and their readiness to provide key documents in electronic form; and (c) the staff in the New York Liaison Office for their efforts. It was suggested that future Executive Committee reports should focus on outputs, outcomes and results with clearly set priorities.

79. The Federation was thanked for its prompt response to the plea for assistance in the case of both the WHO/HQ Staff Association and the three FAO/WFP staff associations and union. The latter Association also thanked the numerous member associations/unions for the messages of support that had palpably strengthened their resolve.

80. The ensuing discussion focused on the issues raised in the executive summary of the report before Council, the first of which related to staff's rights of representation. It was pointed out that in a UN setting, reform ineluctably took place at three distinct levels: local (internal management); local (external parties); and common system. It was essential to establish the degree to which those three levels dovetailed and an effective consultative process had been provided for. In that context, any recognition agreement reached with the administration of an organisation should make the duties and responsibilities of **both** parties patently clear, as well as determine the facilities and release to be provided. It was cautioned that the creation of an enabling environment that the FICSA President had mentioned depended very much on management attitudes towards staff: a very guarded approach was called for. In the absence of clearly recognised rights of representation, staff members were increasingly reluctant to serve as staff representatives.

81. FICSA had to be fully involved in the process of change: some of the changes were far-sweeping as evidenced by the relocation of UNOPS to Copenhagen, the regionalisation and decentralisation of UNDP and the decentralisation of UNFPA. Support for broadbanding was not on the wane as some hoped. Formal visits to the Secretary-General and executive heads should be more assertive in their advocacy of staff concerns. Opportunities for building a common front with CCISUA should be seized in an attempt to effect change in the interests of staff. Member associations/unions should become more cohesive and strive for more than mere semblance of unity. With moves being made to introduce new contracts policies on the organizational level and the recommendation by the ICSC to harmonise the plethora of different contracts under the contractual arrangement framework, it was more important than ever to ensure that the Federation's voice was

clearly heard in all the relevant fora. It should also be recognised that if the initiation of a staff/management dialogue was to be effective, it should go beyond the completion of a questionnaire and be focused much more on updating the directives contained in ST/AI/293 pertaining to facilities offered to staff associations and unions that dated back to 1982.

82. The foregoing discussion pointed up the need to reactivate the FICSA Standing Committee on Staff/Management Relations, although it was recalled that re-establishment of the Standing Committee might well stretch the resources of smaller delegations beyond all measure.

83. The Council approved the re-establishment of the Standing Committee on Staff/Management Relations with effect from the sixtieth session of the Council.

84. A second issue of particular concern to staff associations/unions was the shortcomings in the administration of justice in the common system. The Secretary-General had announced a Redesign Panel. Unfortunately, none of the experts recommended by the UN Staff Union and Unions of the Funds and Programmes were included. Thus the UN Staff Union constituted an ad hoc expert group. FICSA was encouraged to follow this matter closely.

85. A third issue of concern related to the contacts that FICSA had established with the Geneva Group. If it was accepted that FICSA could engage with the Geneva Group, individual associations should be able to do the same at the level of their own organisations. Furthermore, since the Geneva Group involved itself in the activities of different organisations, the member associations/unions could provide input to FICSA for their contacts with the Group.

86. In that context, it was recalled that a number of associations/unions did not enjoy the right to address their legislative bodies. Every attempt should be made to rectify that shortcoming.

87. The continued failure to pay hazard pay to UNRWA area staff in Gaza and the West Bank was considered intolerable. It was suggested that a formal legal appeal be lodged as the situation brooked no further delay. Moreover, the view was expressed that the UN Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet's claim that the UN Secretary-General had no jurisdiction over staff conditions in UNRWA was unfounded.

88. Support was expressed for concluding a new memorandum of understanding with CCISUA. It would be necessary to clarify such details as the sharing of costs and document preparation.

89. Council approved the Federation's continued participation in the meetings of the Conference of Staff Associations of International Organisations (CSAIO) as they offered a useful opportunity for the effective exchange of information on staff-related matters.

90. Council also recognised the benefits to be gained from a continuous review of the Federation's Statutes. In the current context, they should be studied in the light of ensuring the rights of field staff who deserved the fullest support. In that context, it was suggested that the Federation might wish to re-appraise the role of its regional representatives.

91. Council expressed its general agreement with the Executive Committee report and formally approved the same.

Election of the Executive Committee and subsidiary organs for 2006-2007 (Agenda item 9)

92. On the second day of the Council, the General Secretary announced the current status of the nominations received in respect of the election of the Executive Committee and the Regional Representatives. At that juncture, no nominations had been received for the post of Treasurer. The General Secretary also took the opportunity to inform Council that she would be retiring in the latter part of the year (31 October 2006); she outlined alternative ways of dealing with that situation. They were: (a) to request UNFPA to extend the General Secretary's NTE date to 28 February 2007; (b) to resign as General Secretary at the close of the 59th Council; and (c) to continue as the General Secretary until 31 October, at which time the Executive Committee will decide on the best course of action. Council did not indicate which of the three alternatives it would wish to support.

93. In a special plenary session called the evening prior to the elections in order to hear out the candidates, those standing for election outlined what they saw to be the priorities for the coming year.

94. At the session devoted to elections, the General Secretary read Articles 28-36 of the Statutes and Rules 35-44 of the Rules of Procedure to remind Council of the intricacies of the election process. In response to a query, it was also agreed to accept the proxy of the WHO/EMRO Staff Association despite its having arrived late. It was explained that the original designation of proxy had arrived at the FICSA Geneva office before the deadline but that the Staff Association designated was already in possession of a proxy. By the time the WHO/EMRO Staff Association was able to identify a replacement, the deadline had passed.

95. The Chair informed Council that the nominations she had received for election to the Executive Committee for the period 2006/2007 were contained in documents FICSA/C/59/INFO/4/Rev.1 and Add.1:

Position	Name	Organization
President	Mr. Diab El-Tabari Mr. Robert Weisell	UNRWA/ASA (Beirut) FAO-APS (Rome)
Treasurer	(See para. 99 below)	
First and second of two Members for Compensation Issues	Ms. Maria Dweggah Ms. Christiane Nollet Mr. Mauro Pace	WHO/HQ (Geneva) UNESCO STU (Paris) FAO/WFP-UGSS (Rome)
Member for Regional and Field Issues	Ms. Maria Dweggah	WHO/HQ (Geneva)
Member without Portfolio	Mr. Varghese Joseph Ms. Valérie Seguin	ITU (Geneva) IMO (London)

96. The first post up for election was that of President. Two candidates were standing: Mr. Diab El-Tabari (UNRWA/ASA (Beirut)) and Mr. Robert Weisell (FAO-APS). After two indecisive rounds, a tie-breaker was deemed to exist pursuant to Rule 43 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council. At the request of one delegation, the vote was postponed at that juncture and further nominations were asked for pursuant to Rule 42. One new nomination was put forward, Mr. Dean Neal (IAEA), whereupon Mr. Diab El-Tabari stepped down. In a third round, Mr. Robert Weisell was elected President.

97. The second post up for election was that of Treasurer. No nominations had been received for the post. The Council decided unanimously to suspend Rule 38 and take nominations from the floor. Ms. Manijeh Torabi (IAEA) was nominated by her delegation. She was elected by acclamation.

98. Three candidates stood for the posts of First and Second Member for Compensation Issues: Ms. Maria Dweggah (WHO/HQ), Ms. Christine Nollet (UNESCO STU) and Mr. Mauro Pace (FAO/WFP-UGSS). Mr. Mauro Pace was elected in the first round, whereafter Ms. Maria Dweggah stepped down and Ms. Christine Nollet (UNESCO STU) was elected.

99. A single nomination had been received for the post of Member for Regional and Field Issues. Maria Dweggah was elected unanimously to the post.

100. Two candidates stood for the post of Member without Portfolio: Mr. Varghese Joseph (ITU) and Ms. Valérie Seguin (IMO). Mr. Varghese Joseph was elected to that post.

President	Robert C. Weisell (FAO-APS)
Treasurer	Manijeh Torabi (IAEA)
First of two members for Compensation Issues	Mauro Pace (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
Second of two members for Compensation Issues	Christiane Nollet (UNESCO)
Member for Regional and Field Issues	Maria Dweggah (WHO/HQ Geneva)
Member without Portfolio	Varghese Joseph (ITU)

101. The regional representatives elected were:

Regional Representative for Africa	Paul Matsiona (WHO/AFRO Brazzaville)
Regional Representative for Asia	Fredrik W. Schultz (UNRWA/ISA)
<i>(Nomination received from the floor at the time of the election for this position.)</i>	
Regional Representative for Europe	Janet Boulmer (UNESCO STU)
Regional Representative for the Americas	Audrey Hyatt (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS)

102. Given the difficulties that had arisen in connection with the calculation of the votes cast and the altercations that arose in connection therewith, Mr. Richard Kerby, the Polling Officer, announced that as per the FICSA Statutes the FICSA voting software should use all of the FICSA members regardless of status in its calculation (see Article 21 (a)(i)). It had not been clear at the outset that the number to be used in the calculation was the total number of member organisations (27) and not just the number of members with voting rights present at the current Council (24). The vote for the post of President was then recalculated using the correct values; it resulted in no change in the outcome.

Election of the Standing Committee officers for 2006-2007 (Agenda item 10)

103. Council elected the following Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Standing Committees for 2006-2007:

Legal questions

Chair: Maria Traficanti (UNRWA/ISA)
Vice-Chairs: Joel Lahaye (CERN)
Michael Donoho (IAEA)

Human resources management

Chair: Valérie Seguin (IMO)
Vice-Chair: Maite Comas-Barnes (ITU)
Core group: Lisa Villard (IAEA)
Imed Zabaar (IAEA)
Tint Kyu (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS)
Johanne Lortie (ILO/ITC Turin)
Marilyn Rice (PAHO/WHO Washington)
Rhéal Leblanc (UPU)

Social security/occupational health and safety

Chair: Svend Booth (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
Vice-Chairs: Jacques Sanou (ITU)
Jean-François Santarelli (ILO Former Officials Section)

Conditions of service in the field

Chair: Ann Wishart (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS)
Vice-Chairs: Steven Ackumey-Affizie (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
Aye Win (FUNSA Myanmar)
Core group: Margaret Eldon (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
Simone Tetz (WHO/EURO Copenhagen)
Gustavo Casas (FAPNUU Uruguay)

General Service questions

Chair: Edmond Mobio (WHO/HQ Geneva)
Vice-Chairs: Azucena Pernia (UNWTO)
Ingrid Lopez (IMO)

Professional salaries and allowances

Chair: Kristin Kolshus (FAO-APS)
Vice-Chair: Kees de Joncheere (WHO/EURO Copenhagen)

Staff/management relations

Chair: Valérie Seguin (IMO)
Vice-Chairs: Janice Albert (FAO-APS)
Maria Dweggah (WHO/HQ Geneva)
Core group: Maite Comas-Barnes (ITU)
Imed Zabaar (IAEA)

104. In answer to a query, it was deemed statutorily possible to have one person chairing two Standing Committees.

Standing Committee on Legal Questions (Agenda item 11)

105. The report of the Standing Committee (Annex 3) was introduced by the Chair who expressed his thanks to the rapporteur, Ms. Leslie Ewart, FICSA Information Officer for having taken on the duties of rapporteur. In its discussion under the first agenda item, the Committee had decided against studying the application of US labour laws to the legal framework of the United Nations, but to focus on inserting into that framework those elements or legal instruments that were not part of it, viz. ILO Conventions. A law firm should be entrusted with the task on a *pro bono* basis.

106. In the ensuing discussion, Council agreed that in identifying those elements and instruments currently unused, the broader concept of the international civil service (as distinct from the narrower concept of a UN legal framework) be used and a law firm be approached on the issue. The UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS delegation reported that overtures had already been made to a law firm that was considering the feasibility of working on a *pro bono* basis.

107. Council noted the positive experience that both the ITU and OPCW Staff Associations had had with CAP insurance under the umbrella arrangement with FICSA.

108. The Standing Committee, it was reported, had arrived at a definition of the term ‘United Nations family’ which, if adopted, would mean that OPCW and IOM met the criteria for associate membership. Council felt it was counterproductive to question the status of a current member: an administrative issuance or rule could not be applied retroactively. Each case had to be examined on its merits.

109. Discussion also broke out over the distinction made between agencies with differing degrees of autonomy. It did not seem useful to exclude the World Bank Group and the IMF from the ‘family’ as had been proposed by the Standing Committee on Legal Questions.

110. Council approved the recommended definition, but added the following rider:

‘On the understanding that no retroactive changes to membership status could be entertained, the Council decided that:

- (i) having discussed the implications of the above with OPCW, OPCW should be given associate status with immediate effect; and**
- (ii) other implications would be examined as and when required by the corresponding member.’**

111. Council further decided that paragraph 12 of the Standing Committee report should be replaced in its entirety to read:

‘OPCW thus became an associate member while the status of IOM was not affected.’

112. In respect of the margin appeal, Council noted that there was no obligation to draw down from the Legal Defence Fund. A collective approach was probably the most effective route to take and member associations/unions would be appropriately advised when and if action was needed. The recommendation on the margin appeal was adopted with a slight modification.

113. In discussing the reform of justice, the Committee had, inter alia, urged: the inclusion of references to the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work when submitting appeals to the ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT); the pursuance of *stare decisis* be dropped, given that ILO judgements in favour of administration far outnumbered those in favour of staff; and the establishment of a group to work on the issue of *locus standi*. The pertinent recommendations were adopted with some modifications.

114. The Standing Committee had also urged that disclosure of evidence be made a right of parties. It was reported in Council that previous attempts to do so had been rejected.

115. The Standing Committee had further recommended on the basis of an earlier successful meeting that a meeting of experts in the administration of justice be held. The Chair reported that no funding would be required as participation would involve payment of a fee. It was agreed that the Executive Committee be tasked with its preparation.

116. Council supported the recommendation that FICSA write to the newly-appointed ILO Legal Adviser to request a meeting of all parties concerned. It approved the continuation of the annual informal discussions with the ILOAT which had proved most constructive and the suggestion that such discussions also be held with UN Administrative Tribunal (UNAT).

117. Council approved the proposed resolution on the harmonisation of the two Tribunals (see Resolution 59/1 in Annex 2).

118. It concurred with the recommendation that the resolution and other points be submitted to the Redesign Panel before the end of March. At a later stage in the deliberations of the Standing Committee, it was recommended that the resolution also be submitted to the group responsible for reviewing the Staff Rules and Regulations.

119. Council focused on UNAT Judgement No. 1275 relating to the abdication of duty in UNDP that had led to a staff member losing his job solely on the basis of nationality. In that particular case, UNDP had also failed to observe the principle of staff consultation. It was agreed that FICSA in cooperation with the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Staff Association would draft a letter to the UNDP Administrator enquiring about the steps that had been taken in respect of the officials responsible and the avoidance of similar occurrences in the future.

120. During the discussion in the Standing Committee the representative of UNLB-LSU Brindisi had described the problems his Staff Association had experienced with the Department of Peace-Keeping Operations (DPKO). The DPKO management claimed that the Staff Association could not join FICSA by virtue of the UN Funds and Programmes being represented by CCISUA. Maître Sicault had been approached on the issue and had opined that such action would seem to constitute a major infringement of staff's right to freedom of association. That preliminary legal opinion was fully shared by Council. The issue would require further study and the Executive Committee was urged to monitor developments closely.

121. The Standing Committee had also recommended the commissioning of a study on staff association/union rights. Certain delegations in Council urged a gradualist approach, pointing out that prior to undertaking such a study, the Standing Committee should first study the literature on the law of the international civil service that it proposed acquiring, whereafter the feasibility and scope of the undertaking could be better assessed. It was also pointed out that the Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had taken up the funding aspects and had likewise spoken in favour of the gradualist approach. The recommendation on the issue was adopted by the majority of Council members.

122. Council also adopted with a slight modification the recommended change in the procedure for assessing the status of members in terms of their contributions.

123. Council approved the recommendation pertaining to the extension of the Mediation Board and the acquisition of law books and journals.

124. In closing his presentation, the Chair reported that owing to exigencies of work he would no longer be able to chair the Standing Committee. A similar situation existed where the other officers of the Committee were concerned and he saw little benefit in nominating 'core' members. He hoped, however, that prior to the end of the Council, nominees would come forward. (See agenda item 10 for the nominations that were ultimately proposed.)

125. Taking into account the modifications and amendments agreed upon during its discussion of the report, Council adopted the report of the Standing Committee and the recommendations therein:

It was decided that:

- **FICSA should try to import into the UN legal framework elements or legal instruments not currently expressly part of the UN legal framework such as the relevant ILO Conventions (e.g. the provision relating to the negotiation of employment conditions). To that end, FICSA should ask a law firm, on a *pro bono* basis, to: (a) identify such legal instruments; (b) identify how to submit a case and where; and (c) prepare a case, should Council so decide.**
- **In interpreting Article 6 of the Federation's Statutes, the term 'United Nations family' was to be understood as covering the same organizations as the closest term used in official publications i.e. 'United Nations system' (see www.un.org/aboutun/unchart.pdf reproduced in Annex V of FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/1) with, however, the following exceptions: (i) the organizations appearing in that chart under the heading 'Related Organizations'; and (ii) the World Bank Group organizations and the IMF. Furthermore, the term 'applying the terms and conditions of service of the United Nations common system' would refer to those organizations that had recognized the jurisdiction of the ICSC. The list of those organizations was provided by the ICSC itself (see icsc.un.org/about4.asp, reproduced as Annex VI in FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/1).**
- **The staff associations or unions representing the staff of an organization listed in one of the above-mentioned lists met the criteria for full membership.**
- **On the understanding that no retroactive changes to membership status could be entertained and (i) having discussed the implications with OPCW, the latter should be given associate status with immediate effect; and (ii) other implications would be examined as and when required by the corresponding member.**

- When the General Assembly took a decision on the margin, the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Legal Questions should decide whether to launch an appeal as soon as possible after that decision had been made, and whether the Legal Defence Fund should be used.
- When launching appeals before the ILOAT, Members and Associates should seize every opportunity to include specific references to the important principles contained in the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and/or the relevant ILO and UN Declarations¹ and Conventions. The Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Legal Questions should be informed without delay of any such attempts by Members or Associates so that support could be offered, as and when needed.
- The principle of *stare decisis* or strict adherence to prior jurisprudence should no longer be pursued as a reform of the ILOAT because judgements ruling in favour of staff were far fewer than those in favour of the administrations and it was no longer in the interests of staff to take that route.
- The Tribunal should be informed (e.g. on the occasion of formal/informal meetings) of those cases where, in the opinion of the appellant and/or in that of staff representatives, more complete motivations and/or explanations would have been useful, especially if and when the Tribunal reversed its jurisprudence, thus encouraging the Tribunal to improve in that area.
- Given the importance of *locus standi* and the fact that concerted efforts by interested associations and unions would be required, an *ad hoc* working group of interested persons both within the Federation and without should be set up to work on the issue. The Federation might also wish to appoint a focal point to lead that effort on its behalf.
- FICSA should promote, as a matter of very high priority, a change in the Statute of the ILOAT to make disclosure of evidence a right of the parties. The Executive Committee should promote such a change in its interactions with the ILO Staff Union, the ILOAT reform movement and other entities that might have an interest in the reform of the administration of justice by the ILOAT.
- In the course of 2006, the Executive Committee should (co-)organize a meeting of experts in the administration of justice in the international civil service.
- FICSA should write to the newly-appointed ILO Legal Adviser to request that a meeting between all parties concerned, including the Tribunal, be organized without delay so as to ensure the resumption of constant dialogue between parties. The Executive Committee should continue to hold yearly informal discussions with the Tribunal.
- The resolution on the harmonisation of the Administrative Tribunals should be submitted to the Redesign Panel and further work should be carried out to identify other points that might need improvement, noting that the deadline for submission of views to the Redesign Panel was 31 March 2006. The Executive Committee should start holding yearly informal discussions with the appropriate UNAT officials, in much the same manner as it currently does with the ILOAT.
- The Executive Committee should raise with urgency and all possible strength, possibly by issuing a public statement, the issues related to UNAT Judgement No. 1275.
- The FICSA President should write to the administration of UNDP to ask: (a) what action (if any) had been/would be taken in respect of the UNDP officials who let a 'clear violation of the United Nations Charter' happen; (b) what action (if any) had been/ would be taken to ensure that no such violations occur ever again; and (c) what had been/would be done to address and correct any other such violations of the UN Charter which might have previously occurred (e.g. in the case of staff members in situations similar to that of Mr. Al-Souki).

¹ For instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- The Executive Committee should monitor closely all developments relating to the representation of the staff at UNLB-LSU Brindisi.
- On the basis of prompt and regular information to be provided by the WHO/HQ Staff Association, the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Legal Questions should closely monitor, and keep the membership informed of, any developments relating to a possible appeal against the WHO Director-General on the latter's threat to terminate the contracts of staff who had participated in the recent work stoppage. If and when a case was launched, all members should file *amicus curiae* briefs.
- The FICSA President should continue to seek a meeting with the WHO Director-General on the issue [of the termination of contracts of staff who had participated in work stoppages in an effort to resolve the problem as soon as possible in an amicable fashion. FICSA should draft a letter to Member States constituting WHO's Governing Body to keep them informed of the situation.
- In the event that member/associate staff associations/unions had prospective cases of general interest and application (to all staff), those cases should be submitted to the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Legal Questions well enough in advance, especially if support from the Legal Defence Fund were to be sought.
- FICSA should commission a study on staff association/union rights, based on the jurisprudence and general principles of law.²
- Rule 14 (bis) be revised by the Council as follows: 'The status of each Member and Associate in respect of payment of their contributions and the possible application of Article 40 of the Statutes shall be compiled on 31 December of the relevant year³ and circulated by the General Secretary to the membership and at least 10 days prior to the opening of the session.'
- The resolution proposed by the Standing Committee should be submitted to the group responsible for reviewing the Staff Rules and Regulation.
- The Mediation Board should be extended for three years.
- The Federation should acquire a copy of *The Law of the International Civil Service*, by C.F. Amerasinghe, 2nd Ed, 2 Vols., Oxford University Press (estimated cost \$US 300), as well as the yearly *Annuaire Français de Droit International* (estimated cost per annum \$US 120) and that the necessary appropriations (annual in the latter case) be granted by Council.

Standing Committee on Human Resources Management (Agenda item 12)

126. The report of the Standing Committee (Annex 4) was introduced by the Vice-Chair. The first issue that the Standing Committee had taken up was paternity leave, the application of which varied in each organisation. The second issue had been contractual reform and the contractual arrangements framework that had given rise to a protracted discussion. It also gave rise to a lengthy debate in Council. Staff were faced with an issue of crucial importance. In one organisation the shift in terminology from 'permanent' to 'continuing' contracts was purely a change in nomenclature. As with permanent contracts, staff became eligible for continuing contracts after six years' service.

127. It was considered unlikely that the same would hold true for other organisations once the general framework had been adopted in the General Assembly. A further complicating factor was that both the ICSC and the UN Secretariat had worked on the same issue simultaneously, with the UN secretariat in fact having presented the GA with its own contractual proposals before the ICSC deliberations had concluded. At present, both the ICSC contractual framework, as well as the UN

² The requisite appropriation was not approved.

³ New text underlined.

secretariat's proposals were under formal consideration by the Fifth Committee. It was thus questionable whether it would be useful or indeed possible to resurrect the issue of the ICSC's contractual framework with the Commission at this stage, also taking into account that both organizations and staff had been an integral part of the process in devising that framework. What was deemed more crucial at this stage was what action and what support FICSA could provide at the local level to ensure the equitable application and implementation of the ICSC's contractual framework at the local organizational level, e.g. to ensure that any revisions to individual organization's staff rules and regulations, particularly in terms of the definition of a continuing contract, did not threaten the sanctity of the permanent contract and the cumulative over 50 years' worth of jurisprudence attached to this type of contract.

128. Under such circumstances, the aim of such action at the local level would be to preserve the features of the current permanent contracts. The Standing Committee's recommendation on the issue was not accepted. A new proposal was advanced, encouraging the Executive Committee to use all means to preserve the current legal content of the various existing types of contracts. To that end, the Executive Committee, together with the Standing Committee, was to elaborate an interpretation of the framework that promoted staff's best interests. Council adopted the reformulated recommendation [14 votes in favour, 2 abstentions].

129. Council also commented at some length on the domestic partnership issue. Some of the definitions in the Committee's report were unspecific. It was agreed that paragraph 16 should read as follows:

‘Given that the United Nations only recognised domestic partnerships, including same-gender partnerships and same-gender marital relationships, in those circumstances where they were recognised by the staff member's country, the 58th Council had decided to set up a task force to look into the matter. Regrettably, the task force had not been very active over the year.’

130. The second sentence of paragraph 18 was deleted and the remaining two sentences were amended to read:

‘The Standing Committee agreed that recognition of domestic partnerships should not be linked to a staff member's nationality. Staff living in such partnerships should also enjoy the same benefit as staff living in traditional marriage relationships.’

131. The recommendation on the issue was adopted by Council with the more specific definition of domestic partnership.

132. Among its priority activities for 2006, the Standing Committee would focus on the assessment of the support lent to staff associations/unions by individual agencies/organisations. The assessment had been the outcome of a FICSA initiative in the CEB. Council agreed that the assessment should cover all aspects of support, not merely the physical amenities. It also concurred with the recommendation that letters be sent to those executive heads who had denied staff representatives official leave to attend the Council. The letters should go solely from the President of the Federation.

133. Council also supported the idea of publicising the findings of the staff associations/unions' own assessment of the state of staff/management relations in the individual organisations. The proposed wall of fame/shame' could be prominently displayed on the FICSA website.

134. Council shared the concerns expressed by the Standing Committee over the issue of outsourcing and discounted the claims that such moves invariably secured cost-savings and made for greater efficiencies. Outsourcing was seen to bear implications for the long-term self-sufficiency of an organization; it might well lead to a drop in standards and undermine the international character of the international civil service.

135. It approved with certain modifications the proposed resolution on outsourcing practices (see Resolution 59/2 in Annex 2).

136. Council discussed at some length the proposal that a letter be sent to the Director-General of WHO et al. condemning the new recruitment policy that discriminated against smokers. Reservations were expressed about approaching all executive heads unless all staff in the respective agencies were known to be in favour of FICSA intervening. Opinion varied on the very legality of the measure since smoking, like drinking, was a known medical condition that should not be used against potential applicants, candidates and staff for the wrong purposes. The introduction of the new policy was diametrically opposed to the principle of first consulting the staff associations/unions on matters that had such a bearing on the staff that they represented. A comparison was drawn to the situation in UNDP and UNAT Judgement No. 1275, where the organisation had likewise failed to observe the principle of prior staff consultation.

137. It was agreed to limit the recipients of the letter to the Directors-General of WHO and ILO, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary of the CEB. The President of FICSA sought assistance in preparing solid arguments to be incorporated in the letter. The recommendation was adopted with the above modifications.

138. Council also adopted an additional recommendation from the floor pertaining to practices and mechanisms in the various organisations. The recommendation read:

Requests FICSA Secretariat to conduct, at the earliest opportunity, a survey of members and associates on practices and mechanisms in regard to:

- (a) Prevention of harassment;**
- (b) Existence (or not) of the office of ombudsman;**
- (c) Existence (or not) of the right of the staff representative body to address its organisation's policy-making organs (governing bodies); and**
- (d) Existence (or not) of the right to counsel.**

Requests further that the results of the survey be circulated to members and associates, and posted on the FICSA website by 1 July 2006.

139. Council also considered and adopted a submission from the representative of the African Development Bank Staff Council (FICSA/C/59/CRP.6), the first part of which read after amendment:

Considering the important role that staff associations/unions play in, among other things, policy formulation and policy dialogue, FICSA recommends to the administrations of the various international organisations that the competences acquired or developed by staff representatives be assessed for the purposes of career development.

140. The second part of the submission read as follows:

FICSA Council deplores the situation of short-term staff who, for the most part, perform regular and budgeted functions, yet are deprived of the benefits that go with such positions. FICSA appeals to the administrations of the various international organisations to ensure that short-term staff members that have served the organisation for at least three years are entitled to the same benefits as regular staff members.

141. Council supported the names put forward for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and core group.

142. Taking into account the modifications and amendments agreed upon during its discussion of the report, Council adopted the report of the Standing Committee and the recommendations therein:

It was decided that:

- **In coordination with the Chair, Vice-Chair and core group of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management, the Executive Committee should prepare a best definition of the basic principles of each contract category in the contractual arrangements framework (ICSC Report for 2005, Annex IV) and present it to the HR Network and the summer session of the ICSC after consultation with FICSA members. The Executive Committee should use all means available to preserve the current legal content of the various types of contract. To that end, the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management should elaborate an interpretation of the framework that promoted staff's best interests and make as wide a use as possible thereof.**
- **The World Bank, which had integrated domestic partnerships, including same-gender partnerships and same-gender marital relationships, fully into its Staff Rules, should be requested to share those guidelines with other members of FICSA by mid-March 2006, as an input to the work of the task force [on issues related to domestic partnerships set up by the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management].**
- **After identifying the staff representatives who had been denied official leave to attend the FICSA Council, the President of the Federation should send a letter before the end of March 2006 to the respective executive heads requesting reinstatement of that annual leave.**
- **FICSA members should send to the FICSA Secretariat reports of their practices and/or procedures on staff/management relations by the end of March 2006.**
- **A survey be prepared for all FICSA members on their ratings of staff/management relations and the results be widely published, taking a "wall of shame/fame" approach to be posted on the FICSA website.**
- **The FICSA Executive Committee should send by the end of February 2006 a letter of condemnation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Directors-General of WHO and ILO and the Secretary of the CEB concerning the non-recruitment of smokers: a discriminatory and hence illegal practice.**
- **FICSA members be requested to send to the FICSA Secretariat by the end of April 2006 details of their practices and procedures in respect of the mechanisms used to collect dues from their members.**
- **The FICSA Secretariat should conduct, at the earliest opportunity, a survey of members and associates on practices and mechanisms in regard to: (a) prevention of harassment; (b) existence (or not) of the office of ombudsman; (c) existence (or not) of the right of the staff representative body to address its organisation's policy-making organs (governing**

bodies); and (d) existence (or not) of the right to counsel. The results of the survey should be circulated to members and associates, and posted on the FICSA website by 1 July 2006.

- FICSA should recommend to the administrations of the various international organisations that the competences acquired or developed by staff representatives be assessed for the purposes of career development.
- FICSA should appeal to the administrations of the various international organisations to ensure that short-term staff members who have served the organisation for at least three years are entitled to the same benefits as regular staff members.

Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety (Agenda item 13)

143. The Standing Committee report was introduced by the Chair of the Committee (Annex 5). He reported on the major items raised by FICSA at the Standing Committee of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (UNJSPB) the previous year. At that meeting, the proposed buy-back scheme (for the purchase of additional years of contributory service) had been considered too expensive; it would be studied further. The review of pensionable remuneration had been put on hold until the outcome of the pilot testing of the pay and benefits review was known. In any event, the Committee urged FICSA to maintain its rejection of any changes to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) along the lines of a defined contribution plan or its possible privatisation. Council supported that plea.

144. The Committee had also urged the Federation to continue supporting the identification of protection measures related to both the pensionable remuneration and the impact of currency fluctuations. Council noted the risks associated with shifting to a local currency denominated pensionable remuneration, in particular for local General Service staff. As the matter would come up for discussion at the next session of the UNJSPB, the Executive Committee should report back to the membership, as well as report back on the issue related to the impact of the dollar devaluation on dollar-denominated pensions in the euro zone. Council agreed to that approach and the Standing Committee's recommendation would be amended accordingly.

145. In addition to its concern over the possible privatisation of an appreciable segment of the Pension Fund's portfolio, the Standing Committee had also expressed concern over the purported lack of ethics in the manner in which some of the Fund's assets were being invested. Council agreed that the Pension Board should be alerted to that concern. The two recommendations proposed by the Standing Committee in that connection were adopted, although the suggestion that the share of externally managed investment be maintained at the lowest level was dropped as being debatable. Those funds often offered a better return.

146. The Council also noted the lack of consensus in the Standing Committee on the issue of Article 35 bis (b)(i) of the UNJSPF Statutes. It shared the concern expressed by the UNWG representative over the Committee's failure to endorse the relevant recommendation adopted by Council at its previous session to the effect that the ten-year period of marriage currently required under Article 35 bis (b)(i) be reduced (cf. paragraph 93 of FICSA/C/58/R.1). Council upheld the decision adopted at its previous session.

147. The IAEA delegation requested that its position on the issue be reproduced in the report of the current Council:

“IAEA maintained its long-held position that based on surveys of staff and discussion at IAEA, the vast majority of staff felt the issue was not in the interest of staff, as most staff members did not wish to have former spouses receiving part of their pension. It was proposed that FICSA work on issues that improved conditions for staff and not for divorced spouses of staff, as proper legal channels in the local duty station should be utilised for determining the rights of divorced spouses.”

148. It was further reported that in light of the lack of consensus on the composition of the Pension Board, a tripartite working group had been set up that would report back to the Board at its 2006 session. The Standing Committee supported the inclusion of representatives of retired UN staff in the membership of the UNJSPB. Council concurred with the recommendation put forward on that issue and noted the statement in the Standing Committee’s report that FICSA enjoyed a good working relationship with the representatives of FAFICS (paragraph 3 of the Standing Committee report).

149. FAFICS had submitted a paper on long-term care that had provided the basis for discussion on the issue. Council endorsed the recommendation that FICSA should continue its endeavours to secure sustainable long-term care insurance across the common system.

150. The Standing Committee had been briefed on developments relating to the taxation of UN pensions in Denmark which had yielded benefits to retirees. The assistance of FICSA in alerting expatriates to those developments was sought.

151. The Standing Committee had also drawn attention to the short-term contractual practices in WHO/HQ that militated against the staff under such contracts ever acquiring pension rights (see FICSA/C/59/SOCSEC/CRP.4)

152. Council supported the names put forward for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chairs.

153. Taking into account the modifications and amendments agreed upon during its discussion of the report, Council adopted the report of the Standing Committee and the recommendations therein:

It was decided that:

- **FICSA should continue supporting a defined-benefit pension system, such as that currently in place for the United Nations Staff Pension Fund. Any attempt to move towards a defined contribution plan or any type of privatization of the Fund should thus be firmly opposed by FICSA.**
- **Noting that the results of a study currently being undertaken by the UNJSPF Secretariat on protection measures for the pensionable remuneration and the impact of currency fluctuations, the Standing Committee recommended that FICSA continue its support for the identification of such measures. The Executive Committee should report back to membership on the relevant outcome of the upcoming session of the UNJSPB.**
- **The Executive Committee should also report back on the impact of the dollar devaluation on dollar-denominated pensions in the euro zone.**
- **FICSA should inform the next session of the UNJSPB in 2006 of its support for keeping accountability and ownership of the investment process within the UN system.**

- **FICSA should alert the UNJSPB to the fact that ethical standards for the investment of the Pension Fund should be guided by those listed in the UN Global Compact.**
- **FICSA should continue supporting the inclusion of representatives of the retired UN staff in the membership of the UNJSPB and inform the upcoming session of the Pension Board accordingly.**
- **FICSA should continue supporting the introduction of sustainable long-term care insurance plans within the CEB and any other relevant administrative body.**
- **FICSA should continue supporting implementation of measures aimed at reintegrating into service staff recovering from disability. It should inform the UNJSPB and the CEB accordingly and report back to the Federation's membership on the outcome of the study currently being undertaken by the UNJSPF Secretariat in that respect.**

Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field (Agenda item 14)

154. The Acting Vice-Chair introduced the report of the Standing Committee (Annex 6), the deliberations of which neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair could attend as they could not attend this session of the Council. The issue of the continued failure to pay hazard pay to UNRWA staff in Gaza and the West Bank had been raised together with other UNRWA-related issues. In view of the costs involved in launching an appeal on the issue, Council suggested that the first recommendation be reworded to reflect the option of first ascertaining the possibility of lodging an appeal with UNAT.

155. Following a briefing by FICSA's Research and Liaison Officer on the current status of staff security developments in the UN system, the Committee had regretted the fact that the accountability framework for the UN's Security Management System had not yet been finalized following the fact that five organisations had objected to the language in the framework that made clear that the final line of accountability for staff security would lay with the UN Secretary-General, rather than with individual executive heads and the Council accepted that FICSA continue to advocate for finalization of the framework. Central and regular funding of the Security Management System remained unsettled as a number of Member States had objected to establishing a core regular budget and would have preferred to have the existing cost-sharing arrangements continue. The Council nevertheless accepted the Committee's recommendation that FICSA advocate for stable funding for the UN's Security Management System.

156. The Committee had discussed security training for staff, in particular both CD-Rom I (Basic Security in the Field) and the newly-completed CD-Rom II, (Advanced Security in the Field). After hearing that CD-Rom II would include features that would be extremely useful for all staff worldwide (such as modules on dealing with sexual harassment), the Council accepted the recommendation that CD-Rom II be made mandatory for all staff, taking due note of the fact that exceptions be made for those staff who would not be able to access the CD-Rom in local languages other than the six official working languages in the UN system.

157. Despite improvements in modalities for evacuation and relocation (to a safe haven) of national staff over the years, national staff continued to face high vulnerability in the field when it came to safety and security issues and were often subject to greater risks to their safety, by virtue of their association with the UN. The Council therefore accepted that FICSA continue to advocate for improved and stronger security measures for national staff as when it came to issues of safety and security, no distinctions should be made among staff due to status.

158. FICSA's Research and Liaison Officer also briefed the Committee on the 2005 round of classifications of hardship duty stations. The response rate to the ICSC's questionnaire on which the

classification exercise hinged to a large extent had been very disappointing this year (i.e. only a 35% response rate). Although FICSA could only urge staff to actively participate in the process to ensure questionnaires were completed, it was recognized that the ultimate responsibility for submitting the questionnaire to the ICSC rested with the Designated Official (DO). As such, the Federation was requested to write to the Administrator of UNDP as well as other relevant executive heads (where the DO is not a UNDP senior official), urging them to make certain that the DO's ensure that the ICSC questionnaires are in fact duly completed and submitted in a timely fashion to the ICSC in order that their respective duty station could be properly evaluated. The recommendation of the Committee was thus modified accordingly to take account of the fact that the DO was not always a UNDP senior official in all cases.

159. Contrary to the statement in the report that national staff working under the same hardship conditions did not receive compensation similar to that of internationally recruited staff, it was pointed out with particular emphasis that UNRWA national staff in Gaza received **no** compensation at all. Council agreed to a more forceful textual amendment that read:

...the Committee took the opportunity to note that although national staff were also subject to hardship conditions, they did not receive any compensation such as was paid to internationally recruited staff...

The Committee, it was reported, had also been adamant in its condemnation of the abuse and exploitation of National Professional Officers. A position that Council shared.

160. The dilemma posed by outsourcing had been extensively debated in the Committee. Relocation of activities from headquarters in high-cost areas to duty-stations in low-cost areas meant job losses in the one instance and substantial benefits in the other. While agreeing that FICSA should establish a common Federation position on relocation and off-shoring, the Council said it should also focus on the status of staff affected by the change in relocation policy.

161. The divisive nature of merit pay had also been discussed in the Committee. Council agreed that cohesiveness was the pivotal issue and as such merit pay and staff development were closely linked.

162. Council supported the recommendation that whenever members of the Executive Committee travelled to the field, they should alert their members in the field as required under Article 35 of the Federation's Statutes. However, it saw little merit in recommending that members needed to understand the Statutes as that was a given. Similarly Council did not concur with the recommendation that two documents needed updating as they had been recently updated. However, it did agree that a third document, *Guidelines for field missions*, was in need of reform.

163. The Committee had reaffirmed staff's right of association; they should be free to establish or join staff representative bodies of their own choosing. Council agreed with that position. It also adopted the recommendation that funds be allocated for regional travel. Furthermore, Council recommended that regional representatives should prepare annual reports of their activities. They would be taken up at each session of the Council immediately after the report of the Executive Committee.

164. Council supported the names put forward for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and core group.

165. Taking into account the modifications and amendments agreed upon during its discussion of the report, Council adopted the report of the Standing Committee and the recommendations therein:

It was decided that:

- The FICSA Executive Committee should pursue the issue of hazard pay with the Fifth Committee. However, if that did not yield positive results, the possibility of UNRWA staff lodging an appeal before UNAT should be ascertained.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should request UNRWA Administration to provide for each year since 2001 details of the actual hazard pay entitlements that had not been paid.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should continue to address the many unresolved administrative issues that confronted UNRWA area staff and pursue efforts to encourage the other UNRWA unions in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan to join the Federation.
- FICSA should express its regret over the fact that the accountability framework for the UN Security Management System had still not been finalized, urging that the matter be settled without delay since a truly effective security management system could not function without clear lines of accountability in place.
- FICSA should continue to advocate core funding for the Security Management System, particularly since for some organizations the present cost-sharing arrangements continued to be problematic.
- Taking into account that it also addressed such issues as sexual harassment (i.e. issues that might arise in all duty stations, irrespective of phase designation), CD-Rom II [Advanced Security in the Field] should be made mandatory for all staff in the UN system, taking due account of the fact that some local staff might have difficulties in fulfilling that requirement, were the CD-Rom not available in languages other than the six official UN working languages.
- FICSA should continue to advocate that more needed to be done to ensure properly the safety and security of national staff. When it came to such issues, no distinctions could or should be made based solely on status.
- Given that for the current year the ICSC had reported a response rate of only 35 per cent to its hardship questionnaire, internationally recruited staff in the field should be made aware of the importance of the questionnaire and wherever possible do their best to ensure its timely completion. FICSA should write to the Administrator of UNDP as well as to relevant executive heads urging them to ensure that the DOs fulfilled their responsibilities and arranged for the questionnaires to be duly completed and promptly submitted to the ICSC, as and when requested.
- The Executive Committee should raise the issue [of problems facing national professional staff] at meetings of the HR Network and prepare a conceptual paper, including statistics and comments, on the abuse of the contractual status of NPOs.
- The issue of relocation and off-shoring needed to be researched and information sought on the experience on other organizations. Based on the information gathered, FICSA should establish a common position and focus on the status of staff affected by the change or relocation.
- FICSA should obtain from its members details of all the different merit pay practices and update the membership on the progress of the pilot broadbanding experiments being conducted in certain organizations. FICSA should continue to convey its reservations to both the ICSC and the organizations. FICSA should continue to warn the ICSC and the organizations about the negative consequences of merit pay in country offices where staff cohesion was a better way of managing programmes than the jealousy and competition that merit pay would inevitably engender in small workplaces.
- Whenever an Executive Committee member went to the field, he or she had to contact members prior to the visit as stated in Article 35 of the Statutes.

- The document *Guidelines for field missions* needed updating; the revised version should be sent to members for comments.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should prepare a standard report format to be used by all those undertaking visits to the field on behalf of the Federation.
- Regional representatives should prepare annual reports of their activities and present them to Council each year for discussion immediately after the Executive Committee report.

Standing Committee on General Service Questions (Agenda item 15)

166. The Chair of the Committee introduced the report (Annex 7) and drew attention to the various recommendations. Discussion in Council focused on the workshops that had proven an effective source of income. Council approved the tentative schedule and agreed that the Executive Committee should explore the possibility of asking a participation fee of any administration representatives attending the workshops

167. Council pointed out that the recommendation on the need to prepare a list of the requirements and other arrangements that organisations hosting the workshops would have to provide was best undertaken by the Executive Committee. Council concurred with the recommendation that a proposal on reviewing the composition of the joint ICSC/CEB/FICSA/CCISUA Working Group on General Service job classification should go to the ICSC urging the participation of four members and four alternate members representing staff.

168. Council supported the names put forward for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chairs, with Ms. Azucena Pernia (UNWTO) replacing Mr. Mauro Pace (FAO/WFP-UGSS).

169. Taking into account the modifications and amendments agreed upon during its discussion of the report, Council adopted the report of the Standing Committee and the recommendations therein:

It was decided that:

- FICSA should assume a proactive role and start working on the proposals for the next revision of the methodology [for salary surveys in HQ (and non-HQ?) duty stations] as a matter of urgency.
- Each HQ duty station should provide at least one member and one alternate to be part of PTC/GSQ and members from major non-HQ locations should be identified.
- The collection of data relevant to the salary surveys should be initiated in order to identify breaches in the application of the Flemming principle.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should closely monitor the implementation of the handover agreement and the jointly funded arrangements for salary survey activities as described in CEB/2005/HLCM/34.
- FICSA should liaise with the appropriate office in the United Nations in order to offer support to the capacity-building process for the conduct of surveys, particularly at the local level.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should closely follow developments on the inclusion of General Service staff in the pilot tests for broadbanding and pay for performance by UNDP in Copenhagen and other field locations in the light of their potential impact on salaries.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should liaise with UNDP staff representatives and request that channels of communication be established with local staff in order to

enhance the flow of information to FICSA on that matter [conduct of salary surveys at non-HQ duty stations].

- The local salary survey committees needed empowering and strengthening, while their members should be provided with adequate terms of reference.
- The General Service salary survey methodology workshop activities should continue and possibly be stepped up, given the key role they played in raising staff representatives' awareness of the survey process and other related issues.
- FICSA should inform the consultant of the required amendments and request that a revised version of the CD-ROM [used by trainers on the GS salary survey methodology] be released.
- FICSA should evaluate the possibility of protecting the copyright of that CD-ROM.
- It invited the Executive Committee to explore the possibility of demanding a participation fee of administration attendees.
- The Executive Committee should prepare a list of requirements, arrangements and agreements whereby a hosting Organization would be informed of the logistical arrangements necessary to facilitate the smooth running of the scheduled workshops.
- In 2006 FICSA should consider offering the following workshops on General Service salary survey methodology, by region:
 - (a) Africa:
 - (i) English: Tanzania or Malawi
 - (ii) French: Benin or Senegal
 - (b) Latin-America and the Caribbean:
 - (i) Spanish: Dominican Republic
 - (ii) English: USA^{*}, Jamaica or Barbados
 - (c) Eastern Europe:
 - English: Slovak Republic or Czech Republic
 - (d) Far East:
 - English: Pakistan, Vietnam or India
- Consideration should be given to the possibility of holding a workshop on HQ salary survey methodology in Vienna, subject to an invitation from the IAEA Staff Association.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should propose to the ICSC that four members and four alternate members representing staff be allowed to participate in the next meetings of the Joint ICSC/CEB/FICSA/CCISUA Working Group on job classification and, where possible, videoconferences with a larger number of participants should be organized.
- A roster of resource persons comprising at least one experienced staff representative from each of the 8 HQ duty stations should be nominated, mainly drawing on the expertise available in the PTC/GSQ. Ongoing communications should be maintained throughout the year within the Standing Committee on General Service Questions. It was agreed that Ms. Margaret Eldon would continue to serve as a focal point for that exercise.
- To the extent possible, cooperation with CCISUA on matters concerning the Joint ICSC/CEB/FICSA/CCISUA working group should continue.

^{*} Invitation was made by PAHO/WHO (Washington) to host the workshop in English.

Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances (Agenda item 16)

170. The Chair introduced the report (Annex 8) and focused on the recommendations that the Standing Committee had put forward. The first recommendation related to the expanded definition of hazard pay that had been recommended by the ICSC. At the Committee's deliberations, the representative of IAEA pointed out that the definition be expanded even further to take account not only of staff whose work brought them into direct contact with life-threatening diseases but also staff whose work brought them into contact with highly toxic chemicals. The Council noted that this was an issue that would not only affect staff from the Agency but also staff from organizations such as OPCW whose work brought them into contact with dangerous types of weapons of mass destruction. Any broadening of the definition of hazard pay should thus take such factors into account.

171. Council took note of the other recommendations. It recommended, however, that the reference compensation comparison should not be made with EU institutions, but with the EU Commission. Certain EU institutions enjoyed conditions of employment that were inferior to those of the common system. However, certain bodies within the purview of the European Commission enjoyed vastly superior conditions of employment as IAEA safeguards inspectors repeatedly realised when working alongside EURATOM inspectors on one and the same project.

172. Council also suggested that the Professional Salaries and Allowances training package and the General Service salary survey methodology package might be combined in some way, possibly in joint activities so as to secure the maximum possible outreach and increase the opportunity for advocating the Federation.

173. Council supported the names put forward for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair. It was also announced that Mr. Matthew Montavon (FAO-APS) would join the 'core' of members that was to maintain contact throughout the year.

174. Taking into account the modifications and amendments agreed upon during its discussion of the report, Council adopted the report of the Standing Committee and the recommendations therein:

It was decided that:

- **FICSA should bring to the attention of the ICSC the many different hazards faced by staff in the course of their work so that it might re-examine and broaden the definition of hazard pay.**
- **FICSA should carefully monitor developments in future work by ACPAQ on methodological issues pertaining to the place-to-place survey and try to ensure that major problems be addressed as soon as possible, including rental data, education costs and low participation of staff in the associated surveys.**
- **FICSA should seek more timely implementation of updates of the education grants with the ICSC so that the ceiling of education grants was consistent with the reality of actual school fees for the school year in question.**
- **FICSA should endeavour to secure an increase in the age limit for child allowance/dependency rate for UN staff with children attending post-secondary education institutions.**
- **FICSA should monitor developments regarding the increased use of national professionals in all duty stations and consider the consequences they bore for the principles of equal pay for equal work and for overall HR management, including the issue of possibilities for job rotation.**

- **FICSA should request that the reference compensation comparison by the ICSC also be made with the European Commission.**
- **FICSA should create more awareness of the training packages available and provide trainers for workshops in the duty stations that requested them. The cost should be borne by the requesting member association/union.**
- **FICSA should identify people who were familiar with the post adjustment methodology being used in field duty stations, and modify the existing training package as appropriate. \$US 1,000 should be allocated for that modification.**
- **FICSA should continue to put pressure on the ICSC and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly to increase the margin for professional salaries to at least 115.**

Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (Agenda item 16)

175. The Chair introduced the Committee's report (Annex 9) and the draft budget proposals contained therein together with the corresponding scale of contributions. He drew Council's attention to the recommendation pertaining to the need for fuller annotation in respect of both the audited accounts and the budget performance reports, with the latter showing actual income generated rather than net expenditures. He also drew attention to the recommendations relating to the treatment of delinquent member associations/unions. Whereas Council approved those recommendations, it rejected as redundant the Committee's recommendation pertaining to the authority to switch funds from one budget line to another and from one budget chapter to another since that was already provided for under in Article 7 of the Financial Rules.

176. After discussing the individual line items, the Committee had proposed increases in chapters 2, 3 and 4, as well as a new breakdown of budget lines in chapter 3 in the interests of greater transparency. Council approved the increases that pertained to regional travel, training workshops, training package modifications, field testing an interactive CD-ROM, purchase of law books and subscription to a legal journal, as well as the establishment of a staff development fund.

177. Discussion focused on the scale of contributions. Given the late stage at which some of the new proposals had been presented and the embryonic status of others, Council decided it would be best to adhere to the current scale of contributions and methodology (Annexes 11 and 12). Council concurred, however, with the recommendation that a working group be set up to study all four proposals for changing the scale of contributions. By the end of the session, the following names had been received by the Executive Committee:

Robert Aguirre	PAHO/WHO Washington
Carolina Bascones	PAHO/WHO Washington
Kees de Joncheere	WHO/EURO Copenhagen
Jean-Pol Matheys	CERN
Giovanni Munoz	FAO-APS
Gordon Vachon	OPCW
Robert Weisell	FICSA President

178. Council supported the establishment of a staff development fund. Furthermore, it felt it more apposite to speak of staff's right to consideration for promotion rather than staff's right to promotion. The recommendation on considering the possibility of promotions within the FICSA Secretariat was therefore amended accordingly.

179. Council also concurred with the recommendations that the Executive Committee to follow up on the offer of the UNIDO Staff Union to settle the issue of the arrears of dues and open discussions with the Staff Association of the World Trade Organisation on dues outstanding.

180. In the ultimate analysis, the Council adopted the budget for a total amount of SFR 789,593 equivalent to \$US 602,743 as contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. The agreed budget is attached as Annex 11.

181. The Council adopted the scale of contributions totalling SFR 762,238 as contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee with the proviso that due account be taken of the decision to include OPCW as an associate member. The agreed scale of contributions is contained in Annex 14.

182. Taking into account the modifications and amendments agreed upon during the discussion on the report, Council adopted the report of the Ad Hoc Committee and the recommendations therein.

It was decided that:

- **Future audited statements should be appropriately annotated if there were significant differences between the budget performance report and the audited statements for the same year.**
- **After three full years of non-payment of dues, the member association/union concerned should be declared delinquent with the attendant loss of rights and privileges. The delinquent members would be removed from the assessment process.**
- **FICSA should write to the delinquent member association/union informing it of the loss of rights and privileges and reminding it of the balance outstanding. In the event of it returning to the Federation, the member association/union would be expected to pay that balance.**
- **Any significant over-expenditure against individual budget lines should be described in greater detail in the budget performance report.**
- **In the interest of greater transparency, future budget performance reports should show the income generated by the FICSA workshops in the income table as a separate item line.**
- **In future draft budgets, the annotations referring to travel should use the generic 'FICSA representative' rather than identify the person travelling in each individual case.**
- **A staff development fund be set up into which a sum equivalent to 1% of the Federation's staff costs would be paid each year.**
- **The Executive Committee should consider the possibility of promotions within the FICSA Secretariat in accordance with best practice and that budgetary factors not be allowed to take precedence over the staff's right to consideration for promotion.**
- **As in the budget performance report, the income accruing from the FICSA regional training workshops should be shown under a corresponding budget line [Miscellaneous income] in the income tables (Annex 4 to the draft budget).**
- **A working group should be set up to study all four proposals relating to changing the scale of contributions and the membership thereof should be determined prior to the end of the current session of the Council [see paragraph 178].**
- **The Executive Committee should follow up on the UNIDO Staff Union offer and seek payment of half of the dues outstanding.**
- **The Executive Committee should open discussions on the issue of outstanding dues with the Staff Association of the World Trade Organisation.**

Associate matters (Agenda item 18)

183. The Council took note with particular interest of the paper prepared by the CERN Staff Association on developments in that organisation over the past year. The year had been significant on account of it being the year of the five-yearly review when conditions of work within the organisation were compared to those in the world outside. The same year had also seen an actuarial review of the CERN Pension Fund and the governance structure thereof. The staff association had also seized the opportunity to review its own methods of work, as a result of which new executive and permanent commissions had been set up. The staff association had also presented to management a scheme for expanding the current nursery school facilities to include a crèche.

184. FAO/WFP-UGSS wished to thank Jean-Pol Matheys (CERN) for the report that gave much food for thought. Since regrettably he would not be coming to the next session, she wished to pay tribute to the most constructive contribution he had made to the work of the Federation. He would be sorely missed and she hoped that at some stage in the future, should pressures of work allow, the Federation might see him again at a Council session. Council expressed its appreciation with a round of applause and a song sung in his honour.

Date, place and draft agenda for the next session (Agenda item 19)

185. The Council was informed that the IAEA Staff Association was negotiating with its Administration on securing the facilities needed to host the Council in 2007 given that it was also the Agency's fiftieth anniversary. The latter undertook to inform the Federation on the outcome of its negotiations as soon as possible. It was agreed that the 60th session of the Council would be of the same duration as the present session and with the same draft agenda, but for two suggested changes. First, an agenda item be included on regional representatives' reports immediately after the presentation of the Executive Committee report; and second, the election of the Standing Committee officers be held after the presentation of the Standing Committee reports.

Other business (Agenda item 20)

186. In the afternoon of the third day, prior to the Workshop on staff/management relations moderated by Ms. Maria Dweggah, the Council Chair read out a message from Rosemarie Waters, President, CCISUA, in which she underscored the looming threats to staff benefits and rights throughout the common system and the need for a united front to defend the same (Annex 17).

187. The workshop was structured along the lines of the FICSA Handbook on Staff Representation (FICSA/C/59/5) written by Ms. Leslie Ewart, FICSA Information Officer, with inputs from Ms. Valérie Seguin (IMO), which addressed the issue of staff representation from both the local and global perspectives.

188. At the outset, Ms. Dweggah emphasized that anybody contemplating taking on the hard work that staff representation involved should ask themselves whether they were really willing to assume the manifold responsibilities and speak out firmly on behalf of others. For all the risks of self-isolation and self-deprivation that it might entail, effective staff representation was essential to the well-being of staff at large. Staff bodies and staff representatives had been described in one instance as 'an indispensable cogwheel as well as a lubricant in the whole administrative machinery of the organization', which explained and justified the support in kind and facilities given to staff bodies.

189. The workshop provided a brief history of staff representation in the United Nations and other precursors such as the League of Nations and ILO. The Administrative Instruction (ST/AI/293)

spelling out the facilities for staff representation dated back to 1982. It was clearly in need of updating.

190. The workshop addressed the very basics of staff representation ranging from the securement of recognition agreements to the collection of dues. It also entered into the modes of relationships that staff representatives entered into with their constituents, administrations and the outside world. Advice was given on maintaining continuity and preserving the all-essential institutional memory. In the final segment of the workshop, the participants were taken through a series of case-studies: the more recent work stoppages and other industrial action taken in the organizations of the member associations/unions with a breakdown of the reasons leading up to such action and the manner in which the problems were solved.

191. In the course of the week, two presentations were given by the United Nations Federal Credit Union and AMFIE, the Luxemburg-based credit union for active and retired civil servants.

192. On the evening of the fourth day, Mr. Todd Larson (WIPO) gave a brief presentation on domestic partnership issues. He outlined the historical developments that had led initially to consensus being reached in the CCAQ in 1998 on the elaboration of neutral criteria to define dependency. They had finally emerged, albeit in a much reduced form, in the Administrative Instruction issued by the Secretary-General in 2004 which granted recognition of same-gender marital relationship and same-gender domestic partnership in those instances where they were recognised by the staff member's country of origin. Staff in same-gender partnerships which were not nationally recognised were thus excluded, even though very plausible arguments could be launched on behalf of those staff members through the appeals process. Whereas the UN Secretariat, Funds and Programmes were following the directives of the Administrative Instruction, specialised agencies were palpably slower, arguing that it entailed changes in staff rules and regulations that were within the purview of their governing bodies. That was a disingenuous argument which could be easily refuted. In the ultimate analysis, the appeals mechanism constituted the best means of gaining greater recognition. Full details of the arguments used in appeals to date and other background material would be supplied to member associations/unions.

193. On the last day of the session, the Council undertook a brief assessment of the five days spent in Council. It was conceded that more effective use could be made of time; 'prime time' should be devoted to the business of the Federation rather than to prolix presentations. The election process also offered scope for improvement. Not only was it necessary that the voting software be run beforehand to check for any glitches, but the run-up to the elections proper should be more strictly managed. Candidates should respect the deadlines and also provide more details in their application forms, furthermore the hearings should be more constructive. The aim of the hearings was to seek answers to three crucial questions. Why was the candidate running for election? Why was the candidate running for that particular post? What did the candidate intend to do if elected?

194. Improvements could also be made in terms of documentation. The documents presented to Council and the proceedings of the Council with the Standing Committee reports plus the conference room documents could be burned onto CDs. The latter could be distributed to (or even purchased by) member associations/unions.

195. Immediately prior to the closure of the session, the Council took note of the framework for action that had been elaborated at the Inter-Union Round Table held at UNESCO in December 2005 on the occasion of the award of the René Maheu Prize for the International Civil Service to the Federation (document FICSA/C/59/CRP.1). The round table had undertaken a retrospective assessment of fifty-three years of representing the interests of international civil servants and taken a

prospective view of the future of the international civil service and staff representation. The framework for action which had emanated from those discussions focused on the following aspects:

- In the context of unprecedented globalization, where relations between States were more complex than ever, the United Nations system was needed more than ever by the international community in its efforts for peace and cooperation.
- The organizations of the UN system could not carry out their missions without staff who were united, motivated and completely devoted to their work.
- The organizations of the United Nations should respect and apply the highest ethical values guiding the international civil service, such as independence, integrity, loyalty, impartiality and tolerance.
- The organizations of the United Nations system should equally recognize the right of staff representatives to negotiate their terms and conditions of service; the recognition of the individual and collective rights of international civil servants should serve as an example for the world.
- The United Nations common system should be strengthened and its unity should be reaffirmed. It was time to re-examine the separation of staff into two categories and to study the impact of new technologies, which had considerably modified their respective roles.
- Legal action should be one of the pillars of the FICSA strategy, and of its member associations and unions. Clearly, that action should not serve as a substitute for negotiation between staff and management, or any other legitimate action. In that context, it was essential for FICSA to take legal action with a view to recognizing the legal status of associations, unions and their federations, notably to enable them to launch appeals in the name of staff.
- The image of the international civil service should be re-built and improved through FICSA efforts and those of its member associations and unions.
- FICSA should take a proactive approach to each of the above issues, and not content itself with reacting to crisis situations or limiting itself to a defensive position.

Closing of the session (Agenda item 21)

196. In his closing statement, the FICSA President thanked all those who had contributed to the smooth running of the Council. The work of the FICSA Secretariat and the Liaison Office had been greatly facilitated by the assistance that the Federation had received from the local member Staff Association and the splendid support from the various United Nations Departments. Their readiness to help had been greatly appreciated. He looked forward to seeing everybody at the next session of the Council and wished them all a safe journey home.

197. Speaking on behalf of the Federations of United Nations Staff Associations (FUNSAs), Gustavo Casas (FAPNUU Uruguay) thanked the Federation for the support it had lent to their colleagues in the field and urged the Council not to forget the FUNSAs.

198. In her closing statement, the Council Chair thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the session. She extended particular thanks to the interpreters and the engineers who had facilitated the process of debate. She also paid particular tribute to the staff of the FICSA Secretariat in Geneva and the Liaison Office in New York who had provided stalwart services both in the run-up to the Council and throughout the current session.

199. The Chair assured Council that it been both a pleasure and an honour to guide its deliberations. She declared the 59th session closed at 8.30 p.m. on 10 February 2006.

Annex 1

AGENDA FOR THE 59TH FICSA COUNCIL

1. Opening of the session
2. Credentials
3. Election of the Chair, Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur
4. Adoption of the agenda
5. Organization of the Council's work
6. Constitutional matters
7. Questions relating to membership status in FICSA (changes in membership)
8. Report of the Executive Committee for 2005-2006
9. Election of the Executive Committee and subsidiary organs for 2006-2007
10. Election of Standing Committee officers for 2006-2007
11. Standing Committee on Legal Questions
12. Standing Committee on Human Resources Management
13. Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety
14. Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field
15. Standing Committee on General Service Questions
16. Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances
17. Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
18. Associate matters
19. Date, place and draft agenda of the next session
20. Other business
21. Closing of the session

Annex 2

Resolution 59/1

**RESOLUTION
ON THE HARMONIZATION OF THE STATUTES OF THE ILOAT AND UNAT**

The Council of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) at its 59th session (New York, from 6 to 10 February 2006),

Considering that harmonization of the Statutes of the ILOAT and UNAT is receiving serious consideration within the organs of the United Nations;

Resolves to support harmonization efforts that would:

(i) Leave intact the authority of the ILOAT to (a) order specific performance, (b) make awards without limitation, and (c) receive complaints that skip the internal appeal process of an organization in case of unreasonable delays in said process; and

(ii) Give to UNAT the same authority as ILOAT with respect to specific performance, awards and receivability mentioned in subparagraph (i) above.

Resolution 59/2

RESOLUTION ON OUTSOURCING PRACTICES

The Council of the Federation of the International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) at its 59th session (New York, to 10 February 2006),

Having considered General Assembly resolution 59/289 on outsourcing practices,

Acknowledging that outsourcing can be useful under certain circumstances,

Recognizing the need for updating technical skills and expertise of staff members to meet rapidly changing circumstances and environment,

Concerned that current outsourcing practices:

(i) affect the long-term ability of the organization to be self-sufficient and often affect the international character of the international civil service;

(ii) may not yield the efficiencies and cost savings originally sought; and

(iii) in all too many cases do not provide a level of service quality up to international civil service standards and may thus compromise that high level,

1. Requests

- (a) that a clear definition of outsourcing be provided by the UN General Assembly to all Executive Heads and staff associations/unions of each organization;
- (b) that organizations train current staff in acquiring the necessary technical skills and technology to develop expertise within their organizations;
- (c) that all possible avenues be explored with full consultation and participation of staff representatives prior to any outsourcing or restructuring plan;
- (d) that when outsourcing, organizations employ ethical methods and practices; and
- (e) that each organization provide not only a cost analysis of any outsourcing proposal, but also a comprehensive analysis of the consequences.

2. Recommends that organizations carefully consider the need for outsourcing and only utilize it when deemed absolutely necessary.

Annex 3

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL QUESTIONS

Chair	Jean-Pol Matheys (CERN)
Vice-Chair	Margaret Eldon (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
Rapporteur and FICSA Information Officer	Leslie Ewart
President, FICSA	Robert Weisell (FAO-APS)
General Secretary, FICSA	Vivien Joy Ponniah (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS)
Invited (Legal Adviser)	Robert Aguirre (PAHO/WHO Washington)

Participants

FAO-APS	Giovanni Munoz Jakob Skoet
IAEA	Michael Donoho Lisa Villard John Young
IMO	Ingrid Lopez
ITU	Maite Comas-Barnes
OPCW	Gordon Vachon
UNESCO	Christine Restif
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	Kaan Ba-Maung Stephan Flaetgen Ann Wishart
UNLB	Vincenzo de Leo
UPU	Stéphane Vuillemin
WHO/HQ Geneva	Tina Colombo Gisèle Laliberté
Consultative status	
FAFICS	Andrés Castellanos del Corral

Adoption of the agenda (Agenda item 1)

1. The agenda was adopted without change.
 1. Adoption of the agenda
 2. Appointment of a rapporteur

3. Report on Committee activities since the 58th Council
4. Legal Defence Fund
 - (a) Status of the Legal Defence Fund (FICSA/C/59/A&B/3)
 - (b) Supported cases and financial implications
5. Reform of the Administration of the justice
 - (a) ILOAT – Progress report, further actions
 - (b) UNAT – Study Progress Report (B. Aguirre invited)
6. Legal insurance – Status report (CAP invited)
7. ILOAT and UNAT cases:
 - (a) Current and recent cases (L. Fauth invited)
 - (b) Prospective cases
8. Follow up to margin appeal (evolution of the margin since then)
9. Rights of staff and staff representatives
10. Legal studies that might be commissioned
11. Issues referred to the Committee by the Plenary
12. Articles X and XI of the UN Rules and Regulations concerning disciplinary measures and appeals
13. Other business
14. Nomination of Committee Chair and Vice-Chairs, and core group members (3)

Appointment of a rapporteur (Agenda item 2)

2. Ms. Leslie Ewart, FICSA Information Officer, was appointed Rapporteur.

Report of the Committee on activities since the 58th Council (Agenda item 3)

4. After an introduction by the Chair and review of the paper Activities of the Standing Committee on Legal Questions since the 58th Council (FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/1), the Committee took note of the report, aware of a revised and more detailed interpretation of Article 6 of the Statutes being proposed (which was discussed as reflected below).
5. Under the item, the Chair provided an overview of the status of reform of the ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) He indicated that the reform of the UN Administrative Tribunal (UNAT) and the administration of justice in general would be discussed in depth under item 5(a).
6. At that juncture the Committee also addressed the question whether it would be desirable for a law firm, working on a *pro bono* basis, to explore the possibility of applying US labour law to international civil servants. It adopted the following recommendation:

<p>FICSA should try to import into the UN legal framework elements or legal instruments not currently expressly part of the UN legal framework such as the relevant ILO Conventions (e.g. the provision relating to the negotiation of employment conditions). To that end, FICSA should ask a law firm, on a <i>pro bono</i> basis, to: (a) identify such legal instruments; (b) identify how to submit a case and where; and (c) prepare case, should Council so decide.</p>

7. The Committee concluded by agreeing that if the case should fail, FICSA should seriously examine the possibility of seeking redress in external courts.

Legal Defence Fund (Agenda item 4)

8. It was noted that the financial status of the Fund would be taken up in the Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The Committee noted that legal fees that had been provided by FICSA had been re-paid by a former President of FICSA. It was also noted that the Committee was not aware of any cases that had been supported by FICSA in 2005, such that no financial implications for the Fund could be identified.

Legal insurance (Agenda item 6)

9. The representative of the OPCW Staff Association provided an overview of its experience with the CAP insurance coverage. The representative of the ITU Staff Union also reported on its experience with CAP. The Committee took note of the fact that OPCW had been extremely satisfied with the services provided by CAP during internal and external procedures, and that ITU had also been largely satisfied, although the service had been somewhat slow.

Issues referred to the Committee by Plenary (Agenda item 11)

10. It was recalled that some confusion and vagueness currently derived from the various possible interpretations that could be given to expressions such as ‘United Nations family’ which are used in Article 6 of the Statutes. The Committee had been tasked to find a clear interpretation to the Article by the 58th Council. After discussion, the Committee agreed on the following: (i) in the chart reproduced in Annex V of FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/1, the organizations appearing under the heading ‘Related Organizations’ were only ‘related’ and should thus not be deemed part of the ‘family’; (ii) in the chart, footnote 6 indicated that ‘Specialized Agencies’ were relatively autonomous and it was recognized that when that autonomy was very large, it no longer made sense to consider an organization part of the family; and (iii) as the World Bank Group organizations and the IMF were very autonomous organizations they should not be considered part of the ‘family’.

11. The following recommendation was thus submitted.

The Committee recommended that Article 6 of the Statutes should be interpreted as follows:

The term ‘United Nations family was to be understood as covering the same organizations as the closest term used in official publications i.e. ‘United Nations system’ (see www.un.org/aboutun/unchart.pdf reproduced in Annex V of FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/1) with, however, the following exceptions: (i) the organizations appearing in that chart under the heading ‘Related Organizations’; and (ii) the World Bank Group organizations and the IMF.

The term ‘applying the terms and conditions of service of the United Nations common system’ would refer to those organizations that have recognized the jurisdiction of the ICSC. The list of those organizations is provided by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) itself (see icsc.un.org/about4.asp, reproduced as Annex VI in FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/1).

The staff associations or unions representing the staff of an organization listed in one of the above-mentioned lists met the criteria for full membership.

12. Should that recommendation be approved by Council, the Standing Committee wished to draw Council’s attention to the fact that its application would mean that OPCW and IOM fell within the criteria for associate membership. (FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/CRP.4.)

Follow up to margin appeal (Agenda item 8)

13. The FICSA President provided a brief review of the appeal, stating that there had been a slight suggestion in the ILOAT judgement that if the margin did not continue to move towards the acceptable midpoint of 115, the Tribunal might be sympathetic. The ICSC had reported a margin of 111.1 to the UN General Assembly (UNGA), but had not made any recommendation. It was noted that the UNGA had not yet made a decision on the issue because it had been deferred to the resumed session. It was further noted that when the margin again slipped below 110, the ICSC would be required to make a recommendation for an increase: an issue on which the UNGA would have to decide (that might or might not happen in the course of 2006). On that basis, the Standing Committee adopted the following recommendation:

The Committee recommended that:

When the decision of the General Assembly on the issue of the margin for 2006 is made, the EXCOM and the Standing Committee on Legal Questions should decide whether or not to launch an appeal as soon as possible after the decision has been made, and whether the Legal Defence Fund should be used.

14. The Committee further agreed that it would discuss any proposal for legal action having potential widespread implications for Members and/or Associates, provided that the necessary homework, legal analysis, and potential case description were made available to it as far as possible in advance of any requirement for a decision (see below).

Reform of the Administration of justice (Agenda item 5)

(a) ILOAT – Progress report, further actions

15. The Chairman of the Standing Committee submitted his views on this issue in document FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/CRP.6, which served as the basis for discussion.

1 Standards of justice

The Committee recommended that:

Every opportunity should be seized by Members and Associates to include specific reference to the important principles contained in the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and/or the relevant ILO and UN Declarations⁴ and Conventions when launching appeals before the ILOAT. The Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Legal Questions should be informed without delay of any such attempts by Members or Associates so that support could be offered, as and when needed.

2 Adherence to jurisprudence

The Committee recommended that:

The principle of *stare decisis* or adherence to prior jurisprudence no longer be pursued as a reform of the ILOAT because judgements ruling in favour of staff were far fewer than those in favour of the administrations.

⁴ For instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

3 Basis for judgments

16. Considering that the Tribunal has not erred away from its obligation to motivate its judgements and had recently provided more consideration and explanation of its judgements, the Committee agreed on the following recommendation:

The Committee recommended that:

The Tribunal should be informed (e.g. on the occasion of formal/informal meetings) of the cases where, in the opinion of the appellant and/or in that of staff representatives, more complete motivations and/or explanations would have been useful, especially if and when the Tribunal reversed its jurisprudence, such that the Tribunal would be encouraged to improve in that area.

4 Irreceivable complaints

17. To include in the Tribunal's statute a provision allowing for the late submission of applications in exceptional circumstances was not deemed necessary as precedent had been established; for example, when the appellant had been misled about procedure.

5 Staff association/union access

The Committee recommended that:

Given the importance of *locus standi* and the fact that concerted efforts by interested associations and unions would be required, an *ad hoc* working group of interested persons both within the Federation and without should be set up to work on the issue.

The Federation might also wish to appoint a focal point to lead that effort on its behalf.

6 Disclosure of information

The Committee recommended that:

FICSA should promote, as a matter of very high priority, a change in the Statute of the ILOAT to make disclosure of evidence a right of the parties, and the Executive Committee should promote such a change in its interactions with the ILO Staff Union, the ILOAT reform movement, and other entities that might have an interest in the reform of the administration of justice by the ILOAT.

7 Comprehensive approach

The Committee recommended that:

The Federation should (co-)organize a meeting between experts in the administration of justice in the international civil service.

The Committee recommended that:

FICSA should write to the newly appointed ILO Legal Adviser to request that a meeting between all parties concerned, including the Tribunal, be organized without delay so as to ensure the resumption of constant dialogue between parties. The Executive Committee should continue to hold yearly informal discussions with the Tribunal.

(b) *UNAT – Study progress report*

18. The Committee reviewed document FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/CRP.2, Differences between the provisions of the statutes of the ILO and UN Administrative Tribunals submitted by Bob Aguirre, Legal Adviser to the PAHO/WHO Staff Association. The Committee focused on the most important differences between the two Tribunals, which were: specific performance, limitations to awards and the need to exhaust all internal remedies prior to appealing to the Tribunal. A resolution on the issue was drafted and adopted in Plenary (see Annex 2, Resolution 59/1).

The Committee recommended that:

The resolution on the harmonisation of the Administrative Tribunals be submitted to the Redesign Panel and that further work be carried out to identify other points that might need improvement, noting that the deadline for submission of views to the Redesign Panel was 31 March 2006.

The Executive Committee should start holding yearly informal discussions with the UNAT, in much the same manner as it did currently with the ILOAT.

ILOAT and UNAT cases (Agenda item 7)

(a) *Current and recent cases*

19. The Committee reviewed document FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/CRP.5, which presented UNAT Judgement No. 1275. The case concerned the nationalization of a UNDP programme in the UAE, which led to the staff member losing his job solely on the basis of nationality. The Tribunal, finding in favour of the appellant, concluded that UNDP's implementation of the UAE government's directions "**was a clear violation of international law, the United Nations Charter, the Basic Agreement between the UAE Government and UNDP, as well as a violation of the Staff Regulations and Rules. By allowing the UAE Government to interfere in personnel decisions such as those involving the Applicant, UNDP abdicated its duty not to allow outside forces, including Member States, to make such decisions.**" (Judgement No. 1275, paragraph X.)

20. The Committee welcomed the judgment and agreed to recommend the following.

The Committee recommended that:

- 1. The Executive Committee should raise with urgency and all possible strength, possibly by issuing a public statement, the related issues;**
- 2. The FICSA President should write to the administration of UNDP to ask: (a) what action (if any) had been/would be taken in respect of the UNDP officials who let a 'clear violation of the United Nations Charter' happen; (b) what action (if any) had been/would be taken to ensure that no such violations ever occur again; and (c) what had been/would be done to address and correct any other such violations of the UN Charter which might have previously occurred (e.g. in the case of staff members in situations similar to that of Mr. Al-Souki).**

(a) *Prospective cases*

21. The WHO/HQ Staff Association reported that it would be launching an appeal against the threats by the WHO Director-General to terminate the contracts of staff who had participated in the work stoppage. The Staff Association was covered by CAP legal insurance and would not be seeking funds from the Legal Defence Fund.

22. The Committee thus recommended the following:

The Committee recommended that:

- 1. The Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Legal Questions should closely monitor, on the basis of prompt and regular information to be provided by the WHO/HQ Staff Association, the development of the case(s) related to the recent work stoppage and keep the membership informed.**
- 2. If and when a case is launched, all members should file *amicus curiae* briefs.**
- 3. The FICSA President should continue to seek a meeting with the WHO Director-General in an effort to resolve the problem as soon as possible in an amicable fashion. FICSA should draft a letter to Member States to keep them informed of the situation.**

23. The Committee wished to remind membership that information exchange was very important in respect of legal action, as well as in other instances. The Committee thus agreed on the following recommendation.

The Committee recommended that:

In the event that member/associate staff associations/unions had cases of general interest and application (to all staff), the prospective cases should be submitted to the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Legal Questions well enough in advance, especially if support from the Legal Defence Fund were to be sought.

Rights of staff and staff representatives (Agenda item 9)

24. The Chairman drew the attention of the Committee to document FICSA/C/57/LEGAL/2 (presented and discussed two years previous) and to ILOAT Judgement No. 1234 (de Padirac) which outlined what administrations could and could not do to staff representatives and staff representative bodies (especially in respect of the facilities accorded to them).

25. UNLB-LSU Brindisi raised the difficulties it had experienced with its administration's insistence that the local staff union cannot join FICSA because it was already represented by CCISUA. The Committee maintained that the administration could not tell the UNLB-LSU which federated staff body it should belong to.

26. The participants from UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Staff Association informed the Committee about a number of administrative instructions and UNGA resolutions that would be useful in supporting various staff rights, such as whistleblowing. They also asked why UNDP and other specialized agencies and/or programmes had not been obliged to implement the same policies on whistleblowing as had been adopted at the United Nations.

The Committee recommended that:

FICSA commission a study on staff association/union rights, based on the jurisprudence and general principles of law. CHF 5,000 should be allocated for that purpose.

Issues referred to the Committee by Plenary (Agenda item 11 cont'd)

27. The Committee had been requested to review Rule 14 (bis) of the FICSA Rules of Procedure, on the subject of the assessment and circulation to the membership of the status of their contributions and voting status.

**The Committee recommended that Rule 14 (bis) be revised by the Council as follows:
The status of each Member and Associate in respect of their contributions and the possible application of Article 40 of the Statutes shall be assessed on 31 December of the relevant year and circulated by the General Secretary to the membership and at least 10 days prior to the opening of the session.” [NEW TEXT UNDERLINED.]**

Articles X and XI of the UN Rules and Regulations (Agenda item 12)

28. It was explained that the item had been put on the agenda in response to the opportunity given to UN staff to provide input to a revision of the Staff Regulations and Rules. The Committee recommended the following:

**The Committee recommended that:
The resolution proposed by the Standing Committee should be submitted to the group responsible for reviewing the Staff Rules and Regulation.**

Other business (Agenda item 13)

**The Committee recommended that:
Council approve the extension of its Mediation Board for three years.**

**The Committee recommended that:
The Federation acquire a copy of *The Law of the International Civil Service*, by C.F. Amerasinghe, 2nd Ed, 2 Vols, Oxford University Press (estimated cost \$US 300), as well as the yearly *Annuaire Francais de Droit International* (estimated cost per annum \$US 120) and that the necessary appropriations (annual in the latter case) be granted by Council.**

Nomination of Chair, Vice-Chairs and core group members (Agenda item 14)

29. The Committee did not reach a conclusion on the matter.

Annex 4

**REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

Chair	Valerie Seguin (IMO)
Vice-Chair	Maite Comas-Barnes (ITU)
Rapporteur	Imed Zabaar (IAEA)
General Secretary, FICSA	Vivien Joy Ponniah (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS)
Member, FICSA Executive Committee	Diab El-Tabari (UNRWA/ASA Lebanon)
Research and Liaison Officer, FICSA	Anne Marie Pinou

Participants

CERN	Joel Lahaye
FAO-APS	Giovanni Munoz
FAO-FSA	Edward Seidler
FAO/WFP-UGSS	Olwen Gotts
IAEA	Lisa Villard John Young
IMO	Ingrid Lopez
ILO-ITC	Johanne Lortie
ITU	Varghese Joseph
PAHO/WHO	Marilyn Rice
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	Fikerte Assefa Audrey Hyatt Tint Kyu
UNESCO	Christine Restif
UNLB	Samuel Cassista
UNRWA/ISA	Maria Traficanti
UNWTO	Azucena Pernia
UPU	Rhéal Leblanc Stéphane Vuillemin
WHO/AFRO Brazzaville	Paul Matsiona

WHO/EURO Copenhagen

Rainer Verhoeven

WHO/HQ Geneva

Tina Colombo
Maria Dweggah

Consultative status

African Development Bank

Tah Asongwed

World Bank

Rachel McColgan

Observer status

FAPNUU Uruguay

Gustavo Casas

FUNSA Mexico

Alma Levy

Election of acting chair and/or vice-chair in case of absence of incumbent(s) (Agenda item 1)

1. The Standing Committee met in two sessions to address items 1-4, 6 and 8-9 of its agenda. Items 5 and 7 were addressed in joint sessions with the Standing Committees on Professional Salaries and Allowances and General Service Questions. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, the Vice-Chair acted as Chair of the Standing Committee and a new Vice-Chair was elected.

Adoption of the agenda (Agenda item 2)

2. The agenda was adopted without change.

1. Election of acting chair and/or vice-chair in case of absence of incumbent(s)
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Election of a rapporteur
4. Progress towards implementing the recommendations adopted by FICSA Council at its 58th Session:
 - (a) Paternity leave
 - (b) Contractual reform
 - (c) Dependency status/Recognition of domestic partnership
5. Review of the pay and benefits system (jointly with PSA):
 - (a) Status report: 2005
 - (b) Benefits to be considered by ICSC in 2006: Annual leave and rewarding language proficiency
6. Proposed priority activities for 2006:
 - (a) Study on staff/management relations in each organization to identify the problems, if any, and propose solutions (reference to doc: CEB/2005/HLCM/16)
 - (b) Study on information/consultation/negotiation in international and national labour laws and practices with a view to reforming joint staff/management bodies in each organization and at the level of UN common bodies.
 - (c) Study on outsourcing in each organization (reference to doc ST/IC/2005/30)
7. ICSC reform of the GS and related categories (jointly with GSQ)
8. Other business

9. Nomination of Standing Committee officers and core group

Election of a rapporteur (Agenda item 3)

3. Mr. Imed Zabaar was elected Rapporteur.

Progress towards implementing the recommendations adopted by FICSA Council at its 58th Session (Agenda item 4)

(a) Paternity leave

4. The Standing Committee discussed progress on the matter subject since 2005. It recalled that the policy adopted by the UN General Assembly had agreed on 4 weeks' paternity leave at UN HQ and 8 weeks in the field.

5. The staff representative of ITU mentioned that the proposal to implement paternity leave had been rejected by the ITU Secretary-General last April. There was no reason to believe that the subject would be re-opened for discussion for the time being. The Executive Committee member reminded the staff representative that ITU should have brought the matter to FICSA at an earlier stage so that action could have been taken.

6. At the World Bank, staff were still pushing for paternity leave (at present only 5 days). The World Bank staff representative asked delegates from those organizations which had already introduced paternity leave to share any relevant information on the subject.

7. Other representatives from UNDP, IAEA, UNRWA and PAHO/WHO mentioned that paternity leave had been introduced in their organizations. However, the situation was different in each organization. The duration of leave varied from 3 to 8 weeks. At UNRWA, paternity leave was only granted to international staff and at UNESCO to regular staff.

8. It was noted that the FICSA Secretariat needed to continue monitoring the implementation of paternity leave. Members should send reports of any progress on the policy in their respective organizations.

(b) Contractual reform

9. Reference was made to Annex IV of the ICSC Report for 2005 (A/60/30), in which as a result of the Commission's decision "that three categories of appointments would adequately respond to the needs of the organizations", a framework for contractual arrangements had been developed for the organizations of the United Nations common system. It was emphasized that it was only a framework and each organization had the autonomy to adapt it to its needs].

10. The proposal had not yet been approved by the General Assembly, but approval was foreseen for the upcoming session. The proposal would then go to the governing bodies of each organization for adoption.

11. The ITU and UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS representatives expressed their dissatisfaction with paragraph 116 on page 49 of the ICSC Report as they firmly believed that the FICSA President should have consulted the members before coming to any agreement. The UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS staff representative added that the 'framework' was a potentially damaging paper; it would become a reference source and staff might pay a high price. The United Nations in New York had introduced 'continuing' contracts and abolished permanent contracts.

12. In response to the complaints made by the representative of ITU, the Executive Committee member reminded the Standing Committee that FICSA had participated in the discussions with the ICSC in very good faith. The matter had been discussed in the Standing Committee in 2003, whose Vice-Chair at the time had been from ITU. However, people acting in bad faith had changed the term from 'permanent' to 'continuing' contracts and 'career appointments'. The framework had been developed over a period of two years. All FICSA members should have received all available information with a request for feedback; however, only few responses had been received. It was thus suggested that each member association/union should appoint a focal point for FICSA matters. As for the framework, it was mentioned that it was only a framework; once approved, it would either be ignored or applied in each organization.

13. Given its importance, it was noted that it would be more effective, were FICSA and CCISUA to work together on the issue.

14. The framework was flexible and open to interpretation. FICSA should thus monitor the manner of application in the various organizations.

15. The Chair mentioned that the item had also been discussed in detail the previous year and UNDP/UNFPA/UNOP should have expressed their concerns at that time.

The Standing Committee recommended that:
In coordination with the Chair, Vice-Chair and core group of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management, the Executive Committee should prepare a best definition of the basic principles of each contract category in the framework (ICSC Report for 2005, Annex IV) and present it to the HR Network and the summer session of the ICSC after consultation with FICSA members.

(c) Dependency status/Recognition of domestic partnership

16. Given that the UN only recognized domestic partnership when the staff member's country of origin also recognized it, the 58th session of the FICSA Council had decided to set up a task force to look into the matter. Unfortunately, the task force had not been active. The terminology relating to spouses had been controversial.

17. The representative of the World Bank staff shared her organization's experience: she offered to send FICSA members the guidelines/criteria applied there.

18. The Standing Committee agreed that domestic partnership should not be linked to the staff member's nationality. Domestic partnership should be seen as a civil union in which people were living together. Therefore, they should also benefit from pension, home leave, etc.

19. The task force was re-established comprising: Maite Comas-Barnes (ITU), Valérie Seguin (IMO), Maria Traficanti (UNRWA/ISA), Lisa Villard (IAEA) and Imed Zabaar (IAEA).

The Committee recommended that:

The Chair should request the World Bank, which had integrated domestic partnerships fully into its Staff Rules, to share the relevant guidelines with other members of FICSA by mid-March 2006, as it would support the work of the task force.

Review of the pay and benefits system (jointly with PSA) (Agenda item 5):

- (a) *Status report: 2005*
- (b) *Benefits to be considered by ICSC in 2006: Annual leave and rewarding language proficiency*

20. As the person who was supposed to brief the Standing Committee on the developments over the past year was tied up in another meeting, the joint PSA/HRM Standing Committees could not discuss the point at its first session. It was decided to continue at a later stage.

Proposed priority activities for 2006 (Agenda item 5)

- (a) *Study on staff management/relations in each organization to identify the problems, if any, and propose solutions (reference to document: CEB/2005/HLCM/16)*
Reference was also made to document FICSA/C/59/HRM/1

21. The Chair provided the background history to the document and explained that the purpose of the videoconference of September 2005 had been to set up a working group on the issue. The sole outcome had been a survey that had not yet materialized. The survey was supposed to assess the level of support and other practices in staff/management bodies that the respective organizations awarded to each staff association/union.

22. After discussing each individual case, the Chair requested the members to send to FICSA details of the practices and/or procedures related to staff/management relations in their organizations.

The Committee recommended that:

After identifying the staff representatives who had been denied official leave to attend the FICSA Council, the President or General Secretary should send a letter before the end of March 2006 to the respective executive heads requesting reinstatement of that annual leave.

23. As some organizations had had work stoppages, certain participants wanted to discuss a strategic approach on how the escalation of a response to denial on the part of management could be controlled and pursued in a successful manner.

24. The Standing Committee felt that any issue should be brought to management as soon as it was received from staff. Should no response be received, the matter should be immediately forwarded to FICSA.

25. Certain organizations had carried out internal staff surveys with the help of outside mechanisms or consultants.

The Committee recommended that:

FICSA members should send to the FICSA Secretariat reports of their practices and/or procedures on staff/management relations by the end of March 2006.

The Committee recommended that:

A survey be prepared for all FICSA members on their ratings of staff/management relations and the results be widely published, taking a “wall of shame/fame” approach for any happenings in those areas.

(b) Study on information/consultation/negotiation in international and national labour laws and practices with a view to reforming joint staff/management bodies in each organization and at the level of UN common bodies

26. It was agreed to refer the matter to the Standing Committee on Legal Questions which had already dealt with the subject.

(c) Study on outsourcing in each organization (reference to doc ST/IC/2005/30)

27. The organizations were all at various stages of outsourcing. Printing and publishing, IT and translation seemed to be the areas most often outsourced.

28. The Standing Committee agreed that the perceived reason for outsourcing was cost savings. The Standing Committee put forward a recommendation on relocation and off-shoring. A resolution on the issue was drafted and adopted in Plenary (see Annex 2, Resolution 59/2).

ICSC reform of the GS and related categories (jointly with GSQ) (Agenda item 7)

29. The agenda item was taken up in a joint meeting with the Standing Committee on General Service Questions and reflected in the latter's report.

Other business (Agenda item 8)

30. The Chair reported that on 1 December 2005, the WHO Director-General had adopted a new recruitment policy enabling the administration not to recruit smokers. It was agreed that such a step was discriminatory and should be suppressed.

The Committee unanimously recommended that:

THE FICSA Executive Committee should send by the end of February 2006 a letter of condemnation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Director-General of WHO and ILO with a copy to all executive heads of each organization and a copy to the Chairman of the ICSC, concerning the non-recruitment of smokers, which was a discriminatory practice and hence illegal.

31. The Standing Committee also discussed the question of how staff unions/associations collected dues from their members.

The Committee recommended that:

FICSA members be requested to send to the FICSA Secretariat by the end of April 2006 details of their practices and procedures in respect of the mechanisms used to collect dues from their members.

32. Under the same agenda item the Standing Committee also discussed the role and various practices of the ombudsman/mediator, harassment and the right to address policy-making organs. Each association made a short intervention on the subject and shared its own experience.

Nomination of Standing Committee officers and core group (Agenda item 9)

33. Valérie Seguin (IMO) was nominated Chair and Maite Comas-Barnes (ITU) as Vice-Chair. Nominations for core group members were: Lisa Villard (IAEA), Imed Zabaar (IAEA), Tint Kyu (UNDP/UNFA/UNOPS), Johanne Lortie (ILO/ITC Turin), Marilyn Rice (PAHO/WHO Washington) and Rhéal Leblanc (UPU)

Annex 5

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY/ OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Acting Chairperson
Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur

Mauro Pace (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
Jacques Sanou (ITU)

Participants

CERN

Joel Lahaye

FAO-APS

Lawence Clarke

FAO/WFP-UGSS

Svend Booth
Franco Di Pancrazio

IAEA

Dean Neal
Manijeh Torabi

ILO/ITC

Johanne Lortie
Rosanna O'Keffe

IMO

Anton Pushparajah

PAHO/WHO Washington

Rolando Chacon

UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS

Ruth Sison

UNESCO

Janet Boulmer

UNLB

Vincenzo De Leo

UPU

Rheal Leblanc

UNRWA/ISA

Fredrik Schultz
Maria Traficanti

UNWTO

Azucena Pernia

WHO/EURO Copenhagen

Jenny Birkjaer Madsen
Rainer Verhoeven

WHO/HQ Geneva

Edmond Mobio

Associations with consultative status

FAFICS	O. Richard Nottidge Raymond Gieri Ranadive Prakash
ILO Former Officials	Jean-François Santarelli
UNWG	Nathalie Tschyrgow Adrienne Unwim

Federation with observer status

FUNSA Mexico	Alma Levy
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Other

Former Deputy CEO, UNJSPF	John Dietz
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Adoption of agenda (Agenda item 1)

1. The Standing Committee adopted the following agenda:
 1. Adoption of the agenda
 2. Election of a rapporteur
 3. Report on follow-up activities since the 58th Council
 4. Report on the 188th meeting of the Standing Committee of the UNJSPB
 - (a) Purchase of additional years of contributory service
 - (b) FAR methodology and early retirement protection measure
 - (c) Comprehensive review of pensionable remuneration
 - (d) Impact of currency fluctuation on pension benefits (Jointly with SC/GSQ and SC/Field)
 - (e) Investments of the Fund
 - (f) Actuarial matters
 - (g) Payment of pension benefits to surviving divorced spouse
 5. Revision of size and composition of the Board
 6. Long-term care
 7. Survey of current practices governing return to service from disability
 8. HIV/AIDS in the UN workplace
 9. Other business
 - (a) Taxation of UN pensions in Denmark
 - (b) Short-term staff and pension entitlements
 10. Nomination of Standing Committee officers

Election of a rapporteur (Agenda item 2)

2. In the absence of nominations, Mr. Jacques Sanou (ITU) kindly accepted to act as rapporteur of the meeting.

Report on follow-up activities since the 58th Council (Agenda item 3)

3. The Standing Committee was informed that owing to the absence of the Chair nominated at the previous Council, there were no major activities to report on except the participation of the President in an observer capacity at the 188th Session of the Standing Committee of the Pension Board (UNJSPB). On that occasion FICSA had presented to the UNJSPB Standing Committee all the recommendations approved at the 58th Council concerning social security matters, in particular those relating to the pensionable remuneration review, the protection of pension benefits for local staff paid in soft currencies, the composition of the Pension Board (UNJSPB) and the situation facing colleagues recovering from disability. The Committee was also informed of the good working relationship with the representatives of FAFICS.

Report on the 188th meeting of the Standing Committee of the UNJSPB (Agenda item 4)

(a) Purchase of additional years of contributory service

4. The Committee was informed of the continued discussion concerning the possibility for participants to purchase additional years of contributory services under the proviso that it should have no actuarial impact and should be limited to the maximum of three years once in a working life. The notes by the consulting Actuary (JSPB/CA/44/R.6) outlined costs that were considered too high by the Standing Committee of the Pension Board (UNJSPB) and further study was requested, including a survey at local levels to evaluate the potential interest amongst the staff for such a measure. It was noted that the survey could be conducted in cooperation between the staff representatives and the secretaries of the Pension Committees.

(b) FAR methodology and early retirement protection measure

5. The issue was postponed for discussion in the joint session with the Standing Committees on General Service Questions and Conditions of Service in the Field on devaluation issues.

(c) Comprehensive review of pensionable remuneration

6. The Committee was informed that the ICSC review of the pensionable remuneration had been postponed pending the results of the pilot test of the pay and benefits review. Consequently there was no development to report on the activity of the joint ICSC/UNJSPB working group on the matter.

The Standing Committee recommended that FICSA should continue supporting a defined-benefit pension system, such as that currently in place for the United Nations Staff Pension Fund; therefore any attempt to move towards a defined contribution plan or any type of privatization of the Fund should be firmly opposed by FICSA.

(d) Impact of currency fluctuation on pension benefits

7. The representative from FUNSA Mexico introduced the document FICSA/C/59/SOCSEC/CRP.3 describing the fluctuation experienced by the US dollar denominated pensionable remuneration of locally recruited staff in Mexico owing to sharp changes in the exchange rate. The Committee also considered the content of document FICSA/C/59/SOCSEC/1 presented by the member of the Executive Committee for Regional and Field Issues on the same matter. The suggested solution to establish a dollar-denominated salary scale for locally recruited staff was noted.

8. After an extensive debate the following conclusions were reached:

(a) The implementation of dollar-based General Service salary scales would call for a complete change in the principle governing the establishment of salaries and other conditions of employment for General Service Staff (Flemming principle).

(b) The only possible way of eliminating the anomalies generated by fluctuations of exchange rates would be that of establishing both the salary scale and the pensionable remuneration in the same currency. However, FICSA should take into consideration that the substantial risk involved in shifting to a local currency-denominated pensionable remuneration could be detrimental to the pensionable remuneration of locally recruited General Service staff.

Noting that the results of a study currently being undertaken by the UNJSPB Secretariat on protection measures for the pensionable remunerations and the impact of currency fluctuations, the Standing Committee recommended that FICSA continue its support for the identification of such measures. It requested a report on the relevant outcome of the next session of the UNJSPB.

9. Before concluding the discussion, the Standing Committee was also presented with a note submitted by the UNESCO representative on behalf of their Staff Pension Committee concerning the effect of the devaluation of US dollar vis-à-vis the euro on the dollar denominated pensions. It was noted that the item would be discussed at the next session of the UNJSPB and FICSA was requested to report accordingly.

(e) Investments of the Fund

10. The Committee was informed of the content of the Deloitte and Touche study concerning the investment procedures of the UNJSPB and the suggestion that a larger portion of the Fund's portfolio be outsourced. The Committee noted that the representative of the Secretary-General would submit to the next session of the Pension Board in 2006 a report concerning the investment policies and practices to be followed by the Investment Management Service (IMS) of the Pension Fund.

11. The Standing Committee expressed concern over reports in the press that part of the Fund's assets seemed to be invested in companies that did not comply with the principles expressed by the UN Global Compact (i.e. Bloomberg report dated 31 October 2005 by Bill Varner).

The Standing Committee recommended that:

- 1. FICSA should inform the next session of the Pension Board in 2006 of its support for keeping the accountability and the ownership of the investment process within the UN system, so that the share of externally managed investments would be maintained at the lowest possible level.**
- 2. FICSA should present the UNJSPB with the opinion that ethical standards for the investment of the Fund should be guided by those listed in the UN Global Compact.**

(f) *Actuarial matters*

12. The Standing Committee was pleased to note that the last actuarial evaluation as of 31 December 2003 had resulted in a surplus of 1.4 per cent and was informed of the assumptions approved for the 28th actuarial valuation.

(g) *Payment of pension benefits to surviving divorced spouse*

13. The Standing Committee considered document FICSA/59/ SOCSEC/CRP.5 presented by the United Nations Women's Guild, Geneva, in which inter alia suggestions were made for amending article 35bis(b)(i): in particular, the request that the minimum number of years of marriage required for entitlement by a divorced spouse for survivor benefit be lowered from 10 to 5.

14. Some participants expressed the view that, since the issue had been discussed for the past 26 years, FICSA should not entertain any further debate on the topic. Other participants felt that, since FICSA was allowed to participate in the meetings of the UNJSPB in an observer capacity, it should continue to follow developments on the entitlements of divorced spouses, noting that the next session of the Pension Board in 2006 would be provided with a comprehensive study on the matter.

15. The Committee took note of the lack of consensus and expressed the intention to liaise with FAFICS on the matter, as required. The representative of the United Nations Women's Guild, Geneva, expressed her deep disappointment at the fact that her proposal to reiterate the relevant recommendation approved at 58th FICSA Council was not endorsed by the majority of the Standing Committee.

Revision of size and composition of the Board (Agenda item 11)

16. The Standing Committee was informed that the Standing Committee of the UNJSPB had not been able to reach a consensus on the revised composition of the Pension Board. The results of the tripartite working group appointed to work on the topic would be tabled at the next session of the UNJSPB in 2006.

**The Standing Committee recommended that:
FICSA should continue supporting the inclusion of representatives of the retired UN staff in the membership of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board, and should inform the next session of the Board accordingly.**

Long-term care (Agenda item 12)

17. The Committee took note of document FICSA/C/59/SOCSEC/2 presented by FAFICS. The ensuing discussion focussed on the lack of consistency in the approach by individual organizations within the UN system on this matter.

18. It was recorded that:

- After having served the organization for many years, officials were very often no longer entitled to rejoin their national social security schemes;
- The organization had a certain moral obligation to provide such benefits;
- All health insurance schemes of the Geneva-based organizations (which cover about 50,000 people) had introduced long-term care benefits at various levels; and

- According to an analysis, carried out by the Geneva AAFI/AFICS working group on health, 70 per cent of the amount paid out for such benefits had been allocated to retirees and 30 per cent to officials and their dependants.

19. In consideration of the potential benefits resulting from implementation of long-term care insurance, the Standing Committee agreed on the following recommendations.

**The Standing Committee recommended that:
FICSA should continue supporting the introduction of sustainable long-term care insurance plans within the CEB and any other relevant administrative body.**

20. The Committee took note of the offer from CERN to share with FICSA membership their experience with the implementation of a long-term care scheme.

Survey of current practices governing return to service from disability (Agenda item 13)

21. The Standing Committee reiterated the need for establishing common practices governing the return to service of staff members recovering from disability. Although it was recognized that recovering from disability was not a frequent occurrence, it was felt that its social and human implications were substantial. The Committee took note of the fact that the UNJSPB Secretariat was currently studying the issue jointly with that of partial disability; it expressed interest in the outcome of that study.

**The Standing Committee recommended that:
FICSA should continue supporting implementation of measures aimed at reintegrating into service staff recovering from disability. It should inform the Pension Board (UNJSPB) and the CEB accordingly and report back on the outcome of the study currently being undertaken by the UNJSPB Secretariat in that respect.**

HIV/AIDS in the UN workplace (Agenda item 14)

22. The Standing Committee noted that an increased number of UN organizations were implementing policies aimed at raising the awareness of staff on HIV/AIDS related issues. However, it was reported that, particularly in the field, communication on the matter was sometimes unsatisfactory. The Standing Committee expressed the desire that FICSA continue following developments on the issue at the level of CEB and inter-organizational committees.

Other business (Agenda item 15)

(a) Taxation of UN pensions in Denmark

23. The representative of WHO/EURO gave an update regarding taxation of UN pensions in Denmark. The final ruling in the principal case on the legality of such a taxation was still pending (pending since autumn 2004). However, a law introduced in December 2004 enabled UNJSPB members who had joined before June 1998 to opt for a more lenient form of taxation (members who had joined later would automatically fall under the new law). The more lenient form meant that tax was levied on interest (assumed at a rate of 3.5%) yielded by the individual's pension savings rather than being levied on benefits.

24. Although the new legislation had resulted in a significant improvement for retirees, two major issues remained unsolved:

- The Danish authorities seemed to believe that they could also tax the interest on the pension savings of active staff; and
- There was no mechanism in place to inform expatriates of the new developments.

25. The WHO/EURO Staff Association had expressed the view that taxation of active staff would be in breach of the host-country agreement and that a reduction of net income could not be accepted under any circumstances. The Administration had conveyed similar views. The Danish authorities, on the other hand, had promised to find a solution before May 2006 (the final date for submission of tax declaration forms). Should a solution not be found, the WHO/EURO Staff Association might seek further advice from FICSA.

26. If needed, FICSA should disseminate the relevant information through its channels, in order to reach as many expatriates as possible.

(b) Short-term staff and pension entitlements

27. The Committee was presented with document CRP.4 submitted by a WHO/HQ staff member, concerning the negative effect of an administrative rule implemented by WHO that permitted use of short-term contracts for 44 months only, followed by a mandatory break of one year, thus preventing the staff members so affected from acquiring a right to a UN pension.

28. It was agreed that the matter would be raised within the WHO/HQ Staff Pension Committee by the participants' representatives.

Nomination of Standing Committee officers (Agenda item 16)

29. Mr. Svend Booth (FAO/WFP-UGSS) was nominated Chair and Messrs. Jacques Sanou (ITU) and Jean-François Santarelli (ILO Former Officials Section) as Vice-Chairs.

30. The Standing Committee expressed its appreciation to Ms. Ingrid Lopez (IMO) for her assistance in preparing the report.

Annex 6

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CONDITIONS OF SERVICE IN THE FIELD

Acting Chair	Fikerte Assefa (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS)
Acting Vice-Chair and Rapporteur	Aye Win (FUNSA Myanmar)
Rapporteurs and Members, FICSA	Maria Dweggah (WHO/HQ Geneva)
Executive Committee	Diab El-Tabari (UNRWA/ASA)
General Secretary, FICSA	Vivien Joy Ponniah (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS)
Treasurer, FICSA	Edward Seidler (FAO-FSA)
Research and Liaison Officer, FICSA	Anne Marie Pinou

Participants

FAO-APS	Janice Albert
FAO/WFP-UGSS	Steven Ackumey-Affizie Margaret Eldon
IAEA	Imed Zabaar
ITU	Varghese Joseph
PAHO/WHO Washington	Marilyn Rice
UNLB-LSU	Samuel Cassista
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	Fikerte Assefa Ann Wishart
UNESCO	Janet Boulmer
UNRWA/ASA Lebanon	Daoud Korman
UNRWA/ISA	Fredrick Schultz Maria Traficanti
WHO/AFRO Brazzaville	Paul Matsiona
WHO/EURO Copenhagen	Jenny Birkjar Madsen

Consultative status

African Development Bank	Tah Asongwed
World Bank	Rachel McColgan

Observer status

FAPNUU Uruguay

Gustavo Casas

FUNSA Mexico

Alma Levy

Guest

WFP-PSA

Brian Gray

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair (Agenda item 1)

1. Owing to the absence of both the Chair of the Standing Committee, Mr. Jean Pierre Cebron, and the Vice-Chair, Ms. Simone Tetz, the FICSA Executive Committee Member for Regional and Field Issues opened the session and requested the election of an acting chair and acting vice-chair for the Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field during the current session of the FICSA Council. Ms. Fikerte Assefa (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Staff Association) was elected Acting Chair and Mr. Aye Win (FUNSA Myanmar) Acting Vice-Chair.

Adoption of Agenda (Agenda item 2)

2. The Agenda was adopted as follows:

1. Election of Acting Chair and Acting Vice-Chair
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Election of a rapporteur
4. UNRWA issues
5. Safety and security of staff in the field
6. Classification of conditions of life and work at field duty stations
7. Status and career prospects of National Professional Officers (NPOs)
8. Contractual status of national staff in country offices
9. Merit pay
10. Other business
 - Results of Field Survey or conditions
 - Protocol and Communication Process
 - What is FICSA – update the guidelines for field
 - Reports of Executive Committee
 - UGSS experience
 - FUNSA update
11. Nomination of Standing Committee officers and core group

Rapporteur (Agenda item 3)

3. In view of the fact that they had to attend other standing committee meetings, Maria Dweggah (WHO/HQ Geneva), Diab El-Tabari (UNRWA/ASA Lebanon) and Aye Win (FUNSA Myanmar) volunteered to take turns in assuming the role of Rapporteur.

UNRWA issues (Agenda item 4)

(a) Hazard pay

4. Participants were informed by the Executive Committee Member on Regional and Field Issues of the latest developments regarding the status of the payment of hazard pay to UNRWA area staff in the West Bank and Gaza. Despite verbal support from some Member States, as well as written support from the ICSC and repeated pleas by FICSA for funds from donors, no funds had been forthcoming. It was suggested that prior to moving to an appeal, a legal analysis should be carried out to review the UN Administrative Tribunal (UNAT) decision on the appeal submitted on salaries. As there might be cost implications, it was suggested that all options be considered before resorting to an appeal.

The Committee recommended that:

The FICSA Executive Committee should pursue the issue with the Fifth Committee. However, should that not yield positive results, UNRWA staff would have no choice but to appeal to UNAT.

The FICSA Executive Committee should request UNRWA Administration to provide actual entitlements not paid each year since 2001.

(b) Other UNRWA issues

5. Although some improvements had been witnessed under the new UNRWA management, it was noted that several issues related to the UNRWA area staff, which had been raised the previous year, remained unresolved. They included, but were not limited to: autocratic decision-making, arbitrary procedures, inadequate insurance systems and lack of coverage under the malicious act insurance, as well as arbitrariness and improper procedures in the handling of complaints, non-compliance with ICSC salary surveys (although it was hoped that with FICSA's intervention a comparable methodology could be arrived at), leave entitlements, general disrespect for staff representatives and the freedom of association.

The Committee recommended that:

The FICSA Executive Committee should continue to address the many unresolved administrative issues that confronted UNRWA area staff and pursue efforts to encourage the other UNRWA unions in Gaza, Syria and Jordan to join the Federation.

Safety and security of staff in the field (Agenda item 5)

6. The FICSA Research and Liaison Officer, Anne Marie Pinou, briefed the Committee on the latest developments in the UN Department of Safety and Security (DSS) that had been established in January 2005, as well as on issues that required further consideration by the Committee. They included:

- An update on the current staffing of the department. It was reported that currently only one Chief Security Advisor (CSA) would be present at any one duty station and tasked to oversee all civilian personnel at a duty station with the purpose of ensuring consistency in providing security measures for DPKO civilian staff and other UN system staff at that duty station;

- A report on the status of the accountability framework for the UN Security Management System (SMS) (It was due to be re-considered by the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM)). It was to be noted that the original accountability framework (produced several years previously) needed to be revised in the light of the reorganization of UN SMS and the appointment of a new Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security. Unfortunately, five organizations (FAO, ILO, WHO, the World Bank and the IMF) continued to object to the wording used in the framework that called for the authorization of the UN Secretary-General over security matters. The organizations concerned claimed that they were accountable to their governing bodies - not to the UN Secretary-General. However, the accountability framework was intended for a collective UN SMS. As such, responsibility for decisions reached in common should ultimately lie with the UN Secretary-General. The Standing Committee was also reminded that FICSA had raised that point in its address before the Fifth Committee in October 2005;

The Committee recommended that:

FICSA should express its regret over the fact that the accountability framework had still not been finalized, urging that the matter be settled without delay since a truly effective security management system could not function without clear lines of accountability in place.

- An update on the status of funding the Security Management System from a core regular budget. The issue of establishing a core regular budget had been brought before the Fifth Committee at the 59th session of the General Assembly, but had not been approved. Furthermore, certain Member States continued to oppose central funding for the Security Management System and wished to see the present cost-sharing arrangements continue. Prospects of obtaining central funding, however, did not seem favourable in the short term;

That notwithstanding, the Committee recommended that:

FICSA should continue to advocate core funding for the Security Management System, particularly since for some organizations the present cost-sharing arrangements continued to be problematic.

- Information on security training offered to staff with security responsibilities. All Field Security Coordination Officers (FSCOs) were currently required to attend a three-week induction course before deployment; CSAs were also given further management training and currently a joint UNDP/DSS initiative was in place that was intended to strengthen the training and support that DSS provided to Designated Officials);
- Information on security training offered to staff without security responsibilities. CD-Rom I (Basic Security in the Field) was now mandatory in most organizations throughout the UN system. The Committee was also informed that FSCOs were required to hold regular security briefings for staff at field duty stations (e.g. quarterly briefings). Furthermore, CD-Rom II (Advanced Security in the Field) had since been completed, although no decision had yet been taken whether it too would be made mandatory for all staff (WFP and UNICEF had already made it a mandatory requirement. WHO might only make it mandatory for staff in duty stations designated Phase III and above.)

Taking into account that CD-Rom II also addressed such issues as sexual harassment (i.e. issues that might arise in all duty stations, irrespective of phase designation), the Committee recommended that CD-Rom II be made mandatory for all staff in the UN system, taking due

account of the fact that some local staff might have difficulties in fulfilling that requirement, were the CD-Rom not available in languages other than the six official UN working languages.

- An update on several other security related issues. It included the efforts being undertaken by HR officers, medical and security personnel to ensure that all the necessary contingency measures were in place in the event of an avian flu pandemic. It was reported that both SIRS (Serious Incident Reporting System) and ISECT (Integrated Security Clearance and Tracking System) were up and running, although the latter was not yet fully operational. SIRS was intended as a tool to analyze the pattern of incidents, while ISECT was a central repository of travel security clearance requests that would provide the Designated Official (DO) with a means of deciding, based on staffing numbers, whether to approve or deny the request.
7. Many participants pointed once more to the problems faced by national staff, e.g. non-inclusion in evacuation plans and greater vulnerability as a result of their UN status in a local environment, despite more having been done over the years to introduce evacuation measures for national staff (including relocation to a safe haven).

The Committee recommended that:

FICSA continue to advocate that more needed to be done to ensure properly the safety and security of national staff. When it came to such issues, no distinctions could or should be made based solely on status.

Classification of conditions of life and work at field duty stations (Agenda item 6)

8. A report on the annual and mid-year ICSC review of conditions of life and work in hardship duty stations was also presented to the Committee by the FICSA Research and Liaison Officer. The methodology for determining the hardship level of duty stations was explained as was the fact that the process also depended on questionnaires being completed at the duty stations, with the ultimate responsibility for the completion of the questionnaires resting with the DO.

Noting that for the current year the ICSC had reported a response rate of only 35 per cent, the Committee recommended that internationally recruited staff in the field be made aware of the questionnaire and wherever possible do their best to ensure its timely completion. The Committee further recommended that FICSA take action to ensure that DOs fulfill their responsibilities and ensure that the questionnaires were duly completed and submitted to the ICSC, as and when requested.

9. While the hardship questionnaires were used specifically to determine the hardship level of duty stations that in part determined the amount of the hardship allowance payable to internationally recruited staff, the Committee took the opportunity to note that although national staff were also subject to some hardship conditions, they did not receive any compensation. Furthermore, a query was raised regarding the criteria by which the ICSC classified duty stations for purposes of the General Service salary survey methodology for non-headquarters duty stations.

Status and career prospects of National Professional Officers (Agenda item 7)

10. The category of National Professional Officers (NPOs) had evolved from the original idea of having high-level national professionals who would complement international staff and enrich UN

activities through their proximity to, and familiarity with, local conditions and culture. In other words, they were regarded as being 'of the duty station and for the duty station'. That category was currently being abused; it appeared that NPOs were often seen as a cheaper alternative to international staff since they had competitive skills and qualifications. Furthermore, the career progression of an NPO appeared to be ad hoc and frustrated most NPOs' belief that they might ultimately graduate to the status of international staff. The issue had deeply concerned the ICSC as the hiring of national staff was subject to abuse for reasons of cost benefit.

The Committee recommended that:

The Executive Committee raise the issue at the HR Network and prepare a conceptual paper, including statistics and comments, on the abuse of the contractual status of NPOs.

Contractual status of national staff in country offices (Agenda item 8)

11. The proportion of continuing and fixed-term contracts was diminishing compared to SSAs, service contracts, TAUs or daily contracts. Although it was a general human resources issue, the trend seemed apparent in the field where an increasing number of national and international staff were employed in emergency humanitarian operations. Related to that issue, the Committee also noted that additional qualifications and performance, not noted in the terms of reference, were expected of staff. With the increasing use of computer technology, General Service staff were now working independently, thus relieving Professional staff of less substantive decision-making.

12. The Committee also noted with concern the increasing practice of contractual abuse through the use of staff under employment contracts with external agencies (outsourcing). The Committee noted that FICSA faced a dilemma whenever organizations decided to move their headquarters to cheaper locations. Whereas staff in a more expensive capital might lose their jobs, the re-location of headquarters or off-shoring would be of substantial benefit to staff in poorly paid duty stations.

The Committee recommended that:

The issue of relocation and off-shoring needed to be researched and information sought on the experience on other organizations. Based on the information gathered, FICSA should establish a common position.

Merit pay (Agenda item 9)

13. In the opinion of many field directors, merit pay pitted staff members against each other without providing any value-added. People who were already working at the peak of their ability would not work more for a bonus, since that was not where their motivation lay. On the other hand, poor performers would not work better if the reasons that prevented them from being effective in the first place were not addressed. Pay was rarely, if ever, one of the reasons.

The Committee recommended that:

FICSA should obtain from its members details of all the different merit pay practices and update the membership on the progress of the pilot broadbanding experiments being conducted in certain organizations. FICSA should continue to convey its reservations to both the ICSC and the organizations. FICSA should continue to warn the ICSC and the organizations about the negative consequences of merit pay in country offices where staff cohesion was a better way of managing programmes than the divisiveness that merit pay would inevitably produce in small workplaces.

Other business (Agenda item 12)

Protocol and communication processes

14. The Committee noted that guidelines were required regarding FICSA's intervention on issues brought to the attention of the Executive Committee members during their visits to the field. Executive Committee members also needed to be conscious of the sensitivities of the local duty station and consider all dimensions.

The Committee recommended that:

Whenever an Executive Committee member went to the field, he or she had to contact members prior to the visit as stated in Article 35 of the Statutes. The members need to understand the Statutes thoroughly and could consult the Standing Committee on Legal Questions for any clarification required.

What are the FICSA Guidelines for Field Missions?

The Committee recommended that:

Two documents, *What is FICSA* and *What does FICSA do for you*, needed updating; the revised versions should be sent to members for comment.

Reports

15. The Committee supported by acclamation the need for a standard reporting format for visits to the field. Any activity on behalf of FICSA should be reported back to the Executive Committee. However, the nature of the subject would determine the format. While informal reporting could be done verbally or by e-mail, a formal presentation would require the person concerned to prepare the first draft.

The Committee recommended that:

The FICSA Executive Committee prepare a standard report format to be used by all those undertaking visits to the field on behalf of FICSA.

Representation of GS staff in non-headquarters duty stations

16. FAO/WFP-UGSS briefed the Committee on their efforts to represent the locally-recruited staff in non-headquarters duty stations serving FAO or WFP. It had experienced difficulties in dealing with individual cases at the local level e.g. representing staff in the field who had problems with their supervisors because of the distance from the problem. FAO/WFP-UGSS had offered advice, but it was also necessary to have a representative on the spot. However, on matters that were taken up at headquarters e.g. reform, social security policies, new HR policies and practices, it was easier for FAO/WFP-UGSS to protect the interests of the non-headquarters GS staff.

17. With regard to WFP, the programme was trying to establish local WFP staff representatives in their country offices. FAO/WFP-UGSS felt that the move was also being used to avoid having FAO/WFP-UGSS represent WFP local GS staff at headquarters. While the establishment of local staff representative bodies was good in principle, FAO/WFP-UGSS felt that it was inappropriate for management to approach staff and encourage them to become staff representatives. The Committee

felt that staff representative bodies should be independent of selection by management and that staff should have the freedom to establish or join staff representative bodies of their choice.

FUNSA's

18. The Committee noted that some FUNSAs were in danger of dying out and that they were dependent on the dynamism of the individuals that led them. It called upon the Regional Representatives to follow up on the matter. The Committee also recognized the need for more staff representatives to attend the FICSA workshops. The subjects offered by those workshops needed to be diversified to cover other HR issues, such as classification, entitlements, harassment and performance. Noting that FICSA was less known in the field than at headquarters, it was suggested that FICSA hold regional conferences to attract more members and to keep the members it currently had.

<p>The Committee recommended that: Funds be allocated in the amount of \$US 2,000 for each of the four Regional Representatives to be used to promote better field representation.</p>

Nomination of Standing Committee officers and core group (Agenda item 13)

19. Ms. Anna Wishart (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS) was nominated as Chair and Messrs. Steven Ackumey-Affizie (FAO/WFP-UGSS) and Aye Win (FUNSA Myanmar) as Vice-Chairs.

20. Ms. Margaret Eldon (FAO/WFP-UGSS), Ms. Simone Tetz (WHO/EURO Copenhagen) and Mr. Gustavo Casas (FAPNUU Uruguay) were nominated members of the core group.

Annex 7

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL SERVICE QUESTIONS

Chair	Edmond Mobio (WHO/HQ Geneva)
Vice-Chair	Rolando Chacon (PAHO/WHO Washington)
Rapporteur	Ingrid Lopez (IMO)
Member, FICSA Executive Committee	Mauro Pace (FAO/WFP-UGSS)

Participants

FAO/WFP-UGSS	Francesco di Pancrazio
ITU	Varghese Joseph
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	Dimitri Samaras Kaan Ba-Maung
UNESCO	Christine Restif
UNWTO	Azucena Pernia
UPU	Stéphane Vuillemin
WHO/EURO (Copenhagen)	Jenny Birkjaer Madsen
WHO/HQ (Geneva)	Edmond Mobio

Guest

IDLO	Johanna Dopson
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1. Mr. Edmond Mobio, Chair of the Standing Committee, opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

Adoption of agenda (Agenda item 1)

2. The provisional agenda circulated was amended in order to account for the fact that agenda item 7 would be discussed jointly with the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management, while agenda item 8 had already been discussed in the joint session with Standing Committee on Social Security/OHS. The agenda was eventually approved as follows:

1. Adoption of agenda
2. Election of a rapporteur
3. PTC (HQ and Non-HQ) reports
4. Salary surveys in headquarters duty stations:
 - (a) Madrid, Paris, Montreal (completed)

- (b) New York, Rome (ongoing)
- (c) Geneva, Vienna, London (forthcoming)
- (d) Lessons learned and methodological issues
- 5. Salary surveys in non-headquarters duty stations:
 - Status of UNDP/GCS/BIRCHES GROUP: successions arrangements...
- 6. FICSA Workshops:
 - (a) Reports
 - (b) Getting organized for future challenges
 - (c) Training material
 - (d) Training of trainers and roster and resource persons
 - (e) TOR and ground rules for resource persons
 - (f) Participant's fees
 - (g) Logistical and organizational issues
 - (e) Suggested venues for 2006/2007
- 7. ICSC reform of the General Service and related categories (Jointly with SC/HRM)
 - (a) TOR approved by the ICSC at its 60th session (July 2005)
 - (b) Composition and workplan of the Joint ICSC/CEB/FICSA/CCISUA
 - (c) Appointment of FICSA representatives to the working group
- 8. Impact of currency fluctuations on pension benefits (Jointly with SC/SocSec and SC/Field)
- 9. Planning of activities for 2006
- 10. Other business
- 11. Nomination of Standing Committee officers

Election of a rapporteur (Agenda item 2)

3. Ms. Ingrid Lopez (IMO) was unanimously designated as Rapporteur of the meeting.

PTC (HQ and Non-HQ) reports (Agenda item 3)

4. The Standing Committee was informed of the outcome of the joint meeting of the Permanent Technical Committees held on 4 February 2006 (see Appendixes 1 and 2 for agenda and list of participants) where it had been proposed to merge the HQ and Non-HQ PTCs in the interest of greater effectiveness. The Coordinator of the PTC/Non-HQ reported on the chronic problem of the lack of participants, owing to the remote locations of field duty stations and the absence of funds for travel. In that regard, the Standing Committee invited individual staff associations/unions at HQ to consider allocating some funds to allow their colleagues from non-HQ duty stations to participate in future FICSA Councils.

5. After briefing newcomers on the reasons that had led to the establishment of the PTCs ten years previous, the Standing Committee endorsed the merging of the two PTCs and the revised terms of reference (Appendix 3) were discussed and approved.

6. It was decided that the list of members of the PTC/GSQ should be revised and at least one member per HQ duty station and at least the appointment of one member from major regions in the field should be sought. The fundamental role of the field-oriented agencies, such as UNDP and PAHO/WHO, was recognized in that respect. It was also agreed that members who were no longer available for cooperation in the Technical Committee should not be shown in the membership list (see Appendixes 4 and 5 for the current list of the members of the PTC/GSQ and the resource persons).

7. It was recognized that the Coordinator should take action in order to verify the members' availability and their willingness to serve on the Committee, as well as locate additional members, if necessary.

8. According to the new terms of reference (TOR), the Coordinator would be *ex-officio* the Chairman of the Standing Committee on General Service Questions. The Standing Committee subsequently nominated Messrs. Rolando Chacon (PAHO/WHO Washington) and Varghese Joseph (ITU) as Vice-Coordinators of the PTC/GSQ.

Salary surveys in headquarters duty stations (Agenda item 4)

9. The Member of the Executive Committee on Compensation Issues informed the Standing Committee about recent developments relating to the application of the methodology for salary surveys in HQ duty stations. Following consideration of the ICSC reports on the surveys in Madrid, Paris and Montreal, it was noted that the ICSC had already made attempts to damage still further the application of the Flemming principle by introducing, for example, additional constraints on the selection of employers and the retention of job matches. It was also noted that the lack of participation by key employers was an increasing phenomenon.

10. The Standing Committee approved the following recommendations:

- 1. FICSA should assume a proactive role and start working on the proposals for the next revision of the methodology as a matter of urgency.**
- 2. Each HQ duty station should provide at least one member and one alternate to be part of PTC/GSQ and members from major non-HQ locations should be identified.**
- 3. The collection of data relevant to the salary surveys should be initiated in order to identify breaches in the application of the Flemming principle.**

Salary surveys in non-headquarters duty stations (Agenda item 5)

11. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the outsourcing of the non-HQ salary survey had not materialized. Based on the content of document CEB/2005/HLCM/34 of 28 November 2005, the 'ownership' of the process for conducting the survey would be transferred to the United Nations with effect from 1 July 2006.

12. After considering the supplementary documentation, including the legal opinion of the Office of the Legal Adviser of UN and Progress Report No.1 on the handover of local salary survey responsibilities from UNDP to the UN, detailing the timeframe for the transfer as well as for resolving the issues related to the ownership of the software and data, the Committee agreed on the following recommendations:

- 1. FICSA Executive Committee should closely monitor the implementation of the handover agreement and the jointly funded arrangements for salary survey activities as described in CEB/2005/HLCM/34.**
- 2. FICSA should liaise with the appropriate office in the United Nations in order to offer support to the capacity-building process for the conduct of surveys, particularly at the local level.**

- 3. The FICSA Executive Committee should closely follow developments on the inclusion of GS staff in the pilot tests for broadbanding and pay for performance by UNDP in Copenhagen and other field locations in the light of their potential impact on salaries.**
- 4. FICSA Executive Committee should liaise with UNDP staff representatives and request that channels of communication be established with local staff in order to enhance the flow of information to FICSA on that matter.**

FICSA Workshops (Agenda item 6)

(a) Reports

13. The Committee expressed satisfaction at the fact that in 2005 the successful conduct of four workshops in the field and one at a HQ location had generated income amounting to \$US 16,200, substantially offsetting the running cost of \$US 17,500. It would appear that during 2005 the workshops were the sole revenue-generating activity of the Federation.

14. The Committee took note of the reports on the workshops and endorsed the recommendations contained therein, in particular:

- 1. It was agreed by consensus that the local salary survey committees needed empowering and strengthening, while their members should be provided with adequate terms of reference.**
- 2. The workshop activities should continue and possibly be stepped up, given the key role they played in raising staff representatives' awareness of the survey process and other related issues.**

(b) Training material

15. A report was provided by officers of the Standing Committee on the current status of the development of the CD-Rom on the General Service salary survey methodology to be used by trainers. It was noted that there was need for improvement, in particular in the chapters on data analysis, the salary scale construction phase and the post classification module. After a thorough discussion, the Standing Committee thus recommended the following steps:

- 1. FICSA should inform the consultant of the required amendments and request that a revised version of the CD-Rom be released.**
- 2. FICSA should evaluate the possibility of protecting the copyright of the CD-Rom.**

(c) Training of trainers and roster and resource persons

16. The Standing Committee noted the increased interest in workshops and recognized the need to identify and provide training for additional trainers. In that connection the possibility of having the new trainers assisting in the conduct of workshops should be envisaged.

(d) TOR and ground rules for resource persons

17. The Committee recognized the need for trainers and resource persons to comply with the policy of the Federation and to inform FICSA of their activities concerning salary surveys and related matters, including any ad-hoc requests received from individual staff associations/unions.

(e) Participants' fees

18. The Committee agreed to maintain the current fee of \$US 500.00 for participation of staff from non-FICSA associations/unions.

It invited the Executive Committee to explore the possibility of demanding a participation fee of administration attendees.

(f) *Logistical and organizational issues*

Based on the analysis of the previous experience, the Committee requested the Executive Committee to prepare a list of requirements, arrangements and agreements whereby a hosting Organization would be informed of the logistical arrangements necessary to facilitate the smooth running of the scheduled workshops.

(g) *Suggested venues for 2006/2007*

19. The Committee was pleased to note that a list of the prospective salary surveys in non-HQ duty stations was available. Based on the geographical distribution of the above-mentioned surveys the following schedules for the workshop programme in 2006 was recommended.

In 2006 FICSA should consider offering the following workshops on GS Salary Survey Methodology, by region:

- 1. Africa:**
 - (a) **English: Tanzania or Malawi**
 - (b) **French: Benin or Senegal**
- 2. Latin America and the Caribbean:**
 - (a) **Spanish: Dominican Republic**
 - (b) **English: USA^{*}, Jamaica or Barbados**
- 3. Eastern Europe:**
 - **English: Slovak Republic or Czech Republic**
- 4. Far East:**
 - **English: Pakistan, Vietnam or India**

Furthermore, consideration should be given to the possibility of holding a workshop on the HQ of the Salary Survey Methodology in Vienna, subject to an invitation from the IAEA.

The Committee requested an allocation of \$US 20,000 for running the workshops, as per current practice.

ICSC reform of the General Service and related categories (Agenda item 7)

(a) *TOR approved by the ICSC at its 60th session (July 2005)*

20. The Committee was informed of the results of the ICSC working group on the General Service reform held on 2 and 3 February 2006, the videoconference held on 15 December 2005 and the relevant discussions in the 60th session of the ICSC concerning the terms of reference.

^{*} Invitation was made by PAHO/WHO (Washington) to host the workshop in English.

(b) Composition and workplan of the Joint ICSC/CEB/FICSA/CCISUA

21. Attention was drawn to document FICSA/C/59/GSQ/CRP.3 prepared by the FICSA representatives in the working group. The Standing Committee took note of the intention to collect further data and to revise the definition of General Service work as reflected in the current version of the CCOG.

22. It was felt that the timeframe provided was insufficient. The Committee noted that the other participants in the ICSC working group shared that opinion.

23. The Standing Committee reiterated its disagreement with the composition of the working group as decided by the ICSC Secretariat and recognized the need to increase the number of staff representatives in that group.

24. After discussing the issue, the Committee agreed on the following list of recommendations

- 1. The FICSA Executive Committee should propose to the ICSC that four members and four alternate members representing staff be allowed to participate in the next meetings of the joint working group.**
- 2. Where possible, videoconferences with a larger number of participants should be organized.**
- 3. A roster of resource persons comprising at least one experienced staff representative from each of the 8 HQ duty stations should be nominated, mainly drawing on the expertise available in the PTC/GSQ. Ongoing communications should be maintained throughout the year within the Standing Committee/GSQ. It was agreed that Ms. Margaret Eldon would continue to serve as a focal point for that exercise.**
- 4. To the extent possible, cooperation with CCISUA on the matter should continue.**
- 5. An allocation of \$US 10,000 to cover for expenses related to the functioning of the working group and discussed with CCISUA the possibility of cost sharing.**

Impact of currency fluctuations on pension benefits (jointly with SC/SocSec and SC/Field) (Item 8)

25. The issue was covered in the report the Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety.

Planning of activities for 2006 (Agenda item 9)

26. The schedule of activities was included in the recommendations under agenda item 6 (g) above.

Other business (Agenda item 10)

27. No other issues were presented to the Committee for discussion.

Nomination of Standing Committee officers (Agenda item 10)

28. The Standing Committee nominated Mr. Edmond Mobio (WHO/HQ Geneva) as Chair, Ms. Azucena Pernia (UNWTO) and Ms. Ingrid Lopez (IMO) as Vice-Chairs.

29. The meeting was closed on 9 February at 13.30 hours.

Appendix 1

Joint Meeting of the FICSA PTC/HQ and Non-HQ

New York

Saturday, 4 February 2006

(15h30 to 18h30)

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Election of a rapporteur
3. Organizational matters
 - a. Re-evaluation of the terms of reference and mandate of the PTCs
 - b. Current status of the membership
 - c. Procedures for the nomination and selection of PTC members
 - d. Coordination and reporting to the Chairperson, Standing Committee on General Service Questions and to the FICSA Executive Committee
4. Technical matters
 - a. Application of the ICSC methodologies for salary surveys (HQ/non-HQ)
 - i. Issues related to the next ICSC review
 - ii. Transitional measures for non-HQ salary surveys
 - b. Review of the Job Evaluation Standards for the GS category (HQ)
 - c. Effects of currency devaluation on salaries and pensions (non-HQ)
 - d. Development of interactive training material (HQ/non-HQ)
5. Workplan 2006/07
6. Nomination of Coordinator(s) and Vice-Coordinators for consideration by the SC/GSQ
7. Other business

Appendix 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS Joint Meeting of the FICSA PTC/HQ and Non-HQ

Chair/Chair, Standing Committee	Edmond Mobio (WHO/HQ Geneva)
Rapporteur/FICSA Executive	
Committee Member for Compensation and Social Security Issues	Mauro Pace (FAO/WFP-UGSS)

Participants

FAO/WFP-UGSS	Svend Booth Margaret Eldon Francesco di Pancrazio
IMO	Valérie Seguin
ITU	Varghese Joseph
PAHO/WHO (Washington)	Rolando Chacon
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	Ruth Sison Ann Wishart

Appendix 3

PERMANENT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON QUESTIONS CONCERNING STAFF IN THE GENERAL SERVICE AND RELATED CATEGORIES

Terms of Reference

I. Mandate

1.1 The Permanent Technical Committee on Questions Concerning the General Service and related categories (PTC/GSQ) is a sub-committee of the FICSA Standing Committee on General Service Questions (SC/GSQ), established with the mandate of advising the Standing Committee and the Executive Committee of FICSA on technical issues related to the conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited categories.

II. Functions

2.1 The main functions of the PTC/GSQ are:

- (i) *To advise* the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on General Service Questions on issues related to the conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited categories;
- (ii) *To develop* documents and recommendations of a technical nature in support of FICSA's action on issues related to the conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited categories;
- (iii) *To propose* topics for discussion or items for inclusion in the agenda and/or the workplan of the Standing Committee on General Service Questions;
- (iv) *To assist* the Standing Committee on General Service Questions in coordinating and evaluating information received from member associations/unions on issues pertaining to the conditions of employment of GS and related categories of staff;
- (v) *To study and analyse* issues of a technical nature brought to its attention by the FICSA Executive Committee, the Standing Committee on General Service Questions or individual associations/unions represented by FICSA and
- (vi) *To recommend* relevant solutions and/or course of action, as appropriate.

III. Composition, membership and coordination

3.1 The PTC/GSQ is composed of staff members of associations/unions represented by FICSA, appointed in a technical capacity for an initial period of three years.

3.2 Members will be eligible for re-appointment.

3.3 The Chairperson of the SC/GSQ will assume *ex-officio* the functions of Coordinator of the PTC/GSQ.

3.4 The Chairperson will appoint, in consultation with the members of the PTC/GSQ and the SC/GSQ, two vice-Coordinators with portfolios for headquarters and non-headquarters issues.

3.5 The vice-Coordinators will be eligible for re-appointment.

3.6 Applications for membership will be open to staff associations/unions represented by FICSA, which should nominate candidates of the required level of expertise in matters related to the conditions of employment of the General Service and related categories.

3.5 Applications should be addressed by the head of the respective staff association/union to the Coordinator and should contain a *curriculum vitae* of the proposed candidate, including a summary of his/her experience with matters related to the conditions of employment of the General Service and other locally recruited categories.

3.6 Members will be recommended for appointment by the Coordinator, in consultation with the Vice-Coordinators and the officers of the SC/GSQ, subject to endorsement by the FICSA Executive Committee.

3.7 In recommending members for appointment, the Coordinator will be guided by the following principles:

- (i) The members of the Committee should possess demonstrated experience on issues related to the conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited categories;
- (ii) The Committee should ensure the widest possible coverage of matters related to both headquarters and non-headquarters locations;
- (iii) As far as possible, the membership of the Committee should be equitably distributed between headquarters and non-headquarters locations, without prejudice to principles (i) and (ii) above; and
- (iv) The Committee should normally be composed of no less than seven and no more than fifteen members.

3.9 The Coordinator, upon request by individual staff associations/unions, may recommend the appointment of alternate members, in consultation with the Vice-Coordinators and the officers of the SC/GSQ, subject to endorsement by the FICSA Executive Committee.

3.10 The PTC/GSQ will assist the Standing Committee on General Service Questions in building up a roster of resource persons who have the required expertise in specific subject areas.

3.11 The members, the alternate members and the resource persons may be requested to serve as trainers in the workshops organized by FICSA on matters related to the General Service and other locally recruited categories. Their assignment will be a responsibility of the FICSA Executive Committee, in consultation with the officers of the SC on General Service Questions.

3.12 The members, the alternate members and the resource persons shall comply with the statutory obligations and the policy of the Federation. They shall not make personal use of any information/material developed by, or on behalf of, the Federation, unless so authorized by the Executive Committee.

IV. Methods of work

4.1 The PTC/GSQ will determine its own methods of work, including preparation of its agenda, establishment of ad-hoc working groups, work assignments, record-keeping and other procedures.

4.2 As far as possible, information exchange, cooperation and coordination of activities should be conducted by correspondence and use of electronic communication methods.

V. Meetings

5.1 The PTC/GSQ will normally meet at least once a year, in conjunction with the FICSA Council. Ad-hoc meetings may be convened if specific tasks or circumstances so require, with the endorsement of the FICSA Executive Committee and the officers of the SC/GSQ.

5.2 The costs for attendance to meetings of the PTC/GSQ will normally be borne by the association/union to which the participant belongs.

5.3 However, should financial coverage be envisaged for the performance of specific assignments, it should be approved through the established financial procedures of the Federation, following a specific request by the Coordinator or the Executive Committee.

5.4 PTC/GSQ meetings may be attended by participants other than members as proposed by individual associations/unions, subject to endorsement by the Executive Committee, and the concurrence of the Coordinator. The costs related to such participation will normally be borne by the sponsoring association/union.

5.5 The Coordinator and the Vice-Coordinators shall be responsible for the organization of the meetings of the PTC/GSQ, the preparation of the relevant documentation and the selection of the venue. As far as possible, the venue shall be selected on the basis of invitations received from staff associations/unions represented by FICSA.

5.6 The Coordinator or one of the two Vice-Coordinators shall normally preside the meetings of the PTC/GSQ. In their absence, the Presiding Officer will be selected from among the members present at each meeting. A rapporteur shall be also nominated at each session among the participants.

VI. Reporting

6.1 The PTC/GSQ shall report to the Standing Committee on GS Questions and submit a yearly report of activities for transmission to the FICSA Executive Committee. It will also report on the purpose and outcome of its meetings.

6.2 The Coordinator shall be responsible for keeping the Standing Committee/GSQ and the Executive Committee informed of the activities of the PTC/GSQ.

VII. Revision of the terms of reference

7.1 Request for amendments of the TOR should be addressed to the coordinator of the PTC/GSQ. If endorsed by the Standing Committee they will be transmitted to the FICSA Executive Committee for appropriate action.

Appendix 4

PERMANENT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

ASSOCIATIONS/UNIONS/FUNSAs	NAMES	EMAIL ADDRESSES
FAO/WFP-UGSS Rome	Paolo Barchiesi Margaret Eldon Mauro Pace	paolo.barchiesi@fao.org margaret.eldon@fao.org mauro.pace@fao.org ugss@fao.org
FUNSA Romania	Cristina Balan	cristina.balan@undp.org
IMO London	Ingrid Lopez Antonio Paoletti	ilopez@imo.org apaoletti@imo.org
PAHO/WHO Washington	Rolando Chacon	Chaconed@paho.org
ITU Geneva	Varghese Joseph Jacques Sanou	Varghese.joseph@itu.int Jacques.sanou@itu.int
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS New York	Ruth Sison	Ruth.sison@undp.org
UNESCO Paris	Christiane Nollet	c.nollet@unesco.org
UNWTO Madrid	Monica Gonzales Michel Julien Amparo Muñoz	mgonzalez@world-tourism.org mjulien@world-tourism.org
WHO/EURO Copenhagen	Gareth Burns	gbu@who.dk
WHO/EURO Barcelona	May Hansen	may@es.euro.who.int
WHO/HQ Geneva	Edmond Mobio	mobioe@who.ch
WMO Geneva	Françoise Plivard	Plivard_f@gateway.wmo.ch

Appendix 5

LIST OF FICSA RESOURCE PERSONS ON GENERAL SERVICE ISSUES AS OF FEBRUARY 2006

<i>Name</i>	<i>Working language(s)</i>	<i>Duty station</i>
Headquarters		
Franco di Pancrazio (also Non-HQ)	English, French	Retiree, contact through FAO/WFP-UGSS Rome Email: frandip@libero.it
Varghese Joseph	English, French	ITU Geneva Email: Varghese.joseph@itu.int
Edmond Mobio	French	WHO/HQ Geneva Email: mobioe@who.ch
Christiane Nollet	French	UNESCO Paris Email: c.nollet@unesco.org
Mauro Pace (also Non-HQ)	English, French, Spanish	FAO/WFP-UGSS Rome Email: mauro.pace@fao.org
Non-Headquarters		
Basharat Ahmad	English	ILO Islamabad Email: basharat@iloisb.org.pk
G. K. Mandapati	English	WHO/SEARO Email: mandapatig@whosea.org
Osvaldo Bastida	English, Spanish Portuguese	Former UNHCR Buenos Aires Email: odbconsultant@sinectis.com.ar
Rolando Chacon	English, Spanish	PAHO-WHO/AMRO Washington Email: chaconed@paho.org
R. L. Rai (non-HQ)	English	Retiree, contact through WHO New Delhi Email: ramrai@gmail.com
<i>N.B. Names are listed in alphabetical order.</i>		

Annex 8

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

Chair	Jakob Skoet (FAO-APS)
Vice-Chair	Kees de Joncheere (WHO/EURO Copenhagen)
Rapporteur	Rhéal LeBlanc (UPU)
President, FICSA	Robert Weisell (FAO-APS)
Research and Liaison Officer, FICSA	Anne-Marie Pinou

Participants

CERN	Jean-Pol Matheys
IAEA	Dean Neal Manijeh Torabi
ILO/ITC Turin	Johanne Lortie
IMO	T. Antón Pushaparajah
ITU	Varghese Joseph
PAHO/WHO Washington	Marilyn Rice
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	Tint Kyu
UNRWA/ISA	Maria Traficanti

Adoption of the agenda (FICSA/C/59/PSA/CRP.1) (Agenda item 1)

1. After agreeing to the following additions:
 - New item 3: A review of the ICSC report on mobility/hardship allowance, hazard pay and strategic bonuses (the following items were renumbered)
 - New item 9: The evolution of the margin
 - New item 10: Equal pay for equal work.

The Committee adopted the following agenda.

1. Adoption of the agenda (FICSA/C/58/PSA/CRP.1)
2. Election of a rapporteur
3. A review of the ICSC report on mobility/hardship allowance, hazard pay and strategic bonuses
4. Review of report of the Standing Committee for 2005 (FICSA/C/58/PSA/1) including the Index of Decisions (FICSA/C/58/PSA/CRP.2):

- (a) FICSA/58/D/64. Ensure that the FICSA membership is informed of the outcome of the legal appeal against General Assembly Resolution 57/285 (section II.A) of 20 December 2002 and its possible implications. (See FICSA Update No. 6 / 2005)
 - (b) FICSA/58/D/65. Request interested HQ duty stations to implement at least the post adjustment and place-to-place survey sections of the Workshop on Professional Salaries and Allowances by the end of June 2005.
 - (c) FICSA/58/D/66. Review the issue of post adjustment methodology and the implications of being a non-HQ duty station; and if warranted, enhance or modify the suite of presentations to accommodate that distinction.
 - (d) FICSA/58/D/67. Commission a preliminary study updating some aspects of the publication entitled "The United Nations: an Uncompetitive Employer" in preparation for the review of the Noblemaire principle, taking particular care to avoid any comparison of General Service and Professional salaries in view of prior experience in this respect. (See document ICSC/61/CRP.11.)
 - (e) FICSA/58/D/68. Continue to monitor the implementation of the pilot studies and work closely with the staff associations of the pilot organizations to provide support and information.
5. Programme of work of the International Civil Service Commission for 2006-2007
- (a) Review of the pay and benefits system:
 - (i) Modernizing and simplifying allowances: Separation payments; All leave entitlements; Language incentive;
 - (ii) Monitoring of the pilot study on broadbanding/pay-for-performance (jointly with HRM);
 - (iii) Assessing the implementation of the new Job Evaluation Master Standard for the Professional and higher categories;
 - (v) Education grant: review of the methodology for determining the grant;
 - (vi) Staffing of field missions: review of conversion of contractual instruments.
 - (b) Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories:
 - (i) Evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin;
 - (ii) Base/floor salary scale;
 - (iii) Survey and report on the status of National Professional Officers;
 - (iv) Report of the twenty-eighth session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ);
 - (v) Children's and secondary dependant's allowances: review of the level.
 - (c) Total compensation comparisons under the Noblemaire principle to determine the highest paid civil service:
 - (i) Results of the United Nations/United States grade equivalency studies (SES);
 - (ii) Results of the United Nations/United States grade equivalency studies (All other grades);
 - (iii) Total compensation comparison – Stage II (Belgium);
 - (iv) Conduct a United Nations/United States total compensation comparison;
 - (v) Reference check with World Bank and OECD.
6. Review the agenda for the 28th session of ACPAQ (New York, 30 January – 6 February 2006).
- (a) Methodology approved by the Commission for cost-of-living surveys at HQ duty stations;
 - (b) Collection of survey data in New York for the purpose of place-to-place cost-of-living comparisons;
 - (c) Cost-of-living survey in HQ duty stations: Geneva, London, Madrid, Montreal, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Washington, D.C.; and
 - (d) Review of the cost-of-living methodology for application to field duty stations.

7. Training and capacity building within FICSA on PSA-related issues: what is needed, how do we proceed?
8. Post adjustment methodology and the implications of being a non-HQ duty station
9. The evolution of the margin
10. Equal pay for equal work
11. Other business
12. Nomination of Standing Committee officers and core group (3)

Election of the rapporteur (Agenda item 2)

2. Mr. Rhéal LeBlanc (UPU) was elected as Rapporteur.

Review of the ICSC report on mobility hardship allowance, hazard pay and strategic bonuses (Agenda item 3)

3. Anne Marie Pinou, FICSA Research and Liaison Officer, presented an overview of the ICSC report (ICSC/61/R.4) based on the work of the ICSC Working Group on the Mobility and Hardship Scheme and highlighted the major changes to the scheme that had been recommended by the ICSC at its 61st session. The revised scheme would be considered again at the resumed session of the General Assembly in spring 2006, at which time the date of implementation for the new mobility and hardship arrangements would also be decided.

4. Given the fact that the new scheme would need to be communicated to staff and that many staff members needed to understand fully the purpose for mobility and hardship arrangements, the Committee was informed that the ICSC, together with the organizations and staff, were currently in the process of developing a communication strategy to ensure that the scheme, as well as the individual elements of the scheme, were effectively conveyed to staff. The communications strategy would strive to ensure that the individual components of the scheme (i.e. mobility, hardship, non-removal and assignment grant) were well understood. Depending on the final product, FICSA might have to supplement that strategy with its own communication.

5. The Committee was also informed that the Commission had revised the definition of a hazard, for the purposes of hazard pay, to include cases where medical staff had to come into close contact with life-threatening diseases in the course of their work. IAEA suggested that the definition of what constituted a hazard be expanded to include staff whose work brought them into contact with radioactive substances, as was the case for safeguards inspectors working for that agency.

Recommendation: FICSA should bring the matter to the attention of the ICSC so that it might re-examine and broaden the definition of hazard pay.

Review of report of the Standing Committee for 2005 (FICSA/C/59/PSA/1) (Agenda item 4)

6. Participants reviewed and discussed the various elements of the report, in particular:

(a) *Place-to-place surveys at headquarters duty stations in 2005*

7. Members reported on the 28th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ) held in New York, 30 January - 6 February 2006, which had recommended the new post adjustment indices for headquarters duty stations for approval by the ICSC at its forthcoming session.

8. A series of problems with the survey methodology had become apparent during the discussions of ACPAQ, including:

- Validity, transparency and comparability of data on rent (inter alia the proper inclusion of all costs related to renting accommodation);
- Comparability of information on education costs; and
- Low participation of staff in the housing and household expenditure surveys.

9. The Committee noted that ACPAQ had decided to elaborate a 'wish list' of methodological questions for future discussion in ACPAQ. The Committee also noted the importance of monitoring developments in ACPAQ's future discussion of methodological issues pertaining to place-to-place surveys.

Recommendation: FICSA should carefully monitor developments in ACPAQ's future work on methodological issues pertaining to the place-to-place survey and try to ensure that major problems be addressed as soon as possible, including rental data, education costs and low participation of staff in the associated surveys.

(b) PSA training workshops

10. It was noted that interest in the workshops was not as high as expected. Participants felt that the training material was well designed and complete, while the limited interest might be attributed to the cost of providing the training. Finding a sponsor for the training where possible and exploring the use of innovative technology to deliver the training were suggested as possible ways of increasing interest in the workshops. The issue was further discussed under agenda items 7 and 8.

(c) Review of pay and benefits systems

11. Participants felt that the enthusiasm for the pilot projects on broadbanding was decreasing. Concerns were expressed with regard to deviations from the methodology for the pilot studies on broadbanding, which should be raised with the ICSC.

12. Participants reviewed the index of decisions pertaining to the Standing Committee from the previous FICSA Council (FICSA/C/58/PSA/CRP.2). It was noted that no action had yet been taken by the Standing Committee on decision FICSA/58/D/66 (relating to post adjustment methodology for non-HQ duty stations) owing to insufficient human resources in the Committee.

13. In conclusion, the report was adopted by the Committee.

Programme of work of the International Civil Service Commission for 2006-2007 (Agenda item 5)

14. Participants reviewed the work programme of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for 2006-2007 and made observations and recommendations on the following issues.

Children's and secondary dependant's allowances: review of the level

15. It was found that the implementation of education grant adjustments was not done in a timely fashion and thus grants given for a particular school year did not reflect actual costs. It should be

ensured that the school fees taken into account were consistent with the actual fees paid by staff members in a given school year.

Recommendation: FICSA should seek more timely implementation of annual updates of the education grants with the ICSC so that the ceiling of education grants was consistent with the reality of actual school fees for the school year in question.

16. Participants also expressed concern over the discontinuation of child allowance/dependency rate at 21 for children still attending higher education institutions. Since children rarely finished their university degree at the age of 21, it was considered necessary to increase the cut-off age for child allowance/dependency rate beyond the age of 21.

Recommendation: FICSA should endeavour to secure an increase in the age limit for child allowance/dependency rate for UN staff with children attending higher education institutions.

Survey and report on the status of National Professional Officers (NPOs)

17. Participants discussed a growing trend in several organizations to recruit national professional officers. They cost less and did not receive a great many of the benefits that international professionals obtained as part of their recruitment. It was felt that NPOs often had qualifications and job responsibilities similar to those of internationally recruited staff, but their benefits, salary and job security were much inferior to those of international staff. The Committee expressed concern over that trend and the potential negative implications it bore for the international civil service.

Recommendation: FICSA should monitor developments regarding the increased use of national professionals in all duty stations and consider the consequences they bore for principles of equal pay for equal work and for overall HR management, including the issue of possibilities for job rotation.

Total compensation comparisons under the Noblemaire principle to determine the highest paid civil service

18. The Committee took note of the ongoing study on total compensation comparison – stage II (Belgium) (ICSC/62/R.11). The Committee felt that FICSA should ensure that the compensation comparison between the US, Belgian and other appropriate civil services resulted in the best benefit package for UN staff and be in line with the Noblemaire principle.

19. Concerns were also raised over the impact of a non-UN spouse's benefits package under national schemes on that of a UN partner. It was suggested that FICSA pay attention to the particular issue of whether the benefits of UN staff members were negatively impacted by the benefits package received by spouses working for a private company or another employer.

20. It was noted that reference compensation checks would be conducted with the World Bank and OECD. It was suggested that a similar comparison should be made with the European Union Commission.

Recommendation: FICSA should request that the reference compensation comparison by the ICSC also be made with EU Commission.

Training and capacity building within FICSA on PSA-related issues (Agenda item 7)

21. The Committee emphasized the need for capacity building in that area and for broadening the pool of expertise within FICSA. The Committee took note of the training package on PSA and post adjustment issues prepared by FICSA. Training workshops had been conducted on the basis of the package in some duty stations, but too few member associations/unions had taken advantage of the opportunity for training, possibly because of cost considerations. It was noted that the cost to an organization wishing to organize this training could be kept to a minimum.

Recommendation: FICSA should create more awareness of the training packages available and provide trainers for workshops in the duty stations that requested them. The cost should be borne by the requesting member association/union.

Post adjustment methodology and the implications of being a non-HQ duty station (Agenda item 8)

22. Certain elements of the training package mentioned under Agenda item 7 were specific to headquarters duty stations and would need to be adapted to other types of duty stations. It was noted that the post adjustment methodology for non-HQ duty stations and HQ duty stations was largely the same, but it differed significantly for field duty stations. In order to adjust the training package, there was a need to identify people who were knowledgeable about the methodology being used in field duty stations.

Recommendation: FICSA should identify people who were familiar with the post adjustment methodology being used in field duty stations, and modify the existing training package as appropriate. \$US 1,000 should be allocated for that purpose.

Evolution of the margin (Agenda item 9)

23. The Committee expressed concern that the margin for professional salaries had been consistently below 115 for many years. The Committee considered that situation a violation of the rules laid down by the UN General Assembly, which mandated a margin range of 110 to 120, with a desirable mid-point of 115. It was important that every effort be made to raise the margin, not only in order to improve the compensation of Professionals, but also to ensure respect for the rules and regulations applying to common system staff.

Recommendation: FICSA should continue to put pressure on the ICSC and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly to increase the margin to at least 115.

Equal pay for equal work (Agenda item 10)

24. The IAEA Staff Association felt that it was unfair for single staff members to receive less pay than their colleagues who had spouses and/or children and received a dependency allowance. They requested that a recommendation be included asking FICSA to put pressure on the ICSC to ensure that all staff were paid equally, independent of the number of dependants they might have. They proposed that single salaries be increased to the level of those at the dependency rate (equal pay for equal work) so as to ensure that those currently receiving a dependency allowance would not be disadvantaged. The IAEA Staff Association asked that the issue be investigated since the United States Civil Service was the comparator and did not provide for a dependency allowance. They added that since the dependency allowance was included in the same salary scale as that for single staff, it was not a benefit, but a difference in pay for staff in the same grade. It thus discriminated

against single staff who performed the same work (in the same grade) as those receiving a higher salary on account of their dependants.

25. The majority of the members of the Committee did not support the proposal.

Other business (Agenda item 11)

25. No issue was raised under the agenda item.

Nomination of Standing Committee officers and core group (Agenda item 12)

26. Ms. Kristin Kolshus (FAO-APS) was nominated Chair of the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances. At the request of the Committee, Mr. Kees de Joncheere (WHO/EURO Copenhagen) agreed to continue as Vice-Chair. The Committee felt that it was important for participants to maintain contact throughout the year. The Committee noted that also Mr. Matthew Montavon (FAO-APS), who had been on the core group over the last year but was not present at the Council, would continue his involvement.

Annex 9

REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS

Chair	Svend Booth (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
Rapporteur	Peter Lillie
President, FICSA	Robert Weisell (FAO-APS)
General Secretary, FICSA	Vivien Joy Ponniah (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS)
Treasurer, FICSA	Edward Seidler (FAO-FSA)
Members, FICSA Executive Committee	Maria Dweggah (WHO/HQ Geneva)
	Diab El-Tabari (UNRWA/ASA Lebanon)
	Valérie Seguin (IMO)
Regional Representatives	Manijeh Torabi (IAEA)
	Paul Matsiona (WHO/AFRO Brazzaville)
	Fredrik W. Schultz (UNRWA/ISA)
Accountant, FICSA	Brian Turner

Participants

CERN	Jean-Pol Matheys
FAO-APS	Janice Albert
	Lawrence Clarke
	Giovanni Muñoz
FAO/WFP-UGSS	Steven Ackumey-Affizie
	Margaret Eldon
	Olwen Gotts
	Mauro Pace
IAEA	Michael Donoho
	John Young
	Imed Zabaar
ILO/ITC Turin	Rosanna O’Keeffe
IMO	T. Anton Pushparajah
ITU	Maite Comas-Barnes
	Varghese Joseph
	Jacques Sanou
OPCW	Gordon Vachon
PAHO/WHO Washington	Carolina Bascones
	Marilyn Rice

UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	Stephan Flaetgen Tint Kyu Ruth Sison Tita Tiongson
UNESCO	Janet Boulmer Christine Restif
UNLB	Samuel Cassista
UNRWA/ISA	Maria Traficanti
UNWTO	Azucena Pernia
UPU	Stéphane Vuillemin
WHO/AFRO	Paul Matsiona
WHO/HQ Geneva	Gisèle Laliberté Edmond Mobio
WHO/EURO Copenhagen	Kees de Joncheere Rainer Verhoeven

Associations with consultative status

Former Officials Section ILO	Jean-François Santarelli
UNWG Geneva	Nathalie Tschyrkow
World Bank Group	Rachel McColgan

Federations with observer status

FAPNUU Uruguay	Gustavo Casas
FUNSA Myanmar	Aye Win

Introduction

1. Prior to the first meeting of the Standing Committee, a meeting of heads of delegations was held on 5 February 2006 to brief them on the main features of the budget proposed for 2006. The FICSA Treasurer emphasised the conservative nature of the budget which proposed a decrease of some SFR 37,000. In an initial discussion, issues related to the scale of contributions and its computation were taken up and a new approach to the banding system was outlined.

2. The Ad Hoc Committee held its first meeting on 7 February 2006 under the chairmanship of the FICSA Treasurer, Mr. Edward S. Seidler (FAO-FSA), who was subsequently replaced by Mr. Svend Booth (FAO/WFP-UGSS).

Adoption of the agenda (Agenda item 1)

3. The provisional agenda was adopted and comprised the following items:

1. Approval of the provisional agenda
2. Appointment of a rapporteur
3. General comments on the A&B meeting
4. FICSA Audited Accounts for 2004 (FICSA/C/59/A&B/1)
5. Statement of contributions of member associations/unions, associate members, consultative and observer bodies based on information received up to 31 December 2005 (FICSA/C/59/A&B/5) and update (FICSA/C/58/A&B/CRP.2)
6. Budget performance report for 2004 (FICSA/C/59/A&B/2)
7. Reports on the status of the Termination Indemnity Fund and Legal Defence Fund (FICSA/C/59/A&B/3)
8. Draft budget for 2006 (FICSA/C/59/A&B/6)
9. Proposed scale of contributions for 2006 (FICSA/C/59/A&B/6)
10. General accounting and banking matters
11. Administrative matters
12. Other business

Appointment of a rapporteur (Agenda item 2)

4. Mr. Peter Lillie (FAFICS) was appointed Rapporteur.

General comments on the A&B meeting (Agenda item 3)

5. The Chairman explained the structure of the meeting and drew attention to various papers before the Committee, in particular the draft budget and the statement of assessed contributions. In connection with the latter paper, he drew attention to the proposal for the introduction of half-bands as well as the paper on dues and voting structure (FICSA/59/CRP.5) that plenary had referred to the Committee. He also underscored the need to be alert to requests from the various Standing Committees for budgetary resources to cover activities in the current year.

FICSA audited accounts for 2004 (Agenda item 4)

6. The Chairman introduced the audited accounts (document FICSA/C/59/A&B/1).

7. Attention was drawn to discrepancies between the figures shown in the audited accounts and the budget performance report for the same year. Questions were asked about the fungibility and policy on over-expenditures within and between various chapters of the budget.

The Committee recommended that in future, audited statements should be appropriately annotated if there were significant differences between the budget performance report and the audited statements for the same year.

8. The Committee noted and approved the audited accounts as submitted. Thanks were expressed to the auditor.

Statement of contributions of member associations/unions, associate members, consultative and observer bodies (Agenda item 5)

9. The information contained in the statement and update (documents FICSA/C/59/A&B/5 and CRP.2) reflected the financial contributions as at the beginning of the current session of the Council. Whereas no arrears were recorded in Swiss francs (CHF), the US dollar figure amounted to \$US 88,110.04. The defaulting members were clearly shown in the relevant table, as were those FUNSAs and members with consultative status in a similar situation. Advice was sought on how best to deal with delinquent members. Continuing to include them in the basis for calculating contributions would automatically incur a shortfall in income. However, a distinction would have to be made between: (a) those member associations/unions that did not pay and failed to contact FICSA; and (b) those who applied for deferred payment terms.

The Committee recommended that after three full years of non-payment, the member association/union concerned should be declared delinquent with the attendant loss of rights and privileges. The delinquent members would be removed from the assessment process.

The Committee further recommended that FICSA should write to the delinquent member association/union informing it of the loss of rights and privileges and reminding it of the balance outstanding. In the event of it returning to the Federation, the member association/union would be expected to pay that balance.

Budget performance report for 2005 (Agenda item 6)

10. The Chair introduced the report (document FICSA/C/59/A&B/2). Questions were raised on the issue of maintaining budget control and checking over-expenditure. Whereas Articles 6 and 7 of the Financial Rules met certain concerns over budget control, further measures could be adopted.

It was recommended that any significant over-expenditure against individual budget lines should be described in greater detail in the budget performance report.

11. Questions were also raised with respect to the lack of funds for regional travel, potential cost-savings measures on bank charges and the revenue generated by the FICSA workshops. With respect to the last, it was suggested that the current practice of offsetting credits against expenditures and showing the net expenditure should be changed.

In the interest of greater transparency, the Committee recommended that in future budget performance reports the income generated by the FICSA workshops be shown in the income table as a separate item line.

Report on the status of the Termination Indemnity Fund and Legal Defence Fund (Agenda item 7)

12. In introducing the reports on the status of the Termination Indemnity Fund and Legal Defence Fund as contained in document FICSA/C/59/A&B/3, the Treasurer reported that the Termination Indemnity Fund covered the Federation's liabilities for terminal payment to the FICSA secretariat staff. The provision of indemnity related to the indemnity for salary, termination and commuted annual leave. Whereas in the previous year the calculation had been based on the commutation of 60 full days of annual leave per staff member, the report for the current year showed actual accrual of leave plus 10 days. It represented a significant change over previous years.

13. Expenditure against the Legal Defence Fund had been minimal in the past year. Furthermore, having won his appeal, Ali Basaran, former President of FICSA, had reimbursed the Federation the sum of CHF 25,000 that FICSA had paid him to help with the conduct of his appeal. That reimbursement had also been reflected in the FICSA accounts. The Legal Defence Fund stood at the required level of CHF 60,000.

14. The Committee took note of the reports.

Draft budget for 2006 (Agenda item 8)

15. The Treasurer introduced the draft budget for 2006 as contained in document FICSA/C/59/A&B/4. The budget reflected the continued efforts of the Secretariat to contain and reduce expenditures while maintaining the core activities of the Federation and securing the best representation of its members' interests. The budget had been prepared at the exchange rate of CHF 1.31 to \$US 1: a significantly higher rate than the 2005 rate of CHF 1.14 to \$US 1. The budget showed: a pronounced increase under the heading of external activities; a slight increase under annual programmes; a sharp decrease under special programmes and standing committee support; and a minor increase under FICSA administration.

16. The Committee decided to go through the draft budget chapter by chapter.

Chapter 1

17. The main increases related to: (a) representation at ICSC meetings and associated working groups, as well as missions to other bodies such as the General Assembly and CEB; and (b) increasing the public relations and information activities. Other than the general provision for contingency, no specific provision had been made for the proposed meeting of the panels related to redesigning the UN system of justice and redefining staff rules and regulations, nor for any new working groups or strategic workshops on the future direction of FICSA.

The Committee recommended that in future draft budgets, the annotations referring to travel should use the generic 'FICSA representative' rather than identify the person travelling in each individual case,

18. It was pointed out that the budget should address priorities and respond adequately to the UN reform process that was currently the single most important issue confronting staff at large. The importance of participating in the reform process was recognised, particularly when reform took place at three distinct levels: local (internal management); local (external parties); and common system. Given the need to maintain an effective FICSA presence throughout the reform debate, innovative thinking was called for. Fuller use should be made of local member associations/unions or staff representatives on various committees at the duty stations (principally New York) where the process was unfolding.

The Committee recommended that in exercising its prerogative, the Executive Committee be given full authority within the existing budget to switch funds from one budget line to another or from one budget chapter to another. Those funds should be predominately used for activities related to reviewing and discussing the UN reform process.

Chapter 2

19. The Treasurer pointed out that the costing for the Council was based on New York costs and one consultant. The increased costs were offset by a drop in the cost of external affiliation (PSI).

20. Discussion focused on the lack of provision for regional travel. Given the important role assumed by the regional representatives, it was suggested that the revenue generated by the FICSA regional workshops could be used to fund the travel of the regional representatives. A tentative figure of \$US 8,000 was suggested. It was recognized that a greater regional presence could be assured by making fuller use of active FUNSAs in the regions; it was incumbent on the Executive Committee member for regional and field issues to set in train a process of identifying those FUNSAs with the greatest synergetic potential.

21. The Committee proposed the following amount against the respective budget line in the chapter:

Budget line 2.2 \$US 8,000 to cover Regional Travel

Chapter 3

22. The Committee proposed the following amounts against the respective budget lines in the chapter:

- Budget line 3.1 \$US 21, 200 to cover the cost of six workshops
- Budget line 3.2 an additional amount of \$US 1,000 for the modification of the training package on post classification in field duty stations
- Budget line 3.3 CHF 3,000 to field test the interactive CD Rom (GS salary survey methodology)
- Budget line 3.4 an additional amount of \$US 420 for the purchase of law books and annual subscription to legal journal.

23. The Committee did not concur with the request for CHF 5,000 from the Standing Committee on Legal Questions in order to commission a study on staff association and union/staff representatives' rights on the grounds that a more gradual approach be adopted following close study of the legal material to be purchased.

24. The Committee also recommended that future budgets should break down budget line 3.3 into its component parts: General Service Standing Committee, SOCSEC Standing Committee and Legal Standing Committee.

25. In connection with budget line 3.6, the Committee took note of the fact that the Executive Committee would determine the criteria governing the allocation of funds for FUNSA travel to the Council and present the same to the next Council.

Chapter 4

26. The Treasurer explained that the items in the chapter referred to the essential fixed costs of running the Federation: salaries, communications, supplies, office rental, equipment, bank charges and contingencies. Any changes were due to changes in UN salary schemes and exchange rates. The Committee was also reassured that full provision had been made for the salary costs of the Research/Liaison Officer for 2004 and 2005.

27. It was suggested that funds be set aside to finance training opportunities, skills enhancement and career development for the FICSA Secretariat staff. FICSA could not afford to be perceived as being less aware of its staff development needs than most organizations in the common system.

The Committee recommended that a staff development fund be set up into which a sum equivalent to 1% of the Federation's staff costs would be paid each year.

28. In connection with the development of the FICSA Secretariat staff, it was suggested that FICSA should develop an effective staff performance appraisal system as it was recommending such to the various administrations, i.e. 360° evaluation.

The Committee recommended that Council request the Executive Committee to consider the possibility of promotions within the FICSA Secretariat in accordance with best practice and that budgetary considerations not be allowed to take precedence over the staff's right to promotion.

In conformity with its recommendation on the budget performance report, the Committee recommended that the income accruing from the FICSA regional training workshops should be shown under a corresponding budget line [Miscellaneous income] in the income tables (Annex 4 to the draft budget).

29. The Committee thus proposed the following amounts against the respective budget lines in the chapter:

Budget line 4.1 CHF 603,295 for salaries and common staff costs
Budget line 4.2 CHF 6,033 for staff development

The proposed totals under the individual chapters were:

Chapter 1: CHF 73,239
Chapter 2: CHF 59,474
Chapter 3: CHF 23,652
Chapter 4: CHF 633,228
Total: CHF: 789,593

Proposed scale of contributions for 2006 (Agenda item 9)

30. The Chair drew the Committee's attention to four proposals relating to changing the scale of contributions. With two of the proposals being described by their authors as 'embryonic', it was first suggested that the Committee focus on the two others: the one proposing maintenance of the current scale and the other introducing a half-unit methodology. In the ultimate analysis and given the late juncture at which the proposals had been submitted, it was deemed more prudent to abide by the current scale.

31. That notwithstanding, the Committee proposed setting up a working group to examine all four proposals: the linear model proposed by CERN; the model based on the number of dues-paying members (as distinct from total staff strength); the current scale; and the modification of the latter.

The Committee recommended that a working group be set up to study all four proposals relating to changing the scale of contributions and the membership thereof be determined prior to the end of the current session of the Council.

General accounting and banking matters (Agenda item 10)

32. No matters were raised under the agenda item.

Administrative matters (Agenda item 11)

33. No matters were raised under the agenda item.

Other business (Agenda item 12)

34. The Committee took up the issue of arrears of dues by the UNIDO Staff Union, a delinquent member who left the Federation in 2003. The President provided details of correspondence with the President of the UNIDO Staff Council at the beginning of the year. The Committee took note of the developments to date and urged that steps be taken to settle the issue to the benefit of both parties. It welcomed the offer on the part of the UNIDO Staff Union to negotiate payment of its arrears.

The Committee agreed to the Executive Committee following up on the offer of the UNIDO Staff Union and seeking payment of half of the dues outstanding.

The Committee also recommended opening discussions on the issue of outstanding dues with the Staff Association of the World Trade Organisation.

Summary

36. The Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions presented 12 recommendations relating to:

- **Annotations to the audited accounts**
- **Non-payment of dues**
- **Treatment of delinquent member associations/unions**
- **Reporting modalities in the budget performance report**
- **Income generated by the FICSA workshops**
- **Fungibility**
- **Increases against specific budget lines**
- **A staff development fund for the FICSA secretariat staff**
- **Modifications to the scale of a contributions**
- **Negotiation on the payment of arrears.**

Annex 10

BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2006

Expenditures by Line

Chapter One, External Activities and PR&I

UN General Assembly
Consult with UNJSPB
HLCM machinery
HR Network
CEB
CSAIO
ICSC
Security
Public Relations & Information
Contingency Travel
Expenditures, Chapter One

Swiss Francs		\$US	
Budget 2005	Estimated Actual 05	Budget 2006	
4,298	9,732	5,701	4,352
-			-
363	3,225	2,878	2,197
1,590	738	8,791	6,711
314		400	305
1,457	1,184	1,143	873
21,377	16,822	23,882	18,231
	4,358	5,444	4,156
11,400	3,924	15,000	11,450
10,000	6,181	10,000	7,634
50,799	46,164	73,239	55,908

Chapter Two, Annual Programmes

FICSA Council/Excom
Regional Travel
External Affiliations (PSI, AHRMIO)
Expenditures, Chapter Two

33,425	35,402	40,994	31,293
		10,480	8,000
	15,953	8,000	6,107
33,425	51,355	59,474	45,400

Chapter Three, Spec. Progs. & St. Comm. Support

GS Non-HQ Workshops, Methodology
P Questions
Field Questions/Training
GS St. Committees
SocSec St. Committees
Legal St. Committees
Legal Defence Fund
FUNSA Participation in Council
Expenditures, Chapter Three

17,100	21,380	27,772	21,200
2,280	3,990	4,692	3,582
15,000	12,963	3,000	2,290
6,400	1,030	8,708	6,647
			-
		550	420
59,585	59,779	(25,000)	(19,084)
3,420	2,302	3,930	3,000
103,785	101,444	23,652	18,055

Chapter 4, FICSA Administration

Salaries & Comm. Staff Costs
Staff Development
Communications
Supplies, Materials & Maintenance
Geneva Office Rent
Computer and Electronic Equipment
Bank Charges
Contingencies
Expenditures, Chapter Four

567,163	600,398	603,295	460,531
		6,033	4,605
12,000	7,900	9,000	6,870
4,400	1,800	2,500	1,908
6,500	6,500	6,500	4,962
2,500	400	4,500	3,435
1,940	1,400	1,400	1,069
	400		-
594,503	618,798	633,228	483,380

Total Expenditures

782,512	817,761	789,593	602,743
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Annex 11

DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE 2006 CONTRIBUTIONS

DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE 2006 CONTRIBUTIONS

Factor	TOTAL STAFF	Prof HQ 1	Prof Field 0.9	GS HQ 0.5	GS Other 0.5	GS Low pay 0.01	STAFF WEIGHTED	UNITS
<i>CERN</i>	2614	1158		1456			1886	0.99
FAO-APS	1080	1080					1080	10
FAO-FSA (5 months)	370		370				333	1.25
FAO/WFP-UGSS	1220			1220			610	6
<i>ECB</i>	1010	812		198			911	0.72
<i>ESO</i>	309	208	55	46			280.5	0.18
IARC	137	47		90			92	0.6
IAEA	2304	1056	44	1168	36		1697.6	11
<i>ICCO</i>	15	8			7		11.5	0.01035
<i>ICO</i>	29	10		19			19.5	0.01755
IFAD	357	171	3	183			265.2	2
ILO/ITC	184	70	4	110			128.6	1
IMO	290	133		157			211.5	2
IOM	1450	80	166	93	154	957	362.47	3
<i>IOOC</i>	43	16		27			29.5	0.02655
<i>IPGRI</i>	76	42		34			59	0.0531
ITLOS	31	11		20			21	0.21
ITU	869	312	23	454	80		599.7	5
PAHO/WHO	650	224	190	236			513	5
SCBD	58	32		26			45	0.45
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	6338	719	1490	524		3605	2358.05	11
UNESCO	2282	720	328	794	440		1060.93	5
UNRWA/ISA	113		106	7			98.9	0.6
UNRWA/ASA	2500					2500	25	0.25
UNRWA/ASU W.Bank	3800					3800	38	0.38
UPU	156	67		89			111.5	1
WHO/AFRO	951		280			671	258.71	2
WHO/EMRO	345		120			225	110.25	1
WHO/EURO	423	111	10	302			271	2
WHO/HQ	1512	822		690			1167	11
WHO/WPRO	372		117			255	107.85	1
WHO/SEARO	469		123			346	114.16	1
WMO	264	118	8	133	5		194.2	1.5
UNWTO	96	42		54			69	0.6
Totals	32717	8069	3437	8130	722	12359	15140.62	87.8376

Annex 12
METHODOLOGY FOR CALCULATING THE SCALE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2006

CALCULATION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2006

	CHF	US\$
Total amount to be covered by contributions	768371	586543
Contributions by Consultative Members: 18 x CHF 600	10800	8244
Contributions by Observer Members (FUNSAs): 26 x US\$ 100 x 1.31	3406	2600
Total amount to be covered by Full and Associate Members	754165	575698
Total number of units	87.838	
Value of one unit	8585.91	6554.13

Band	Weighted number of staff	Units	CHF		US\$	
			Member	Associate	Member	Associate
1	1100 plus	11	94444.97	8500.05	72095.40	6488.59
2	1000 - 1099.9	10	85859.07	7727.32	65541.27	5898.71
3	800 - 999.9	8	68687.25	6181.85	52433.02	4718.97
4	700 - 799.9	7	60101.35	5409.12	45878.89	4129.10
5	600 - 699.9	6	51515.44	4636.39	39324.76	3539.23
6	500 - 599.9	5	42929.53	3863.66	32770.64	2949.36
7	400 - 499.9	4	34343.63	3090.93	26216.51	2359.49
8	300 - 399.9	3	25757.72	2318.19	19662.38	1769.61
9	200 - 299.9	2	17171.81	1545.46	13108.25	1179.74
10	150 - 199.9	1.5	12878.86	1159.10	9831.19	884.81
11	100 - 149.9	1	8585.91	772.73	6554.13	589.87
12	60 - 99.9	0.6	5151.54	463.64	3932.48	353.92
13	40 - 59.9	0.4	3434.36	309.09	2621.65	235.95
14	<40	WN / 100				

Annex 13

SCALE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2006

Member / Associate	W'ed Staff	Units	CHF	\$US
<i>CERN</i>	1886	0.99	8500.05	6488.59
FAO-APS	1080	10	85859.07	65541.27
FAO-FSA	333	1.25	10732.38	8192.66
FAO/WFP-UGSS	610	6	51515.44	39324.76
<i>ECB</i>	911	0.72	6181.85	4718.97
<i>ESO</i>	280.5	0.18	1545.46	1179.74
IARC	92	0.6	5151.54	3932.48
IAEA	1697.6	11	94444.97	72095.40
<i>ICCO</i>	11.5	0.01035	88.86	67.84
<i>ICO</i>	19.5	0.01755	150.68	115.02
IFAD	265.2	2	17171.81	13108.25
ILO/TC	128.6	1	8585.91	6554.13
IMO	211.5	2	17171.81	13108.25
IOM	362.47	3	25757.72	19662.38
<i>IOOC</i>	29.5	0.02655	227.96	174.01
<i>IPGRI</i>	59	0.0531	455.91	348.02
ITLOS	21	0.21	1803.04	1376.37
ITU	599.7	5	42929.53	32770.64
PAHO/WHO	513	5	42929.53	32770.64
SCBD	45	0.45	3863.66	2949.36
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	2358.05	11	94444.97	72095.40
UNESCO	1060.93	5	42929.53	32770.64
UNRWA/ISA	98.9	0.6	5151.54	3932.48
UNRWA/ASA	25	0.25	2146.48	1638.53
UNRWA/ASU WB	38	0.38	3262.64	2490.57
UPU	111.5	1	8585.91	6554.13
WHO/AFRO	258.71	2	17171.81	13108.25
WHO/EMRO	110.25	1	8585.91	6554.13
WHO/EURO	271	2	17171.81	13108.25
WHO/HQ	1167	11	94444.97	72095.40
WHO/WPRO	107.85	1	8585.91	6554.13
WHO/SEARO	114.16	1	8585.91	6554.13
WMO	194.2	1.5	12878.86	9831.19
UNWTO/OMT	69	0.6	5151.54	3932.48
Totals	15140.62	87.83755	754165.00	575698.47
<i>New special status members</i>				
UNLB (second year)	49.5	0.4	686.87	524.33
UNAIDS	166.79	1.5	1287.89	983.12
<i>New Associate member</i>				
OPCW (CHF 3090.93 - CHF 1,102 paid in 2005 as special member)			1988.93	

Annex 14

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Annex 15

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND CONFERENCE ROOM PAPERS

FICSA/C/59/	Title
1	Provisional agenda for the 59 th FICSA Council
2	Nomination form and terms of reference for the officers of FICSA (Executive Committee and Regional Representatives)
3	Report of the Executive Committee to the 59 th session of the FICSA Council
(E/F) 4	Statutes, Rules of Procedure of the Council and Financial Rules
5	FICSA handbook on staff representation

FICSA/C/59/CRP.	Title
(E/F) 1	Table ronde intersyndicale – Inter-union round table
2	No document
3	No document
4	Developments at CERN in 2005
5	FICSA's dues and voting structure
6	Submission from the African Development Bank for consideration by the Plenary

INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

FICSA/C/59/INFO.	Title
1 and Add.1	Information for delegates
2	No document
3	No document
4 and Rev.1	Candidates for election: Executive Committee Members and Regional Representatives
4 and Rev.1/Add.1	Candidates for vacant positions: Executive Committee Members and Regional Representatives

FICSA/C/59/INFO/CRP.	Title
1	Schedule of meetings
2	Provisional list of participants
3	Provisional list of documents and conference room papers for the 59 th FICSA Council

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS

FICSA/C/59/A&B	Title
1	FICSA Audited Accounts - As at the close of accounts 31 December 2004 - Statement of assets, liabilities, income and expenditure
2	Budget performance report for 2005
3	Reports on the status of the termination indemnity fund and legal defence fund
4	Draft budget for 2006
5	Statement of contributions of member associations/unions, associate members, consultative and observer bodies based on information received up to 31 December 2005
6	Proposed scale of contributions for 2006

FICSA/C/59/A&B/CRP.	Title
1	Provisional agenda
2	Statement of contributions of member associations/unions, associate members, consultative and observer bodies based on information received up to 6 February 2006

STANDING COMMITTEE ON CONDITIONS OF SERVICE IN THE FIELD

FICSA/C/59/FIELD	Title
1	Situation report – UNRWA staff working conditions - 2005
2	Report on regular annual meeting of the ICSC WG on conditions of life and work in the field

FICSA/C/59/FIELD/CRP.	Title
1	Provisional agenda

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL SERVICE QUESTIONS

FICSA/C/59/GSQ/CRP.	Title
1	Provisional agenda
2	Review of the methodology for surveys of best prevailing conditions of service at non-headquarters duty stations
(see also FICSA/C/59/HRM/3) 3	Working Group on the Review of the Job Evaluation Standards for the General Service and related categories

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

FICSA/C/59/HRM	Title
1	Enhancing staff-management relations
2	Review of the pay and benefits system: Status report
(see also FICSA/C/59/GSQ/3) 3	Working Group on the Review of the Job Evaluation Standards for the General Service and related categories

FICSA/C/59/HRM/CRP.	Title
1	Provisional agenda
2	ITU's recent experience in staff/management relations: Decision 517

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL QUESTIONS

FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/	Title
1	Activities of the Standing Committee on Legal Questions since the 58 th Council

FICSA/C/59/LEGAL/CRP.	Title
1	Provisional agenda
2	Differences between the provisions of the Statutes of the ILO and the UN Administrative Tribunals
3	Extract - CSAIO3 proceedings
4	FICSA membership – Proposal for clarifying Article 6
5	UNAT Judgement No. 1275 – Case No. 1358: Al Souki
6	ILOAT reform – What next?

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

FICSA/C/59/PSA/	Title
1	Report of the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances

FICSA/C/59/PSA/CRP.	Title
1	Provisional agenda
2	Review of the action points/Decisions of the 59 th FICSA Council

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY/ OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

FICSA/C/59/SOCSEC	Title
1	Devaluation of Currencies - Salaries and Pensions
2	The need for long-term care insurance
3	United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board – 188 th Meeting of the Standing Committee - Summary report

FICSA/C/59/SOCSEC/CRP.	Title
1	Provisional agenda
2	Long-term care – Brief notes and conclusions – CSAIO6
3	Devaluation of pensions of General Service staff in developing countries
4	Short-term staff entitled to pension disadvantage
5 and Add.1	Entitlements to survivors' benefits to former UN spouses
6	Extract – CSAIO6 Proceedings – Long-term care – CERN slides presentation



Annex 16

REMARKS BY MR. EUGENIUSZ WYZNER, VICE-CHAIRMAN, ICSC, TO THE FICSA COUNCIL

UNITED NATIONS

NATIONS UNIES

NEW YORK

**INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE
COMMISSION**

**COMMISSION DE LA FONCTION
PUBLIQUE INTERNATIONALE**

Office of the Vice-Chairman

Bureau du Vice-Président

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REMARKS BY THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF ICSC, MR. EUGENIUSZ WYZNER, TO THE FICSA COUNCIL (New York, 8 February 2006)

Mr. President, distinguished members of the Council,

Due to other urgent commitments, the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission, Mr. Bel Hadj Amor, cannot be with you on this occasion. He asked me, however, to convey to you his best wishes for a successful session. It is with great pleasure that I come here to provide you with an overview of the work being done by the Commission with regard to the current human resources management reform in the United Nations common system at the 59th session of the FICSA Council being held here in New York. This is a very important and exciting time for the organizations of the United Nations common system as they continue to undergo an era of change. We cannot emphasize enough the role of staff at large in ensuring the continued success of this major undertaking that will affect not just the operational capabilities of the organizations, but also the professional growth and future of all staff. It is only through constant dialogue and cooperation that we will be able to stay on course and achieve the expected goals of this reform.

The International Civil Service Commission, as mandated by the General Assembly, will continue to work hand in hand with all common system organizations and staff associations in order to ensure the application of common personnel standards, methods and arrangements. With this in mind, I will highlight some of the work that the Commission has been assiduously pursuing so as to facilitate the human resource reform in the common system.

Review of pay and benefits system – pilot project

Let me start by briefing you on the most comprehensive undertaking of the Commission - the review of pay and benefits system and the pilot study on broad-banding and pay for performance. The objective of this study is to establish a compensation and benefits system that is grounded in a holistic approach and improves the delivery of services. Such a system would reward staff on the

basis of merit, competence, responsibility and accountability. It should reflect transparency, flexibility and simplicity and should establish an environment in which staff is motivated and encouraged to develop skills and competencies with a view towards career advancement. The ultimate goal would be to enable organizations of the common system to attract, develop and retain high quality staff.

As part of the review, the Commission launched its pilot project to explore how the UN System can better reward meritorious performance by staff in Professional and higher categories. The Human Resources Pilot project will continue for approximately two years, and has received the commitment of five volunteer organizations: UNAIDS, UNDP, IFAD, WFP and UNESCO's International Center for Theoretical Physics. Those organizations are involved in a process aimed at examining how to change the current system that provides little incentive for good performance.

I must inform you that thus far the Commission is satisfied with the results of the pilot study. At its last session in July 2005, the Commission was provided with a progress report which was not merely encouraging but was also useful for improving and continuing its work. One aspect that was a source of concern to the staff representative bodies was the inclusion of the General Service and related staff in the pilot project in UNDP. The Commission will closely monitor the project including this aspect to ensure that staff will not be at a disadvantage for having been included in the study. It is expected that, as the project proceeds, it will be possible to provide a more substantive progress report, including some preliminary results of the study of those volunteer organizations with at least one year's experience, at that point, in the conduct of the study.

Reform of the General Service and related categories

This leads me to the topic of reform of the General Service and related categories. You may recall that in 2001, when the review of the pay and benefit system was initiated it was the general agreement that reform efforts should first focus on the Professional and higher categories and should subsequently be extended to the General Service and related categories. Having promulgated the new job evaluation system for the Professional and higher categories, the ICSC is now in the process of reviewing the requirements of the General Service and related categories to determine the approach to be applied for incorporating them into an appropriate holistic human resources management framework.

For this task, a working group comprising six representatives from the organizations, four from the staff and one each from the CEB and ICSC secretariats was established at the summer session of the Commission in 2005 to develop a global, transparent, simple system for evaluating General Service work, which would be flexible, responsive to organizations' needs, reflect the current nature of work and support other human resources subsystems. This is a complex project and already we see evidence of a few of the challenges that must first be overcome. The issue of parity between organizations and staff was originally of concern to some of the members of the working group, but having come together for the first meeting in New York, it would appear that some common ground may have been reached on this point. It is my firm belief that with the collaboration of all parties, we will be able to rise above any other challenges to arrive at a meaningful conclusion for this project. I know we can count on your usual dedicated and constructive participation in this exercise.

Total compensation comparisons under the Noblemaire Principle to determine the highest paid Civil Service: Reference check with World Bank and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

At its sixtieth session, the Commission commenced its current Noblemaire study by reviewing data collected by its secretariat as part of phase I of the study. Phase I analysis resulted in the identification of a number of civil services which could be considered for the phase II analysis, namely the national civil services of Belgium, Germany, Singapore and Switzerland. While the studies of the national civil services of Germany, Singapore and Switzerland were discontinued in view of their less competitive conditions of service as compared to the US Federal Civil Service, the Commission has decided to look further into the Belgian civil service as a possible alternative comparator of the common system. It further decided to proceed to collect information on the remuneration levels of the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as a reference check.

All three studies are currently at various stages of completion and are expected to be concluded by the forthcoming ICSC session to be held next month. Thereafter, the findings of the Commission will be reported to the General Assembly in due course.

ACPAQ

Just two days ago, we concluded the 28th session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ), which I am privileged to chair. It was a particularly important session since it is only once every five years that the ACPAQ makes recommendations regarding the results of the comprehensive cost-of-living surveys conducted at eight headquarters duty stations and Washington, D.C. After a thorough review of those surveys, the Committee was able – with an active and constructive participation of your delegation headed by President Weissel – to reach consensus on all issues before it, including recommendations to the ICSC on the methodologies for surveys both at headquarters and field duty stations and, significantly on post adjustment indexes in the above nine duty stations. I do believe that the ICSC, at its next month's session, will have before it the ACPAQ's report containing solidly documented recommendations based on strict application of the methodology that would hopefully satisfy all participants and that new post adjustment indexes would normally become effective in April 2006.

General Service Surveys

Two surveys were scheduled to be conducted during the fall of 2005.

Rome

With regard to the Rome survey, the main part of data collection took place from 21 November to 2 December 2005. A number of additional employer visits had to be conducted in the course of December 2005 and January 2006 in order to meet employer preferences with regard to the timing of interviews. It should be noted, however, that because of the holiday season, it was impossible to obtain interviews with employers between 22 December 2005 and 9 January 2006. In spite of this delay, this survey will be available during the 62nd session.

New York

In New York, although originally scheduled to begin in the last week of October 2005, the data collection for all three categories General Service, Trades and Crafts and Security Service had

to be postponed until 1 November 2005. This was primarily because the response from outside employers to participate in the survey was unexpectedly slow. In addition, as the survey preparations had to cover a significantly larger range of issues, with the exercise covering three distinct staff categories, the ICSC secretariat and the LSSC needed more consulting time than originally anticipated.

I have to inform you today that although the data collection started in November 2005 and was scheduled to be completed in one month, it did not prove possible to secure the required number of comparators for any of the three categories by the end of this period, as a result of which this survey phase had to be extended. Efforts are continuing to secure the required number of comparators and dates for the completion of the data collection have not yet been determined.

Conclusion

Mr. President, in the interest of time, I must end my introductory remarks, especially since you provided me with a few questions which I would like to address now. Please note however, that I have only briefly updated you with the activities and actions of the Commission as we work towards the transformation of the management of human resources in the common system. Let me emphasize at this point that success can only be attained through the cooperation of all parties involved and much will depend on your input and involvement. The Commission is fully devoted to this task and will keep you abreast of its progress as we endeavour to increase the effectiveness of our common system.

Mr. President, distinguished members of the Committee, I wish you continued success with your meeting. Thanks for your attention.

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MESSAGE TO THE COUNCIL FROM ROSEMARIE WATERS, PRESIDENT, CCISUA

Dear FICSA Colleagues,

I would like to extend my sincere apology for not being available on Monday to welcome you to the United Nations Headquarters, due to illness. However, I wish to inform you that the CCISUA federation believes that these two weeks from now until the 17th of February, represent a tremendous opportunity not only for our two federations, but for all staff we represent.

The threats to our benefits and rights are becoming more aggressive and meaningful consultation and negotiation with elected staff representatives is diminishing rapidly throughout the common system. We have a unique opportunity, at the end of this week, to show all administrations that the staff can form a united front to defend our rights and benefits and that we will be a formidable force.

On behalf of CCISUA, I wish you every success this week and look forward to working with the FICSA federation in a close and cooperative manner in the future.

With best regards,

(signed)

Rosemarie Waters
President of CCISUA