

FICSA CIRCULAR



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To: Chairs, Member Associations/Unions
Members of the Executive Committee
Chairs, Members with Associate Status
Chairs, Associations with Consultative Status
Presidents, Federations with Observer Status
Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Standing Committees

From: Gemma Vestal, General Secretary

**JOINT STATEMENT BY
THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATIONS (FICSA) AND
THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF INTERNATIONAL STAFF UNIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS (CCISUA)
AT THE OPENING OF THE 85TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (ICSC)
(United Nations Office at Vienna 10 to 21 July 2017)**

Mr. Chair, Members of the Commission, colleagues,

It is my pleasure today to address you on behalf of both FICSA and CCISUA, our two federations united for the single purpose to defend and promote the rights of international civil servants across the common system, many of them in some of the world's most difficult and dangerous duty stations.

First let me welcome the opening statements delivered so far.

We also take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Vladimir Storozhev, the newly-elected Commissioner for Russia and thank Mr. Sergei Garmonin for his contributions to the Commission.

Mr. Chair,

Let me highlight some points of concern on which we will elaborate during the course of the session.

Firstly, we would like to echo our full support to the work conducted so far on the definition of the use of categories of staff and in particular the hard work that took place during the meeting of the Working Group in Guatemala. The conclusions provide a sound basis on which to go forward. We welcome as well the proposals for definition of the FS category and look forward to a similar exercise for the S category. At the same time, in considering the scope of the NPO category, we should recall the overriding principle of equal pay for work of equal value. And we look forward to discussing how improvements can be made to remuneration for locally-recruited staff.

We are also encouraged by the work of the hardship working group and its proposals to reform the classification methodology.

This is particularly important as hardship factors other than security emerge as important challenges for the ever-growing body of staff located in the field. Factors such as isolation, health and education facilities, pollution, which are some cases almost as severe, if not more, than security. We thank the Commission for responding to our request, made last year, on this matter.

Very important at this session will be our consideration of the pensionable remuneration. The decisions made on this item have far-reaching consequences for staff in all categories. We urge you to carefully consider the options before you.

Mr. Chair,

This Commission is vested with tremendous responsibility by the General Assembly, but also with trust by the organizations and staff.

Staff around the world expect that the agreed methodologies on issues such as post adjustment be implemented correctly and that the same methodology, often of great complexity, is sound.

We therefore welcome the findings of ACPAQ that a margin of error does exist, requiring appropriate mitigating measures, and that the Secretariat should be open to recalculating data where errors may be spotted.

We also welcome the decision of the Secretariat to make its data and calculations relating to Geneva available to the statisticians of the HR Network, in line with the request made by staff. These statisticians had access to a level of data and calculations not made available to the survey teams to which you, Mr. Chair, referred.

The consequent report, CRP.9, contains a number of observations and recommendations that will hopefully lead to some recalculations, data use revisions and adjustments to the operational rules, not just for Geneva, but also for the EU duty stations being examined in this round, including Vienna, and for forthcoming duty stations in the field.

Further, we look forward to presenting proposals, as set out in our paper, CRP.8, that mitigate the margin of error inherent in any cost-of-living survey, that provide an external review of the data and calculations, and that make raw data and calculations systematically available in a transparent manner.

Further, the use of data from the European Commission, which covers the spending and family patterns of European civil servants, is far from conclusive and, based on extensive study, appears to not be fully consistent with the needs of our more diverse workforce.

Mr. Chair,

We wish to remind the Commission of our previous understanding that the effects of the new compensation package for the Professional and higher categories be reviewed with corrective action where required. We also wish to remind the Commission of the request to have a comparative study on whistleblowing policies currently in place. Further, and in line with the ICSC's and General Assembly's

decisions, we look forward to learning more of the plans of organizations to implement mandatory age of separation of 65 by 1 January 2018, and not 2019 or 2020.

We look forward to a productive session and to working with our fellow federation, UNISERV, as well as our partners in the HR Network, the members of the Commission and its secretariat.

Thank you.
