

# 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: Brett Fitzgerald, General Secretary

**WRITTEN STATEMENT BY  
THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATIONS (FICSA)  
AT THE 28<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT (HLCM)**

(New York, 8 October 2014)

Mr. Chair, Members and Colleagues of the High-Level Committee on Management,

FICSA will provide its interventions on the substantive items as the session progresses.

FICSA looks forward to the continued sharing of views with the HLCM during discussions on items which are of utmost importance to the staff.

We would have hoped to unify the positions of the Members of the HLCM and the Federations with regards to the major challenges posed by the current review of the compensation package for both the organizations and staff respectively. However, after participating in the three ICSC working groups and the two ICSC sessions in 2014, the Federation has concluded that both the organizations and the staff need to work further together to ensure that any changes to the compensation package will not erode benefits and thereby have a negative effect on staff and on the ability to recruit highly qualified candidates in the future.

FICSA is fully aware that certain actions could also have repercussions on staff morale and motivation which would be counterproductive to the organizations' objectives of enhancing efficiency.

The Federation shares with the organizations the importance of maintaining the independence of the international civil service and will continue advocating that the compensation review, led by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), remains free of all political motivations.

FICSA is following closely the Secretary-General's plans in moving the common system forward through the implementation of the "Fit for Purpose Strategy". In this context, we have noted on the HLCM agenda references to various working groups, namely: the draft contribution on redesigning management and operational systems and developing business models; the draft proposal on risk management, oversight and accountability model; and the proposed UN system strategy on cyber security, cyber-crime and policies on information. FICSA would have hoped that the staff representatives would have been asked to participate in the working groups, which lead to the development of these proposals, in order to provide staff views. We would at this stage kindly ask to be provided with these proposals so as to share our comments with the HLCM. We believe that it can only provide value to the Organizations by having another perspective, and that exclusion of the staff perspective can only do damage to the Organizations when the cost of inclusion is nil.

Other issues which have already been repeatedly raised by FICSA at the HLCM and which continue to preoccupy staff are: 1) the lack of a career development plan, which would provide equal opportunities to staff while taking into account the need for diversity and gender balance; 2) the frequently repeated call to do more with less; 3) the increasing use of non-staff contracts; and 4) the lack of succession planning. We hope that working groups to address these issues can be established and that staff representatives will be requested to participate therein.

FICSA remains concerned regarding the use of private security services and the outsourcing of numerous activities in an apparent effort to achieve financial savings. The Federation firmly believes that any short-term savings should not take priority over professional and well-trained security staff.

Last but not least, as it is a major issue of concern, is the blatant attack on the freedom of speech and the freedom of association recently demonstrated by the Chair of the HLCM himself in summarily dismissing the President of the WIPO Staff Association, without conducting any investigation or hearing, and where the sanction imposed is widely disproportionate to the accusations. The Director General of WIPO has weakly but repeatedly claimed that the action taken against the President of the WIPO Staff Association was against him as a staff member and not as a staff representative, an argument that rings especially hollow when considering that the President was performing his staff representative functions on a full-time basis. A communication on the subject has been sent to the Governing Bodies of WIPO and to the UN Secretary-General by the three Staff Federations. Further staff actions will follow. The Federations are thus requesting the UN Secretary-General, as a first step, to remove the Director General of WIPO from chairing the HLCM, and we reiterate this request today.

In closing, we wish to thank you for providing FICSA with this opportunity to address the HLCM on some of the concerns raised by the staff we represent and we look forward to continued dialogue, not only with the HLCM, but also with the ICSC, the HR Network and the UN Joint Staff Pension Board.

We wish you a successful session.

Thank you.

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