

FICSA CIRCULAR



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

From: Gemma Vestal, General Secretary

**OPENING STATEMENT
DELIVERED BY
THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATIONS (FICSA)
TO THE 86TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (ICSC)**

(United Nations, New York, 19 March 2018)

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Commission and Distinguished Colleagues,

On behalf of the FICSA membership, I would like to make just a few opening remarks which I will expand on when each agenda item is discussed by the Commission in accordance with its programme of work.

Firstly, however, I would like to join the voices of those who congratulate the newly elected members to the Commission and those who have been re-elected. We also extend our congratulations to the Vice-Chair on his election to this important position.

The period between the last session of Commission and now has certainly been an active one for staff and their elected representatives. An item on the Commission's agenda which continues to occupy a great degree of attention on the part of staff is the one relative to post adjustment issues and which the Commission will take up this Thursday and Friday. At that time, I will be commenting on the report of the ICSC consultant on the review of the post adjustment index methodology as presented to, and discussed in, the recent session of ACPAQ and the continued staff protests which have recently taken on a considerably larger scale.

In regard to the review of pensionable remuneration and the working group's report thereon, which will be discussed today and tomorrow, I would already like to mention that the relevant document which is numbered R.3 does not appear to specifically mention the views of the staff federations which participated in the meeting of that working group. Therefore, we would like to currently highlight two important points. When, after lengthy discussion, we had agreed to accept the application of the single rates of the common scale of staff assessment to net remuneration under the unified salary scale, it was not in isolation. In fact, it was within a larger

understanding which includes the working group's recommendations on the other elements of pensionable remuneration, which include the grossing-up factors and the recommendations relative to the preparation of the scale of staff assessment. However, our agreement in the end was due to the ICSC secretariat's assurances that there would be no negative consequences for staff in the General Service category, a position shared by the organizations as cited in paragraph 48 of document R.3.

We will be commenting on the other agenda items at the time when they are taken up by the Commission later this week and early next week in accordance with the programme of work.

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of the Commission,

FICSA cannot over emphasize the fact that thousands of international civil servants are anxiously awaiting the Commission's discussions later this week relative to post adjustment issues. In their eyes, the success of this current session of the Commission will very much depend on whether the Commission is willing to reconsider its earlier decisions relative to the 2016 round of cost-of-living surveys, based on the report of the ICSC consultant on the review of the post adjustment index methodology as discussed at the recent ACPAQ session. We also took note of the briefing delivered this morning by the Under-Secretary-General for Management, Ms. Beagle, in which she mentioned that recent changes to the conditions of service, resulting from the work of ICSC, have led to concerns that the Secretary-General shares with a number of his colleagues in other CEB organizations. Some of the changes include transitional measures related to the introduction of a unified salary scale and the recent outcomes of cost-of-living surveys. In specific reference to the review of the post adjustment system, Ms. Beagle stated that it must avoid unexpected, significant decreases in the post adjustment element of the net remuneration of internationally-recruited staff members. Concerns were also expressed in respect to the introduction of secondary and especially tertiary salary scales for locally-recruited staff in duty stations such as Bangkok.

I would therefore like to respectfully request the members of the Commission, when they take up the matter of post adjustment issues later this week, to consider the issues with a fresh view and open mind.

I thank you for your attention.
