

FICSA CIRCULAR



FICSA /CIRC/1231
Ref: Offorg/HLCM

Geneva, 2 June 2016

To: Chairs, Member Associations/Unions
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Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Standing Committees

From: Diab El-Tabari, President

**REPORT BY THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATIONS (FICSA)
ON THE 32ND SESSION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT (HLCM)
(22 and 23 March 2016, Vienna)¹**

Submitted by Diab El-Tabari, President

The High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) met on 22 and 23 March 2016 at UNIDO-IAEA in Vienna.

FICSA and CCISUA participated in the open session held on the 22 March and in informal discussions which took place the next day. UNISERV was not represented at the meeting.

Discussions which occurred during the first day focused on the future of the UN and specialized agencies' operations and human resources management. The HLCM reviewed principles and mandates at which time it became evident that changes in the way the organizations will be conducting their future business should be expected.

These changes, if they do come about, would be concentrated on combining some administrative services so that certain common services could be centralized, such as procurement processes, the screening of applications for recruitment and the provision of IT services through service hubs.

Human resources management would undoubtedly undergo changes by the year 2030. Although discussions on this matter were at the initial stage, the staff federations expressed concern over the continuous use of terms such as work force and talent when speaking of staff. FICSA was quick to point out that this was not in line with, and was a clear deviation from, the UN Charter wherein Articles 100 and 101 clearly refer to "staff" and not "workforce".

¹ Please see document FICSA/CIRC/1223 for the Federation's written statement was annexed to the HLCM's Report.

It was understood from the discussions that the use of non-staff, which has been significantly increasing, was expected to increase even further over the coming years and as such required the immediate attention of FICSA and the other staff federations. Non-staff contracts should not be used to replace staff for carrying out core functions. The staff federations need to prepare an advocacy campaign for discussions at the highest levels of management, the governing bodies and the UN General Assembly.

HLCM also discussed the implementation of the decisions contained in UN General Assembly Resolution 244/70 with regards to the review of the compensation package for staff in the Professional and higher categories. It was clear from the discussions that HLCM welcomed the approved changes to the package.

A few members mentioned that they would have liked to have seen a better package as concerns allowances for staff serving in the field and expressed concern about potential recruitment difficulties in some hardship duty stations.

HLCM members expressed satisfaction with their advocacy efforts made at the ICSC and the General Assembly which led to further improvements to the compensation package. FICSA was quick to point out that the staff federations had worked hard with the Member States in New York to obtain adjustments to the originally proposed package, especially with respect to the allowances relative to single parents, mobility and hardship.

HLCM members informed the participants that the implementation of the package would be challenging, and would take some time. It would also be extremely costly. In this respect, the focal point for the implementation of the changes mentioned that about \$US 50 million would be needed to do so, if not more. The general feeling was that the entire amount of the expected first-year savings would be utilized to implement the changes.

An extensive briefing via video conference with senior staff of UNDSS New York on current safety and security issues ensued. The briefing included a summary of discussions and conclusions emanating from the 23rd session of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN) held in New York from 2 to 4 February 2016 (FICSA's report on its participation in that IASMN meeting was distributed to the FICSA membership on a restricted basis as a confidential document).

The HLCM meeting participants agreed with the IASMN achievements and noted that even more needed to be done concerning the security of staff and installations, especially in light of the attacks in Brussels which clearly proved that no location was safe from terrorism.

Some of the other general topics which were discussed included the need to reconcile the duty of care for UN personnel while operating in high risk environments. What was disappointing, however, was that the HLCM confirmed its previous decision to discontinue the Duty of Care Working Group which had played a positive role in addressing duty of care issues in the field over the last few years where operations were frequently carried out with a limited number of staff and, globally, a large pool of staff volunteers.

The working group on a UN system data catalogue presented its work and visually demonstrated how the data system would work. Much more would be required to prepare the data catalogue as this project was still work in progress but, once established, it would be necessary to continuously update the data.

The ERP Interoperability Working Group provided a progress report to the HLCM on its work and would hopefully present its completed work at the next HLCM session. The relevant studies are available on the CEB website.

Although no decisions were taken during the open session, attendees expressed their satisfaction with and appreciation for the work completed thus far, requested that the work continue and that progress be reported on at the next HLCM session which would be held in the fall of 2016.

The agenda item concerning FICSA's request for cost sharing was deferred to the fall 2016 session of the HLCM, subject to FICSA presenting a business plan in advance to the HLCM working group on this matter .
