



25 February 2021

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
FIRST SESSION**

**2021**

***Record of decisions***

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee declared the first session of the Annual General Meeting open and welcomed participants to a virtual session.

**1. Election of the Chair of the General Meeting**

A participant in the Meeting proposed that Mr Gurchaten “Nanoo” Sandhu, former member of the Staff Union Committee and current President of UN-Globe, be elected to the Chair. The proposal was seconded, and Mr Sandhu was elected without opposition.

**2. Adoption of the agenda (doc. SU/AGM/2021/1/D.1)**

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee thanked Nanoo for accepting to chair the General Meeting at the last minute. Maria Marta Travieso, former member of the Committee and substitute member for the Americas who should have taken the Chair, had unfortunately had a serious accident and was unable to be present. All the thoughts of the Committee and of the Meeting were with her family and friends at such a difficult moment.

The Chair moved to the agenda and asked if there were any items that the Meeting wished to add.

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee asked for an item to be added on the #ILOConnect meeting that the Union had had with the Director-General the previous day.

***The General Meeting adopted the agenda as amended.***

**3. Discussion of the draft Programme and Strategy of the Staff Union for the year 2021 (doc. SU/AGM/2021/1/D.2)**

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee began her presentation of document D.2 by noting that the Union's Vision and mission, along with the strategic objectives that had been discussed at the Global Meeting in September 2020 and adopted at the second session of the General Meeting of 2020, would form part of document D.2 for the next five years.

Each of the three parts of the document was briefly explained.

No comment was voiced by the Meeting on the first part.

On the second part the Chairperson of the Committee had a few observations to make, notably on the Administration's response to the various requests and other points that had been raised by the Staff Union during the previous year.

On the matter of social security, the objective for 2021 was more ambitious than it had been in previous years. Some 50 per cent of the staff was employed on Technical Cooperation contracts and they had little or no access to social security benefits. The Staff Union was therefore looking at unemployment insurance at the international level as a possible solution.

Diversity was an issue that needed to be taken up across the board, and it was up to the ILO to set the example. It was vital, moreover, that the independence of the international public service be maintained. Although the pandemic had shown that it was possible for officials to work from home, that must not be used as an excuse to do away with duty stations in their contractual relationship with their employer.

If the Staff Union was really to become stronger and better attuned to the staff's needs, the membership needed to grow, or at least be maintained. Part and parcel of that objective, of course, was that Union stewards be properly trained.

One of the participants in the Meeting spoke of the potential risk that contracts in the United Nations common system become "uberized". A representative of the Union's Section of Former Officials said that the list of employees leaving the ILO that he received regularly from the Administration showed that fewer and fewer of them were former employees and more and more were engaged under some form of contractual relationship. That was an alarming development. As to unemployment insurance, he cited the unfortunate example of an earlier project in France and suggested that, to avoid a similar fate, the employer should also contribute to the scheme.

The Chairperson of the Staff Union, responding to the comments and questions on the subject, said that the "uberization" issue had first been raised nine months previously in the context of an HLCM initiative that had involved setting up a task force on the future of work in the United Nations without any staff representatives. The staff federations had strongly objected to the task force's report and eventually succeeded in having their representatives participate. Meanwhile, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) had also set up a working party on the subject.

The second part of the document was adopted by the Meeting.

The third part of the document was adopted without comment.

***The Programme and Strategy of the Staff Union for 2021 was adopted by consensus.***

**4. Adoption of the budget for the financial exercise 2021 (doc. SU/AGM/2021/1/D.3)**

In the absence of the Treasurer, who was unable to take part in the session, the General Secretary presented the detailed budget for the 2021 financial year. Since estimated expenditure was less than estimated revenue, the draft budget was expected to show a surplus of CHF 31,000.

Since the fixed-rate bonds were due to expire, an amount of approximately CHF 161,000 would become available at the end of the year. It was proposed that the General Meeting decide to incorporate that amount into the Staff Union's existing investments.

No questions were raised by the Meeting.

***The budget for the 2021 financial exercise was adopted by consensus.***

**5. Other business**

Referring to the previous day's meeting with the Director-General, the Chairperson of the Staff Union observed that for the first time it had been open to the public instead of being private. All the members of the Staff Union Committee had attended.

Reference was made to the current reform in Turin and to the fact that the staff's morale was suffering. The discussion with the Director-General also covered precarious contracts, recruitment and selection in the field, and how to organize teleworking.

Several participants who had attended the meeting were disappointed by the Director-General's position on the employment and working conditions of staff members on Technical Cooperation contracts. The point was also made that, in terms of the ILO's mandate, TC staff were clearly carrying out essential functions within the Organization.

The question of the salary surveys organized by the ICSC was also raised by a participant in the Meeting, as were certain issues regarding the Staff Health Insurance Fund.

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee said that an agreement had been reached with the Administration to suspend the internship programme for the first half of 2021. She concluded by observing that, judging from the number of people who had tuned in to the virtual General Meeting, the staff's interest in union affairs showed no sign of waning, and she thanked all those who had made the effort to take part.

The Chair of the General Meeting thanked the participants, the secretariat and the interpreters.

**The session closed at 2.47 p.m.**