



Staff Union
of the International Labour Organization
Syndicat du personnel
de l'Organisation internationale du Travail
Sindicato del personal
de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo

24 May 2016

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
FIRST SESSION**

11 February 2016

Record of Decisions

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee opened the first session of the Annual General Meeting and welcomed the participants.

1. Election of the Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee reminded the participants that it was customary for the Chairperson of the Annual General Meeting to be elected for both sessions held in the course of the year. Christopher Land-Kazlauskas was nominated and elected as Chairperson of the meeting by acclamation.

2. Adoption of the agenda (doc. SU/AGM/2016/1/D.1)

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee proposed that the information requested concerning some burning issues could be added in the agenda under “Other business” or directly presented throughout the discussion of the programme and strategy.

The Chairperson added that while the Staff Union would always communicate through normal channels and broadcasts, the Annual General Meeting constituted a good opportunity to provide an update on issues in various areas that are of particular interest and which are not mentioned in the report.

Due to the large number of participants, the Chairperson of the meeting thought it would be more appropriate to provide information during the discussion of the programme and strategy, highlighting a few points. Further discussion would be possible at the end of the meeting.

The Annual General Meeting adopted the agenda.

3. Discussion of the draft Programme and Strategy of the Staff Union for the year 2016 (SU/AGM/2016/1/D.2).

a. Vision and mission of the Staff Union

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee informed the meeting that, since the summer of 2015, the Staff Union Committee had held many discussions regarding what the Staff Union wanted to be and what it wanted to achieve over the coming five years. The Staff Union will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2020, which is why the period proposed (2015-2020) was so important.

The proposed vision and mission had also been presented during the Global Meeting held in October 2015 with the participation and input of all the staff representatives. At this Meeting, the Staff Union engaged in a process of in-depth reflection regarding the aims of the Union. Of course, the Staff Union rules already laid out some of its objectives but there were things that needed to be highlighted. It was important to work together with all the Staff Union members on this vision to establish exactly what could be expected from the Union and determine the role it wanted to play within the Organization.

The vision proposed was the following:

“A global Staff Union that leads the process of transforming the ILO into a better workplace, by representing all staff as an equal and strong partner in social dialogue.”

Along with the vision, a mission had been determined. The mission proposed was the following:

“We promote social justice and equality for all staff in order to have ONE ILO by: - mobilizing and organizing for an even stronger Staff Union; - safeguarding and improving working and employment conditions for all ILO staff; - negotiating fair and effective collective agreements.”

Each word had a role to play and an important meaning.

After several suggestions from the floor and an intense discussion – including a vote in favour of an inclusion of a reference to the ILO constituents – the Chairperson of the meeting proposed to refer the drafting of the vision and mission to the Staff Union Committee, in collaboration with the proposers. The final vision and mission of the Staff Union for the next five years will probably be communicated during an Extraordinary General Assembly in the near future.

To achieve this mission the Staff Union determined objectives for 2016.

b. Objectives and priority areas of action

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee emphasized that the seven objectives and priority areas of action proposed were linked to the above-mentioned vision and mission. They focused on measures that could be taken to improve the working conditions of staff or to safeguard the existing ones.

Means of action have also been proposed to achieve the objectives mentioned and the Staff Union is ready to respond to any question concerning those means of action if needed.

The seven objectives and priority areas of action proposed were approved by consensus.

c. Regular actions

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee indicated that these actions constituted the Staff Union's regular work with the support of the regional titular and substitute members in the field. She emphasized the importance of having close relations with the field representatives as, every time a problem arose which needed to be resolved, the opinion of all colleagues outside headquarters and information on how the issues were dealt with, were crucial.

Another aspect to be considered was IRIS, which was being implemented in all the field offices. A number of adjustments would need to be made in that regard, particularly where the financial resources of the Staff Union were concerned.

Furthermore, given what happened with the compensation package and the decisions which were made by the United Nations General Assembly, it was also clear that the decision to boost the exchanges with other unions and federations within the UN family was key. The Staff Union really needed to support a common response to staff issues and it had to be underlined that a number of decisions which had been made in December 2015 had not been communicated by the Administration in due time. The Staff Union will ensure that the Administration, and in particular HRD, communicate with the staff in the appropriate forum, namely the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC). It should not be the exclusive task of the Staff Union to disseminate bad news. The second round of the revisions will affect the General Service staff and will be difficult as many of those officials do not benefit from some of the grants (e.g. education, repatriation) that have been reduced for the Professional category. The question remained, what will be downgraded? As usual, the Staff Union promised to remain attentive, strong and ready to take action. It emphasized the need for staff to demonstrate that they will not accept every decision.

The notion of "acquired rights" needed to be carefully examined. And, as not all of the decisions taken were crystal clear, it might be possible to challenge them. It appeared that each

organization had interpreted differently the notion of “acquired rights” and how they would be implemented. That Staff Union would do all that it could to defend those rights.

The Chairperson of the meeting underlined that the Staff Union needed the support of its membership in order to make sure that everybody was fully aware of what was at stake. All the relevant information was publicly available. What would be jeopardized was the Organization’s ability to continue to attract and retain the best and the brightest to serve its constituents in the way that they deserve.

The regular actions presented were approved by consensus.

4. Adoption of the budget for the financial exercise 2016 (SU/AGM/2016/1/D.3).

The Treasurer of the Staff Union presented the above document, which showed that the budget was perfectly balanced. Thus, ***the budget for the financial exercise 2016 was adopted by consensus.***

5. Report of the Board of the Staff Union Assistance Fund (SU/AGM/2016/1/D.4).

The Chairperson of the meeting explained that normally this report should have been examined at the second session of the General Assembly held in 2015. However, as the treasurer of the SUAF had been unable to complete the accounts and finalize the report, the examination of the report was instead postponed to this current session of the General Assembly.

The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee added that the SUAF had been created to support staff in particularly difficult situations and that it was funded on a voluntary basis. Resources were diminishing due to a great number of officials retiring, and new members were needed. The Staff Union encouraged staff to become members of the SUAF in order to continue helping staff at Headquarters and in the field.

This document was approved by consensus.

6. Other business

Special point: The Staff Union Regional Titular member for the Americas and the Caribbean, Ms. Amalia Orozco de Cuba, will retire in January 2017, and the Staff Union and its membership wanted to recognize the tremendous work accomplished during all these years in her capacity as Staff Union representative.

Update on the Business Process Review (BPR): The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee indicated that from the outset the Staff Union had expressed its very strong opposition to this initiative for a variety of reasons. Firstly, because this seemed to be a reform within the reform and, secondly, because the private company chosen to realize this review did

not have the reputation of fighting for decent working conditions and the principles that the Organization defends. The Chairperson of the Staff Union informed the meeting that it would remain attentive to this issue, in the framework of the Advisory Committee in which it participates along with other involved departments, and that the Staff Union remained ready to inform and negotiate if needed. A Town hall meeting was being prepared on this issue. The Staff Union did not share the opinion of the Administration that currently the BPR had no impact on the conditions of work of the staff. This position will be clearly presented and defended in due time. A call for expression of interest had been sent out to recruit people in teams dealing with the various administrative issues. Concrete decisions were pending and everything appeared to be at a speculative stage. In any case, the Staff Union would inform the staff immediately in case any concerns arose.

The Chairperson underlined that there were two aspects of the BPR: the review of the administrative processes – the above-mentioned call for expression of interest took place in that framework – and the organizational health which deals with very worrying cultural changes. Those two aspects are separate and could be negotiated within the Joint Negotiating Committee.

The Chairperson of the meeting suggested looking into what was happening in other agencies to see if there were differences in the proposals made, as the review was ongoing in all UN agencies with the same type of company.

Update on the Building Renovation Project: The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee informed the meeting that the Staff Union had also been invited to be part of the Building Steering Committee as an observer. The project was progressing faster than expected and the next stage (renovation of the middle section) would probably start before the Governing Body session in November. This will almost certainly create problems for staff, as the middle portion of the building will be inaccessible. As the building will be cut into two separate parts, discussions will be held concerning the departments that need to work together. It is possible that the Administration will be located in one part and the departments working with the Governing body and other supervisory bodies in another, but it will certainly not be as simple as that. It was mentioned in the Joint Negotiating Committee that there will probably be insufficient office space for all members of staff. This was considered to be unacceptable for the Staff Union. The Administration will come back to the Staff Union with proposals on this issue and staff will be duly informed as soon as new information is available.

The session ended at 3.30 p.m.