



30 September 2022

A review of events of the past month

Dear colleagues,

As usual, your Staff Union is reporting on the activities we have carried out in the past month.

On 16 September, the Staff Union's **Survey** on working conditions closed with responses from **1,734** colleagues of all grades, contract durations and sources of funding. This is a large contribution to our activities for the year of the staff in technical cooperation. We will be excited to present you the preliminary results during our Annual General Assembly in October, and we will use the information to guide our strategy in the negotiation of the contracts policy and others, in the context of the new Administration, as well as for the long-term strategies of the Staff Union. **A BIG thank you to all who participated and the volunteers who made the survey possible!** It is a great example of teamwork and foresight.

As this is **Mr Guy Ryder's** last month as Director-General, the officers of the Staff Union met with him on 23 September to reminisce on the ten years that he served and wish him well on his future endeavours. They were ten years of hard work improving dialogue, with high and low points that he appreciated were fruitful in the long run. We signed several collective agreements, some of which took years of painstaking discussion. We take this opportunity to publicly bid him farewell.

On 1 October the new DG, **Mr Gilbert F. Hounbo**, will take office. On the occasion of the second session of the Staff Union's Annual General Meeting on 13 October (**SAVE THE DATE!**), the Staff Union Committee, including the regional titular members, will meet him on 12 October. There are many pending discussions that were slowed down or stopped during and after his election last March, and we will take the opportunity to remind him of their urgency. There is no time to lose.

The Staff Union also met with the **transition team** for the new DG on 21 September. In this fifth meeting, we presented the Staff Union's role, concerns, areas for improvement and proposals on harassment, which is a growing concern of the staff. This is an area where the procedures are cumbersome, and staff need more agility on the part of the Administration. We called for more independence of the investigation function, among other measures. The JAAB and the Mediator have identified as a serious concern the lack of consideration of soft skills when recruiting

managers. We hope that the new Administration will take this issue seriously and enforce a “zero-tolerance” policy on harassment.

On 12-16 September, the Staff Union representatives from the ILO's offices in Abidjan, Abuja, Addis-Ababa, Algiers, Antananarivo, Cairo, Dakar, Dar-es-Salaam, Harare, Kinshasa, Lusaka, Pretoria and Yaoundé, held the biannual **regional meeting of the Staff Union in the African region**. They discussed the situation of the staff at the regional level and received updates on the latest changes and developments in the ILO. The meeting also provided an excellent opportunity for the ILO Staff Union to train its local officials, who are elected every two years, so as to help improve their representation skills. They agreed on a set of conclusions that listed their main concerns in the following order: (a) salary methodology; (b) SHIF; and (c) Reclassification and review of grades. In addition, with no specific order of priority, they requested the Administration to address issues on career development and functional mobility, labour relations and working conditions, recruitment and selection, harmonization of job titles, and security.

On the week of 19 September, the Staff Union held a two-day negotiations **training session for Committee members** and a two-day representation training session for the **Union Stewards**. The trainer helped us identify the different practices and concerns that we need to consider when carrying out our work. The majority of the staff in both groups participated, and it was a great moment for the Committee members and Union Stewards to have lively discussions and share experiences and concerns. The feedback from the groups and trainer was very positive and it confirms the need for regular training to strengthen our capacity to address upcoming challenges. The Staff Union will continue looking for opportunities to improve our knowledge and build on our collective strengths in view of the transition to the new DG.

HRD has indicated that the discussions on the revision of the **ILO parental/paternity/maternity leave and benefits policy** will resume very soon. If you have any inputs you would like to raise or provide in that respect, please contact Clara van Panhuys, vanpanhuys@ilo.org.

Finally, the Staff Union is forging ahead with the recruitment of our new **legal adviser**. It is a process that involves several steps which we take very seriously and hope to finalize in the following weeks. In the meantime, our Deputy General-Secretary, Clara van Panhuys, will handle most of the incoming legal work. We thank her for her willingness to take on this work and will support her in every way.
