



31 October 2022

A review of events of the past month

Dear colleagues,

It is with a heavy heart that we begin this bulletin. We offer our condolences to the families and colleagues of two of our staff members, Salomé Nga Awono and Hervé Ferreira, who passed away in recent weeks.

On 1 October, the new Director-General, Gilbert F. Hounbo, took office. **The Staff Union welcomes him** and has **already taken up the ongoing negotiations with his team**. We also welcome the nomination of Raquel González, former secretary of the Workers' group in the Governing Body, as the CABINET focal point for labour relations.

On 12 October, the Staff Union Committee met with the DG and his team in person, as we used to do the day before the Annual General Meeting (AGM). This practice had been suspended during the lockdowns, but once again, we had the privilege of the **titular members from the regions being in Geneva**. On that occasion, the Staff Union Chairperson, the coordinators of the working group on technical cooperation staff and each of the titular members raised questions. He expressed that the **ILO must be the model of industrial relations for the UN system**. He expressed that he understood the difference between the ILO Staff Union and the Staff Associations or Councils in other UN agencies. In addition, he was open to exploring new ways of working. The DG supported the idea of **aligning benefits and salaries between RB and TC personnel** with equivalent status and seniority. He is not opposed to the idea of extending WLT contracts to staff who have reached a certain seniority.

When raising the issue of **flexible working** with the DG, he spoke in favour of more flexibility for officers and less leeway for supervisors, interpreting the needs of the service narrowly. Unfortunately, he did not address the various forms of flexible working. When asked about mobility, he indicated that he would take into account family responsibilities and **the role of the Staff Union in designing a mobility policy**. However, he did not address the need for a mobility policy for local officials. On security, the DG recognized the **continual occurrence of crises** and will work on **a general "Plan B"** in the face of a potential security situation. He also recognized that placing the regional offices to report directly to him would change the way of working at the country level. The Staff Union will be aware of the impacts that this may have. Finally, he proposed to have **quarterly meetings with the Committee and review the grievance procedures**, to speed

them up. This is an urgent need in view of the increase in complaints, which the Committee raised with the Transition team.

The next day, we held **the second session of the Annual General Meeting**, where we **reported on the activities carried out in 2022**. Thanks to the many of you who participated in a hybrid format, which shows the high interest in Staff Union activities. For the first time in three years, colleagues were also able to **attend the meeting physically**. The report of the activities was presented in a **short video** ([link to the video](#)), followed by the Chairperson's presentation on the **ongoing negotiations, ICSC-related issues** and the meeting with the DG. The coordinators of the **TC working group made a presentation** ([link to the presentation](#)) on the **staff survey**, which closed in September, after which **the titular members from the regions and Turin delivered their reports**, as well as the sections **of former officials and interns**. The latter deserve a particular welcome: the Internship programme had been suspended since the lockdowns began. The Staff Union Chairperson and coordinators for the interns met with the Co-Chairs of the Intern Board in October, and look forward to working with them in the future. The members also approved the Staff Union's **financial report** and the **report of the Staff Union Assistance Fund** Committee for the year; re-elected the Audit Committee; and adopted the arrangements for elections to the Staff Union Committee for the 2022-2024 term.

As we mentioned last month, the response to the staff survey was outstanding, across all groups of staff. Staff reported strong differences in **treatments between RB and TC colleagues**, as well as between the diverse genders, duty stations and contract durations. As for TC staff, we confirmed that many of them deliver on the mandate of the ILO as much as RB colleagues, but with different entitlements, which leads to reduced opportunities outside the Office and lower morale. Frequent contract gaps also lead to **insecurity and less opportunities**. The survey confirmed the **need for further action** on the part of the Staff Union in the context of the year of TC colleagues, especially in the **contracts policy negotiations**. We thank, once again, the colleagues who voluntarily dedicated their time and energy to deliver the survey and analyse the results, both very professionally.

At the ILO, we are proud to have a **UN-GLOBE network** in place. Through UN-GLOBE, the ILO and its Staff Union engage not only with the LGBTIQ+ community at HQ and in the field but also with other UN organizations to tackle bias in the workforce affecting LGBTIQ+ personnel and dependants, and advocates for an **inclusive work environment for all**.

Two information sessions will be held for all colleagues interested in UN-GLOBE on **Tuesday, 15 November, at 09:00 CET and 15:30 CET** (to cater for colleagues in all regions). The sessions will provide colleagues with more information on UN-GLOBE, the UN-GLOBE Coordinator(s), the selection process and assess staff interest in reviving UN-GLOBE activities at the ILO. You can also contact unglobe@ilo.org. They will be held online (<https://ilo-org.zoom.us/j/99587007012>) and in person at Headquarters (Room X, R2 South).

We look forward to seeing you at the information sessions!

Last, but not least, **do not forget to vote** (if you have not done so already) for your next representatives of the Staff Union Committee.