



**CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING  
OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES NETWORK  
(UN, New York, 14-16 March 2007)**

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## **1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME** *(CEB/2007/HR/1/Rev.1)*

1. The Draft Agenda was adopted – it being noted that item 2.6 “Safety and Security update from DSS” would be postponed to a future video conference session as representatives of the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) were not available to attend the current meeting.

## **2. ISSUES FOR THE HR NETWORK:**

### ***2.1 The system-wide implications for HR management of the recommendations included in the Report of the High-Level Panel contained in A/61/583 (CEB/2007/HR/3/Rev.1)***

2. The Network was briefed by the Director of the CEB Secretariat – who had acted as Secretary to the High-Level Panel – on the work undertaken by the Panel. He stressed the importance the High-Level Panel had attached to developing a system-wide response to the recommendations in the “Delivering as One” report in the area of business practices and most especially in human resources management practices.

3. After a wide-reaching discussion of the conclusions reached in the High-Level Panel report and of the importance of looking into the impact of governance on the Network’s response, the Network concluded that it would report to the forthcoming session of HLCM as follows:

#### **1. Key messages from the HR Network to the HLCM:**

The HR Network:

- Fully endorses the objective for a greater coherence.
- Fully supports the harmonization process which is essential to “Deliver as One”. The Network has already been very active in the harmonization process for some time. It realizes that harmonizing HR practices may require the sacrifice of some “sacred cows”. It emphasizes that harmonization is not about “aligning on the lowest common denominator” but about finding the right, balanced solution agreeable to all.
- The HR Network will take a leadership role in key HR-related areas. It is committed to find quality, comprehensive and cost-effective proposals, and to seize this key opportunity to make decisive progress in bringing about good HR practices in the UN.
- The HR Network will work in an inclusive and collaborative way together with various Networks (such as FB and IT) in the many areas of common interest.
- The HR Network stresses the need (a) to address governance issues at the level of the CEB, and (b) for a comprehensive review of the ICSC.

#### **2. Key Objectives:**

The HR Network identified the following key objectives that will drive its action in the implementation of the High Level Panel recommendations:

1. Restoring competitiveness and making the work environment more attractive to attract and retain qualified staff;
2. Ensuring that HR practices/systems support and promote a results-based culture, good management and team-based approaches;
3. Enhancing staff well-being;

4. Building trust by ensuring cohesiveness and harmonization of policies and processes;
5. Finding means to share knowledge and build better networks and promote communities of practices;
6. Promoting and enhancing staff mobility (inter-agency, geographical and functional).

### 3. Drivers of coherence: Priority areas for the HR Network

The main HR recommendation in the report is that “*Human Resource policies and practices should be updated and harmonized.*” In the past few years, significant work has been done by the HR Network and various UN Agencies to update, streamline and harmonize practices. This will remain a **top priority objective** for the HR Network, and an overriding one that will inspire and direct the HR Network current and future work.

The HR Network reviewed the HR-related recommendations in the Business Practices area and identified a number of priority areas to address harmonization:

#### I. Harmonization of Rules and Regulations:

Harmonization is a requirement for the implementation of common services in areas such as payroll.

- **Contracts:** Agencies are urged to move faster to adapt their contractual arrangements to the common ICSC framework to ensure competitiveness
- **Recruitment and promotion:** A review of recruitment and promotion policies and practices will need to take place.
- **Entitlements:** Much work has already been done in the framework of the ICSC Pay and Benefits review. Work will continue to complete the review of all entitlements.
- **Administration of Justice:** Agencies have different staff rules and processes in this area. The Network will examine if these can be more harmonized.
- **Performance Evaluation systems:** The systems, across the UN, are not seniority-based, as the report indicates. The Network will develop common guiding principles for performance evaluation systems in the UN system. The Network will review the practices/processes/implementation across the system and identify tools that can be used by agencies to implement the common principles. We recognize that performance evaluation must be linked clearly to RBM, programme planning and accountability framework. A review of the way UN agencies reward high performers and sanction poor performers must also be undertaken.

#### II. Compensation:

The HR Network should manage the conduct of a “Noblemaire” equivalency study, under the CEB umbrella.

#### III. Mobility:

To promote the concept and understanding of One UN, inter-agency mobility must be encouraged and must work. The challenge is to break down barriers between Agencies. Harmonization of HR policies and practices is a key support to mobility. The consideration of UN applicants as internal applicants needs to be supported. General guidelines to staff as how to move from one Agency to another should be developed. Harmonization of medical plans is a long-standing issue which should be reviewed by the HLCM.

This report was duly presented to the thirteenth session of HLCM which concluded that:

- The Committee, supported by its Networks, will develop a detailed, sequenced and costed plan of action for implementation, based on document CEB/2007/HLCM/3 and on the indicative priorities and areas of interest identified above. The plan of action would be incorporated into the HLCM programme of work, and would include detailed terms of reference outlining the scope, objectives, timeline and resources that each project entails.
- A Steering Committee supported by the CEB Secretariat, led by the HLCM Vice-Chair (WHO) and composed by the organizations whose representatives currently chair the HLCM Networks (UN, IAEA, UNESCO, WFP), would drive the development of such plan of action, to be submitted to the Committee for approval at its 14<sup>th</sup> session in the fall 2007.
- The HLCM Chair would report on the Committee's conclusions at the forthcoming meeting of the CEB of 20-21 April 2007. This would allow advance build-up of the necessary support to the proposal by the donor community and by the organizations themselves, in preparation for specific requests for funding upon approval of individual projects.

HLCM also noted the proposal contained in the High-Level Panel report to review the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). There was consensus in HLCM that the Committee (HLCM) should develop its own position on the matter to submit to CEB before future discussion on the matter at the inter-governmental level.

## ***2.2 The development of the senior management network (SMN) (CEB/2007/HR/2)***

4. It was recalled that the SMN comprised four elements: a set of Core Competencies; a system-wide Programme for Leadership Development; Networking Tools to provide a communications channel; and Global Management Fora which will be a means of bringing together members of the Network for knowledge sharing.
5. It was further recalled that the rationale behind the development of such a network was to:
  - Build a corporate culture at the managerial level across the UN system;
  - Enhance inter-agency coordination and mobility;
  - Promote increased mobility and learning.
6. CEB had approved the creation of the SMN and had also agreed that the CEB machinery would be responsible for supporting its establishment, guided by the HR Network on behalf of the CEB and HLCM.
7. Among the main issues noted by the Network were the following:
  - (a) **The SMN** will consist of approximately 600 to 1,000 senior staff. Executive Heads would be responsible for their selection (typically D1 and above). Membership would be defined by functions and roles rather than by grades. It was expected that the Secretary-General would approach Executive Heads asking them to identify the membership within their own organizations. Selection criteria would be provided.

- (b) **Networking tools:** a communications channel would be created to be the portal to resource materials on management and leadership, to provide the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for participants in the leadership development programme and help facilitate the global management fora. This component of the SMN required urgent funding to develop the electronic platform for such a tool (funding requirement USD 170,000 one-time).
- (c) **Global Management Fora** would bring together members of the Network for knowledge sharing and building esprit de corps across the system, including an annual senior leaders' conference as well as periodic events on a thematic level to discuss cross-functional and inter-disciplinary issues (funding requirement USD 70,000 on an annual basis).
- (d) **Establishment of a position for a SMN project manager**, possibly to be based in Geneva within the offices of the CEB Secretariat, reporting to the HLCM through the Secretary of the HLCM. He/she would work closely with the CEB Webmaster and the UNSSC Coordinator of the Leadership Development Programme, to coordinate and manage the SMN (funding requirement USD 320,000 on an annual basis, including support and travel costs).
- (e) **Development of a comprehensive communication strategy.**

8. In the discussion of the matter, the Network expressed its appreciation for the work undertaken to date. Further, it acknowledged the importance of ensuring the fullest participation of managerial staff in the field and hence of ensuring flexibility in the grade levels of those who would be members of the Network.

9. Among other concerns were (i) that of ensuring already at this stage, a fully developed evaluation system for the leadership programme; (ii) the importance of establishing an appropriate governance mechanism; (iii) that of providing a full curriculum for the leadership development programme *inter alia* to ensure that overlap with individual organization's activities was kept to a minimum; and (iv) developing a work plan for 2008-2009.

10. A number of specific questions about the Leadership development programme were raised with the coordinator in respect *inter alia* of the role of the reference group, the language of the courses themselves, the costs of participation especially for travel and the length of the overall programme.

11. Reiterating its commitment to the project, the Network agreed (a) to advise the HLCM of its conclusions; (b) to create with HLCM a steering committee to take leadership over the next stages of development of the project; (c) to support the ongoing developing of the Leadership Development Programme by UNSSC.

**Extract from the report of the 13<sup>th</sup> session of the HLCM on Senior Management Network (SMN):**

- Some suggestions were made on the need to cater to the bilingual needs of participants; to tag this effort to the Resident Coordinator assessment; and to assign a critical importance to the development of a comprehensive communication strategy to ensure internal buy-in by each organization.
- Many comments focused on the funding requirements of the overall SMN project, as well as on the expected cost per participant in the Leadership Development Programme. It was unanimously suggested that the budgetary constraints of organizations be taken in due consideration when deciding the expected number of participants in the first phase of the Programme. Also, it was suggested that a detailed cost plan for the overall SMN be submitted to the Committee for approval.
- The Committee fully endorsed the launching of the Senior Management Network and its Leadership Development Programme. The UNSSC may proceed with the development and delivery stages with the RSM and its consortium.
- The Committee would expect a request from the Secretary General to Executive Heads asking them to nominate members of the Senior Management Network.

***2.3 The review of the administrative guidelines for an Influenza pandemic in order to make sure they are up to date (CEB/2007/HR/XIII/CRP.2)***

12. The Network expressed its appreciation to the United Nations for the continuing work it had put in to develop the administrative guidelines which it considered remained valid subject to revisions of the amounts of hazard pay contained in paragraphs 53 and 54 of the guidelines.

***2.4 The draft JIU Report on the “Age structure of Human Resources in the Organizations of the United Nations system”***

13. The Network expressed its appreciation to JIU for its report; some agencies notably including UNDP remained concerned that some more recent initiatives in the area of attracting and retaining talent (especially through the national officer programme) had not been fully captured by the Inspectors. Overall, however, the Network considered the report to be a most useful addition to the consideration of this important subject of talent management about which all organizations were currently concerned.

14. In the course of discussion, speakers referred to the ongoing need to balance the retention of organization’s existing staff talent with bringing onboard “new blood”. It was important that organizations recognize this tension and that judgment and justice be exercised in the management of “new” and “old” human resources.

15. In this as in other areas, the Network agreed that each organization should have the flexibility to determine the age structure it needed based on its mandate.

16. Stress was also placed on the importance of better career planning, this was not simply a question of age but rather of ensuring that the right staff were in the right places at the right time. Succession planning was an integral part of the career management structure.

17. In this context the looming loss through retirement of large numbers of senior level staff was a serious preoccupation for all organizations. The challenge would be to find ways of transferring the knowledge of those who were leaving to those who would take over from them.

18. The development of effective ways to manage knowledge was urgent. “Coaching” and “Shadowing” were techniques which some organizations had used and to which greater attention could be paid.

19. There were other issues which faced organizations in terms of becoming or retaining their status as employers of choice:

- The competitiveness of the reward systems
- The work/life balance features
- Career development programmes.

20. At heart, these were all Human Resource management issues for which managers were responsible.

21. In this light the Network

- concurred with the proposal that it should develop guidelines for succession planning;
- agreed to raise with ICSC and the UNJSP Board the question of the mandatory age of retirement. It took note that many national public administrations were raising the mandatory retirement age to take account *inter alia* of economic and social change;
- to support the elimination of limits on the employment of retirees both in terms of earnings limits and the duration of employment;
- to encourage the review of the portability of pensions in UN system – that non-portability had also proved to be an impediment to staff mobility.

### ***2.5 Staff Management Relations (CEB/2007/HR/4)***

22. The Network took note of the summary conclusions of an informal review of staff management relations held in February 2007 and welcomed the positive spirit and the productive discussion that had taken place at that time.

23. It viewed its relationship with the two staff federations as a partnership which it wished to further develop. Nevertheless, this was a two-way process and there remained the outstanding issue of the provision, by both of the Federations, of an effective strategic business plan – a work plan identifying what had been achieved and, with indicators and realistic targets as to just how that work plan would be attained including the resource requirements. All organizations were required to present such business plans to their governing bodies and the Network sought nothing less from FICSA and CCISUA.

24. As a starting point, a simple staff survey could be considered (though not the draft questionnaire which had earlier been circulated) which could validate the current work plans of the federations and help identify gaps.

25. The importance of improving communication with staff and managements was seen as a key component in the development of indicators for the federations' future work programmes.

26. In order to reach these goals, the Network considered that it would be helpful for the informal group which had met on 23 February 2007 be mandated to pursue with the federations the conclusions it had already arrived at and to assist in the development of the federations' business plans.

27. The Network decided to approve the following recommendations that had been developed by the *ad hoc* group that met on 23 February in Geneva:

- (a) To prepare jointly a policy statement reaffirming *inter alia* the full extent of the formal consultative role and responsibility required of the staff federations as a part of the consultative process enshrined in the ICSC Statute;
- (b) To encourage all partners to maximize opportunities for capacity building of both staff and administration representatives in inter-agency activities;
- (c) To invite the staff federations further to consider strategies for increasing their membership;
- (d) To create a working group of its members to assist CCISUA and FICSA to develop a formal business plan, drawing upon details of its programmers/activities, consultative responsibilities and budget and also incorporating an analysis of funding arrangements from their respective memberships. This business plan would be submitted to the HR and FB Networks and then to HLCM.

### **3. ISSUES CURRENTLY ON THE AGENDAS OF THE HR NETWORK AND ICSC:**

#### **3.1 Compensation and benefits:**

##### ***3.1.1 Review of the pay and benefits system: modernizing and simplifying allowances: Separation payments (ICSC/64/R.3 & Add.1)***

28. The HR Network supported the thrust of the proposals made in the documents for greater harmonization notably for having one common schedule for termination indemnities across the system. It concurred that termination indemnities must be based on length of service and not on type of contractual appointment.

29. It supported the introduction of the end of service grant after five years of service. It considered that there might be some small matters of detail (especially in respect of elements of indemnities which may be built into the general service scales in one or two locations) but would be happy to work through these with the Commission and the Secretariat.

30. In respect of the repatriation grant, there was one anomaly which the Network considered also required attention in the context of simplification and indeed of greater transparency. This was the current requirement to reduce the grant acquired for periods of service in the home country. The amount of the reduction was of six months of the accumulated grant for each year of service in the home country. In an era when mobility was being encouraged, this was unhelpful and unreasonable. While additional credit to the grant should not accrue while serving in the home

country there was no justification for reducing the grant already acquired. Moreover, the reduction of qualifying service was extremely cumbersome from an administrative standpoint. Hence the Network recommended simply that service in the home country should not be counted as qualifying service for the repatriation grant.

***ICSC decision***

The Commission decided to revert to the issue of separation payments at a later session following the receipt from its secretariat of the cost comparison of separation payments between the common system and the United States federal civil service and additional information and analysis relating to separations from common system organizations.

***3.1.2 Considerations related to reviewing the Job Evaluation Standards for the General Service and related categories including a report from HR representatives in the Working Group on this subject (ICSC/64/R.9)***

31. The Network expressed its appreciation to the Working Group for the hard work it had put in developing the new job evaluation standard as reported in document ICSC/64/R.9. This was an important exercise to create a new standard for the general service to be applicable world-wide. It was a complex process and “it was right to do it right from the beginning”.

32. The Network was therefore not surprised that the process was taking longer than initially foreseen. It was pleased to note that there had been good collaboration between the consultative partners. It therefore had no objection to extending the project for up to 12 months if such positive work continues.

***ICSC decision***

The Commission took note of the work done by the working group to date and requested its secretariat to present a progress report on the activities of the working group at its spring session in 2008, with a view to finalizing the proposal for the job evaluation system for the General Service and related categories by its summer session in July 2008.

***3.1.3 Report of the twenty-ninth session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ) (ICSC/64/R.5)***

33. The Network had taken careful note of the information contained in the document (ICSC/64/R.5) and in the Report of the 29<sup>th</sup> session of ACPAQ contained in ACPAQ/29/R.9. Twelve organizations and the CEB Secretariat had participated fully in the session and concurred with the conclusions reached by the Committee and the recommendations contained in the Summary Record.

34. Three matters were singled out for attention:

- the out of area index
- the marketing of the household expenditure questionnaire and the housing questionnaire for the 2010 round of cost of living surveys;
- capacity building in post adjustment matters.

35. The Network agreed fully with the intention to carry out a survey to determine more precisely the actual nature of out of area expenditures. It was committed to assisting to ensure a good response rate to this survey.

36. On the subject of surveys, the Network considered that it was crucial to start thinking together as to how best to develop and market to staff the household expenditure and housing questionnaires for the 2010 round of cost of living surveys. The questionnaires were long, complex and the website technology used for their completion for the 2005 round of surveys had been only partially successful. These surveys had to be made more attractive.

37. At the same time, the Network was concerned at the need to ensure that the skills of its members, in respect of the post adjustment system and as organization representatives to ACPAQ were maintained at the highest level. A number of the organization's post adjustment experts had or would shortly retire and it would be essential for us to build capacity for the future. Together with the staff federations and with the support of the ICSC Secretariat, the Network hoped to carry out some post adjustment development activities in the near future.

#### ***ICSC decision***

The Commission decided:

(a) To endorse the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in respect of the proposed simplifications of the post adjustment index structure;

(b) To request the secretariat to conduct an out-of-area survey to determine the out-of-area index and information on Internet purchases;

(c) To authorize the secretariat to negotiate with Runzheimer International specific proposals to improve the transparency and readability of its biennial report, but postpone any methodological modifications to 2010;

(d) To approve the Advisory Committee's recommendation to use the cost estimation models developed by the secretariat to estimate the financial implications of changes in both the base scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories, and in the mobility and hardship scheme (see annexes I and II);

(e) To request the secretariat to develop a model to estimate financial implications of the education grant and present it at its sixty-sixth session.

#### ***3.1.4 Results of the United Nations /United States grade equivalency studies (ICSC/64/R.6 and R.7)***

38. The Network expressed its grave concern at the lack of response from the US authorities in respect of the grade equivalency studies.

39. The grade equivalency study was a key – probably the key element – in the methodology for pay setting for the staff in the Professional and higher categories of the United Nations system of organizations, i.e. setting pay for well over 25,000 staff members.

40. To some extent, the lack of information from the comparator reflected the increasingly fragmented nature of what had been a fairly cohesive national civil service. Over the years, the

ICSC secretariat has provided information about the introduction of separate pay systems. Since 2004, significant numbers of employees from Homeland Security and civilian employees from the Department of Defense (DOD) had been added to this category. It was understood that there were at least 45,000 Homeland Security and 77,000 DOD personnel in this group. Hence now over 430,000 personnel were working on pay systems which were different from each other and from the General Schedule.

41. If the total of US full time employed federal civil servants was over 1.5 million, then the percentage not covered by the General Schedule was probably already over 25 per cent and fast approaching 30 per cent. More important, it was posts in these non-General Schedule pay areas that tended to match better those in the UN population.

42. The issue was clearly exacerbated for SES posts. According to 2006 testimony before the US Congress, the SES was experiencing “egregious salary compression and salary inversion”, which was impacting on other branches of the US Government – notably the Judiciary. The problem was that of capping SES salaries and of having denied cost-of-living increases to the SES group on five occasions during the 1990s.

43. Effectively SES pay had been frozen. The Network was concerned at the impact this might have on the margin. If nothing else, the picture of the structure of the pay system of civil servants in the US federal civil service was confusing; some would go so far as to say that it was the crisis. Increasingly, federal government pay scales were being seen as unfair. One observer had expressed concern also for the consequences of such disparity for the preservation of the public service ethos where there were few commonalities of interest between employees of different agencies.

44. The General Assembly had continued to uphold the Noblemaire principle. In the current circumstances, however, it was difficult to say that it was being appropriately applied. In effect, the updating of the UN pay system was being held hostage to the lack of information available from the United States Federal Civil Service.

#### ***ICSC decision***

The Commission decided to request its secretariat:

- (a) To explore, in coordination with the HR Network, alternative approaches to the current job-by-job comparison;
- (b) To contact agencies in the United States Government to request data and statistics necessary to test those alternative approaches and to seek their commitment to provide the data on an on-going basis;
- (c) To present a progress report to the Commission at its sixty-fifth session.

#### ***3.1.5 Progress report from HR representatives in the Working Group on the determination and administration of the education grant***

45. The Network took note with appreciation of the ongoing work being carried out by the Working Group on the determination and administration of the education grant. The discussions had focussed *inter alia* on lump summing and the certification of tuition and boarding. UNOV had agreed to pilot the new scheme. When the details were further advanced, it was essential (a) that

sufficient time should be given to introduce the new system and (b) that there was a good communication strategy to make the new scheme known to staff. It was evident that the introduction of the new scheme would have a financial impact; nevertheless it was also foreseen that overall costs would be reduced in the long run.

### ***3.1.6 GS Salary Survey System for non-headquarters location (CEB/2007/HR/7)***

46. The Network noted that the UN secretariat had now taken over responsibility for non-headquarters GS salary surveys. It expressed appreciation to the UN for the effective manner in which the transfer from UNDP had been carried out and UNDP for its collaboration therein. There remained some difficulties especially in relation to survey work being carried out by the Birches group which would need further clarification and solution.

## **3.2 Employment Policy:**

### ***3.2.1 Contractual Policy (ICSC/64/R.4)***

47. This matter was left to the United Nations to introduce in the ICSC. The Committee concurred that the new contractual framework established by ICSC in 2005 should be implemented in all UN organizations.

48. The advantages of the approach were those of:

- Streamlining the contractual arrangements
- Enhancing transparency and equity in treatment of staff
- Strengthening the capacity at the UN to recruit and retain high-quality staff
- Providing more rewarding career opportunities to staff members.

49. There remained the need to clarify the link or non-link of staff contracts with budget and the review of separation policies in respect of different contractual arrangements.

#### ***ICSC decision***

The Commission, having reviewed in detail the proposal of the Secretary-General, and in light of its observations above, concludes that the Secretary-General's proposal should be revised and be made to conform with the Commission's contractual framework.

### ***3.2.2 The provision of leave (CEB/2007/HR/5)***

50. The HR Network took note of the information contained in the document. It urged organizations to provide any further changes as soon as possible in order to forward the document to ICSC's summer session

### ***3.2.3 Career Development and Performance Management including a report of the Career Development Roundtable (CEB/2007/HR/XIII/CRP.1)***

51. UNESCO provided a report on the most recent Roundtable on Career Development which was a rather informal grouping of career development specialists in organizations (including some outside the UN system). It was complementary in many ways to the Leading Managers Forum.

52. The Network appreciated the report on the work of the Roundtable and considered that this Network might be further developed within a framework like that of the Learning Managers. Moreover, the Roundtable should be invited by the Network to consider issues related to career development and succession planning in order to provide input to the Network itself.

### ***3.2.4 Staffing of field missions: review of the entitlements of internationally recruited staff in non-family duty stations (ICSC/64/R.10)***

53. Representatives of the HR Network had participated fully in the two meetings of the Working Group which have resulted in the reports before you in ICSC/64/R.10. The Network supported the conclusions reached by this Working Group.

54. It appreciated that in reaching these conclusions and recommendations compromises had to be forged.

55. In this context, the Network underscored how much it appreciated the usefulness of this Working Group mechanism. It could and it often did work well when there was commitment of all parties.

#### ***ICSC decisions***

The Commission decided to recommend that all common system organizations harmonize the designation of duty stations in accordance with the security phase decided by the Department of Safety and Security and the approach as applied by the Inter-agency Committee on Field Duty Stations of the Human Resources Network of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

[...]

DPKO appointments of limited duration are also mission specific and, therefore, do not allow management the flexibility to move staff to another location to meet a higher priority need or to assign staff to a new mission, if their current mission is phased out.

[...]

The Commission decided to recommend that mission-specific 100-series contracts be phased out because they do not provide the flexibility needed to move staff among field duty stations and cannot respond to the need for a global workforce. Further, staff members on 100-series mission-specific contracts serving at non-family duty stations, designated special missions, should receive the same compensation and benefits as those normally given to internationally recruited Professional staff assigned to family duty stations when the duty station designation is changed from non-family to family.

[...]

The Commission decided to recommend that rest breaks be further harmonized in the areas of the payment of travel and daily subsistence allowance. DPKO should arrange for, or reimburse, travel as with the SOA. All organizations of the common system now paying daily subsistence allowance for rest breaks should discontinue that practice. Daily subsistence allowance in connection with rest breaks should be paid only on an exceptional basis, when the organization was unable to provide travel or make arrangements for the staff member to travel to the approved rest and recuperation location.

[...]

The Commission decided to recommend that current practices governing extended Monthly Security Evacuation Allowance and home leave be retained.

[...]

The Commission decided to recommend the application of the current SOA model common system-wide at non-family duty stations with regard to the payment of post adjustment, mobility and hardship, hazard pay and special operations living allowance. That model harmonizes all practices, is the most cost-effective and best meets the needs of the organizations of the common system. Further, the Commission decided to recommend that the SOA model be modified to use only the administrative place of assignment as the basis for the entitlements mentioned above. The result would be that staff members would no longer be permitted to retain the entitlements of the former duty station when the family elects to remain there.

[...]

The Commission urges organizations to implement the following measures, where appropriate, to reduce recruitment delays and streamline the retention and reassignment of staff to non-family duty stations:

- (a) Use of generic job profiles to the extent possible;
- (b) Use of standing rosters in lieu of individual postings for recruitment;
- (c) Optimized use of the Internet in the application process;
- (d) Shared cost of paid advertising, radio and television spots to attract candidates;
- (e) Automated screening of applications, to the extent possible;
- (f) Recognition of the value of experience in non-family duty assignments, by giving special consideration to it in future assignments and promotion possibilities and stipulating that consideration for acquisition of continuing contracts would be subject to a posting in at least one field assignment;
- (g) Mobility stipulated in contracts, as a condition of employment;
- (h) Establishment of rotation policy, based on the hardship categorization of a duty station;
- (i) Facilitation of movement between organizations of the common system.

A. Comprehensive review of contractual arrangements in the common system

The Commission decided to reiterate its decision periodically to review the compensation packages associated with all contractual instruments to ensure that they are harmonized across the common system.

B. Staff well-being in non-family duty stations

The Commission decided to encourage organizations to implement necessary actions to improve working environments and conditions in non-family duty stations in order to enhance staff well-being in those locations, in particular:

- (a) Spouse employment (at the administrative place of assignment);
- (b) Recreational facilities (at the place of work);
- (c) Stress counselling (at the place of work); and
- (d) Satellite communications systems (at the place of work).

***3.2.5 Update on the communication strategy for the revised mobility and hardship scheme (being developed by the ICSC Secretariat and working group)***

56. The Network took note of the progress made in the pursuit of these matters.

**4. OTHER ISSUES ON THE ICSC AGENDA**

***4.1 Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment at London (ICSC/64/R.8)***

57. The matter was introduced by IMO.

***ICSC decision***

The Commission decided:

- (a) To agree to an extension for the completion of the London survey until the sixty-fifth session;
- (b) To request the secretariat to submit a proposal for the use of data from external sources in the event that conventional methods of data collection did not permit the completion of the London survey by the sixty-fifth session;
- (c) To endorse the proposal that the secretariat obtain data from external sources and compare it to data obtained by the conventional method in the London, Geneva and Vienna salary surveys; and
- (d) To request the secretariat to incorporate the results of the comparison study into deliberations on the review of the survey methodology in 2008.

***4.2 Implications of the enlargement of the European Union at 1 January 2007 to include Bulgaria and Romania (ICSC/64/CRP.5)***

58. The HR Network took note of the information provided in the conference room paper.

***ICSC decision***

The Commission decided that:

- (a) For post adjustment purposes, the two countries which joined the European Union on 1 January 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) should be considered Group I duty stations, starting with the implementation of new place-to-place surveys;
- (b) New place-to-place surveys should be scheduled and conducted in 2007 for both “enlargement” countries. The cost-of-living data should be processed using the methodology for Group I duty stations and implemented not later than May 2008;
- (c) Organizations should start paying salaries for staff in the Professional and higher categories in local currency, starting with the implementation of new place-to-place surveys for respective duty stations;
- (d) A modification of the rental subsidy scheme corresponding to Group I duty stations should be introduced at the time of the implementation of new place-to-place surveys;
- (e) The change from “A” to “H” in the classification of those duty stations under the mobility and hardship scheme should be applied with effect from 1 January 2008.

**4.3 Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the common system (ICSC/64/R.2 & Add.1)**

59. The HR Network took note of the information contained in the documents. It confirmed its endorsement of any measures which would ensure in the words of resolution 61/239, the provision of “relevant information in a timely manner.” The provision of data was an ongoing concern. The advent, in almost all organizations, of new ERP systems designed to meet human resources management needs had been good for individual organizations but it had sometimes made the provision of data to third parties such as the ICSC and the CEB more problematic or at least more complex. The HR Network was working to try to improve this situation.

**ICSC decision**

The Commission, in noting the information provided, requested that a more detailed report be submitted to its sixty-fifth session.

**5. STANDING COMMITTEE ON FIELD DUTY STATIONS**

60. The HR Network Standing Committee on Field Duty Stations met on 22 March 2007 (minutes attached as Annex III).

**6. UN CARES IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2008-2009 (CEB/2007/HR/6)**

61. There was an extensive discussion of the issues raised in the document presented by the Global Coordinator.

62. Organizations supported the thrust of the proposals made by the Coordinator but several had concerns about how they could be financed.

63. Moving forward on this matter was urgent and therefore the Network agreed to meet by video conference in April 2007 to discuss how best to pursue action.

64. For that conference the Coordinator would prepare additional material including:

- supplementary information relating to the implementation plan;
- more detailed budget;
- additional implementation scenarios, each with a budget and a cost sharing breakdown by agency.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

### ***7.1 UNDG Dual Career and Spouse Employment Programme (CEB/2007/HR/XIII/CRP.3)***

65. The Network was informed by WFP that it would not be able to continue hosting this programme after the end of 2007. There was agreement that the Programme – which was especially important in terms of work/life balance – should be housed within the CEB Secretariat. WFP and the secretariat would work together on this matter and report back to the Network's summer session.

66. Furthermore, in the context of the High Level Panel Report's concern for spouse employment as a key element in staff mobility:

- The HR Network agreed to report to HLCM that this initiative have been launched in July 2004 to support spouses:
  - (i) A website and newsletter had been created; and
  - (ii) 32 countries had established Local Expatriate Spouse Associations (UN/LESA).
  
- Six organizations had participated in the initiative and the HR Network would seek HLCM support for:
  - (i) making this initiative more inclusive;
  - (ii) greater commitment from RC's to establish LESA in their countries;
  - (iii) the need for agencies to establish LESA at HQ;
  - (iv) a cost-sharing approach to finance these activities.

67. The HR Network also agreed to further work to harmonize spouse employment policies throughout the UN system and to prepare a document for HLCM on this matter.

### ***7.2 Proposal on how to deal with "diploma mills" (CEB/2007/HR/XIII/CRP.4)***

68. It was agreed that the issue should be worked on at the inter-agency level. UNESCO offered to help. The Network supported the potential development of a private area on the HR Network website on this matter.

## Annex I

### Agenda

1. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME** CEB/2007/HR/1/Rev.1
2. **ISSUES FOR THE HR NETWORK:**
  - 2.1 The system-wide implications for HR management of the recommendations included in the Report of the High-Level Panel contained in A/61/583 CEB/2007/HR/3/Rev.1
  - 2.2 The development of the senior management network CEB/2007/HR/2
  - 2.3 The review of the administrative guidelines for an Influenza pandemic in order to make sure they are up to date CEB/2007/HR/XIII/CRP.2
  - 2.4 The draft JIU Report on the “Age Structure of Human Resources in the Organizations of the United Nations system”
  - 2.5 Staff Management relations CEB/2007/HR/4
3. **ISSUES CURRENTLY ON THE AGENDAS OF THE HR NETWORK AND ICSC:**
  - 3.1 **Compensation and benefits:**
    - 3.1.1 Review of the pay and benefits system: modernizing and simplifying allowances: Separation payments ICSC/64/R.3 and Add.1
    - 3.1.2 Considerations related to reviewing the Job Evaluation Standards for the General Service and related categories including a report from HR representatives in the Working Group on this subject ICSC/64/R.9
    - 3.1.3 Report of the twenty-ninth session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ) ICSC/64/R.5
    - 3.1.4 Results of the United Nations /United States grade equivalency studies ICSC/64/R.6 and R.7
    - 3.1.5 Progress report from HR representatives in the Working Group on the determination and administration of the education grant
    - 3.1.6 GS Salary Survey System for non-headquarters location CEB/2007/HR/7
  - 3.2 **Employment Policy:**
    - 3.2.1 Contractual Policy ICSC/64/R.4
    - 3.2.2 The provision of leave CEB/2007/HR/5
    - 3.2.3 Career Development and Performance Management including a report of the Career Development Roundtable CEB/2007/HR/XIII/CRP.1
    - 3.2.4 Staffing of field missions: review of the entitlements of internationally recruited staff in non-family duty stations ICSC/64/R.10
    - 3.2.5 Update on the communication strategy for the revised mobility and hardship scheme (being developed by the ICSC Secretariat and working group)

**4. OTHER ISSUES ON THE ICSC AGENDA:**

- |     |  |                     |
|-----|--|---------------------|
| 4.1 | Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment at London   | ICSC/64/R.8         |
| 4.2 | Implications of the enlargement of the European Union at 1 January 2007 to include Bulgaria and Romania  | ICSC/64/CRP.5       |
| 4.3 | Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the common system | ICSC/64/R.2 & Add.1 |

**5. STANDING COMMITTEE ON FIELD DUTY STATIONS**

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <b>6. UN CARES IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2008-2009</b> | CEB/2007/HR/6 |
|--|---------------|

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

- |     |  |                        |
|-----|--|------------------------|
| 7.1 | UNDG Dual Career and Spouse Employment Programme | CEB/2007/HR/XIII/CRP.3 |
| 7.2 | Proposal on how to deal with “diploma mills”     | CEB/2007/HR/XIII/CRP.4 |

## Annex II

### List of Participants

Org.	Name and title
UN	<b>Martha Helena Lopez</b> , Chief, Staff Development Services and Chief, HR Policy Service
	<b>Regina Pawlik</b> , Deputy Chief, Conditions of Service Section
	<b>Matthew Sanidas</b> , Officer-in-Charge, Policy Support Unit
<b>ILO</b>	<b>Susan Hudson</b> , Policy Advisor
<b>FAO</b>	<b>Gregory Flood</b> , Chief, Human Resources Policy and Social Security
UNESCO	<b>Dyane Dufresne-Klaus</b> , Director, Bureau of Human Resources Management
	<b>Annick Grisar</b> , Chief, Policy Section, HR Management
WHO	<b>Alejandro Henning</b> , Director, Human Resources Management Department
	<b>Mercedes Gervilla</b> , Coordinator, Human Resources Management Department
<b>UNAIDS</b>	<b>Laurie Newell</b> , Global Coordinator, UN Cares
<b>PAHO</b>	<b>Paul de la Croix</b> , Human Resources Advisor (Policy Development) and Acting Unit Chief – Benefits and Contract Administration, HR Management
<b>UPU</b>	<b>Jelto Stant</b> , Programme Manager, RH Policy
<b>IMO</b>	<b>Leif Gunnestedt</b> , Senior Deputy Director
<b>WIPO</b>	<b>Juan Antonio Toledo</b> , Director of Human Resources Management Department
<b>IFAD</b>	<b>Beatrice Kimani</b> , Director of Personnel
<b>UNIDO</b>	<b>Sotiria Antonopoulou</b> , Director, Human Resource Management Branch
<b>IAEA</b>	<b>Douglas Northey</b> , Director, Division of Personnel
<b>WTO</b>	<b>Miguel Figuerola</b> , Director, Human Resources Division
UNDP	<b>Romesh Muttukumar</b> , Officer-in-Charge, Office of Human Resources
	<b>Duncan Barclay</b> , Chief, Human Resources Policy
	<b>Henrietta de Beer</b> , Human Resources Specialist
	<b>Mark Farnsworth</b> , Policy Specialist
	<b>Ramesh Chandran</b> , Chief, Strategic Planning Advisory Services
UNHCR	<b>Marta Leichner-Boyce</b> , Head, Human Resources Policy
	<b>Mérida Morales-O'Donnell</b> , Director, Division of HR Management
UNICEF	<b>Mieko Tarui</b> , Deputy Director, Division of Human Resources
	<b>Ruth de Miranda</b> , Chief, Policy and Administrative Law Section
UNFPA	<b>Linda Sherry-Cloonan</b> , Deputy Director, Office of Human Resources
	<b>Florence Sykes</b> , Chief, Planning and Policy Branch, Division of Human Resources
	<b>Carmen de los Rios</b> , HR Specialist, Planning and Policy Branch, Division of HR
	<b>Pierre Moreau-Péron</b> , Chief, Learning and Career Management Branch
WFP	<b>Rebecca Hansen</b> , Director, Human Resources
	<b>Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores</b> , Chief, Human Resources Policy
<b>ITC</b>	<b>Jay Wormus</b> , Chief, Human Resources Section

<b>Org.</b>	<b>Name and title</b>
<b>ICSC</b>	<b>John P. Hamilton</b> , Executive Secretary
	<b>Vladislav Nisichenko</b> , Chief, Cost-of-Living Division
	<b>Yuri Orlov</b> , Compensation Officer
	<b>Lakeita Henriques</b> , Personnel Policies Officer
	<b>Shihana Mohamed</b> , Personnel Policies Officer
<b>UNOPS</b>	<b>Monika Altmaier</b> , Director of Organizational Effectiveness and Human Resources
<b>FICSA</b>	<b>Robert C. Weisell</b> , President
	<b>Leslie Ewart</b> , Information Officer
<b>ICC</b>	<b>Kristiane Golze</b> , Chief, Human Resources Section

<b>CEB Secretariat</b>
<b>Remo Lalli</b> , Officer-in-charge
<b>Roger Eggleston</b> , Consultant

### Annex III

#### Minutes of the Meeting of the HR Network Standing Committee on Field Duty Stations

22 March 2007

Present: Mr. Gregory Flood, FAO  
Ms. Susan Hudson, ILO  
Mr. Duncan Barclay, UNDP  
Mr. Mark Farnsworth, UNDP  
Ms. Ann Sayers, UNDP  
Ms. Marta Leichner-Boyce, UNHCR  
Ms. Ruth de Miranda, UNICEF  
Ms. Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores, WFP  
Ms. Mercedes Gervilla, WHO  
Mr. Robert Smith, UN Observer  
Ms. Mary Dellar, DPKO Observer

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#### SOA

**DRC/Kinshasa** – Duty station is now in Phase II.

***It was decided*** to remove consideration of SOA status.

UNICEF requested R&R and APA destinations be the same, and to include Johannesburg as an option. WFP requested APA Kampala for Kalemie.

***It was decided*** to take Accra and Dakar off the list and offer a choice of 3 APAs for staff henceforth assigned to DRC: Nairobi, Johannesburg and Kampala. APAs and R&R destinations will be the same effective immediately. Staff already assigned to an APA will not be reassigned to a new APA.

**Eritrea** – SOA was granted 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006. The day after the Kenyan Gov't accepted Nairobi as APA (which took 4 months), security phase downgraded to Phase II and Asmara became a family duty station again. SOA was lifted in March 2006. CO requested a further 3 months as per guidelines.

***It was decided*** that if families had not been moved, SOA would stop in March 2007 as already advised. If families had moved (and it appears none had done so), SOA would continue for 3 months.

**Chad** – The Group has been monitoring the SOLA situation in the capital, N'Djamena, which is currently in security Phase III. CO had requested SOA in effort to resolve difficulty in recruiting qualified staff because of the extreme hardship situation.

***It was decided*** that as N'Djamena is constantly going backwards and forwards from Phase II/III, the Group would continue to scrutinize the situation for another 3 months and review again at the July meeting.

## **R&R**

**PNG** – Port Moresby was moved from 8 weeks to 12 weeks R&R cycle effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007. CO requested reconsideration due to high level of stress and security issues.

***It was decided*** that the 12 week cycle would remain in effect. An internal review of security issues, including other high crime duty stations, such as Nairobi, would be undertaken by the Field Group, and the issue re-visited in July 2007.

**Timor Leste/Dili** – R&R for Dili was moved to a 12 week cycle effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 with discontinuation end of June. CO appealed on basis of disparity in standards used for UNMIT staff who remain on an 8-week cycle country-wide and crime/violence which had an impact on working conditions and life-work balance.

***It was decided*** that we would review lifting R&R at our next meeting in July. In the meantime discussion would take place with DPKO with a view to harmonizing R&R cycles.\*

**Sudan** – WFP/UNHCR asked for the Group's support in requesting hardship classification review for **Damazine**.

**Port Sudan** was moved to a 12 week cycle effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007. UN staff are receiving 6 weeks.

***It was decided*** that discussions would take place with the UN with a view to harmonizing R&R entitlements.\*

**\*It was agreed that once DPKO adopts the same family/non-family designation procedure as the rest of the Common System, then DPKO will need to align its ORB cycles to those of the Inter-Agency R&R Framework.**

The Next Meeting will be held in Geneva on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July (in conjunction with the HR Network meeting 4-6<sup>th</sup>) and will be graciously hosted by WHO.