UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

CEB

**Chief Executives Board
for Coordination**

CEB/2011/HLCM/HR/23

6 October 2011

Meeting of the Human Resources Network

23rd Session, 6-7 September 2011
ITU, Geneva

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

CONTENTS

Opening of the Session and Adoption of the Agenda

1.   The Human Resources Network held its 22nd session from 6-7 September 2011 at the Headquarters of the International Telecommunication Union in Geneva. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Shelly Pitterman, Director, Division of HR Management, UNHCR and Ms. Ruth de Miranda, Chief, HR Policy Service, UN.

2.   The agenda was adopted as reflected in the table of contents, with the addition of an item to provide an update on the Working Group on the Mandatory Age of Separation.

3.   The list of participating organizations and their representatives at the meeting is provided in Annex 1. All session documents are available on the HR Network website at:
http://www.unsceb.org/ceb/mtg/hr/september-2011

I.   Discussion on thematic issues related to ICSC for HLCM:

a)   ICSC Framework for Human Resources Management

4.   The ICSC Framework for Human Resource Management was adopted in 2000. Its purpose was to enable organizations to manage their human resources effectively.

5.   The Commission had expressed a keen wish to review the Framework to establish whether it adequately reflected changes in human resources over the past ten years. Such a review would be undertaken with the collaboration of a working group, whose report would be presented to the ICSC Session in Summer 2012. In the light of budget cuts, however, the organizations felt that a working group on this matter could not be justified.

6.   The Network agreed that the Framework was still a valid HR tool but that it may indeed require some updating to incorporate new human resources management issues such as competency frameworks, but not a full review or restructure. The Framework was regarded as the key and overarching document for all HR planning, which would inform any future debate on common system pay and benefits. In addition, the organizations felt strongly that the definition of core and non-core items was the prerogative of the organizations themselves, given their differing needs and mandates.

b)   Review of the pay and benefits scheme

7.   The ICSC had indicated that a holistic review of the scheme was required, with a view to developing new approaches which would be simpler to administer.

8.   The organizations expressed concern that past reviews of individual parts of the pay and benefits scheme had resulted in the reduction of some of those benefits. The approach of both the organizations and the staff federations was that improving efficiency should be geared towards the reduction of administrative costs, rather than a reduction in the benefits themselves. Taking into account that the General Assembly was not presently in favour of any new reforms but wished rather to take stock of recent initiatives and noting the current unfavourable labour market world-wide, Network members felt that a review of the pay and benefits scheme was premature.

II.   Review of Personnel working for United Nations common system organizations on non-staff contracts *(CEB/2011/HLCM/HR/21)*

9.   In follow-up to the report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security, the HR Network had engaged a consultant (Alejandro Henning) to undertake an in-depth analysis of "non-staff" personnel, with respect to definitions, statistics, principles and policies regarding organizations' responsibilities and liabilities.

10.   After a preliminary debate, the Network identified those recommendations which required priority attention to be submitted to HLCM for initial review and further guidance. These were:

> **Recommendation 4:** *Organizations may wish to clearly stipulate in their policies and procedures as well as in the contracts of non-staff employees, the conditions of service, as well as making a clear reference that such contracts are not governed by the Staff Regulations and Rules nor do they give rise to a conversion to contracts governed by the SRRs;*
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> **Recommendation 5:** *Managers (particularly at the field level) should ensure that they follow all the guidelines provided in the policies and procedures of the organization on who should issue and sign such national execution type of contracts, as well as immediately invoking the corresponding privileges and immunities when confronted with legal actions by national courts;*
>
> **Recommendation 15:** *Organizations should ensure an ongoing dialogue with focus groups of non-staff employees on their conditions of service, particularly those who perceive themselves as performing regular staff type of functions and who have maintained a long term relationship with the organization;*
>
> **Recommendation 1:** *While the efforts undertaken by organizations to produce this data are recognized and fully appreciated, organizations should ensure that in designing their information management systems they should include user-friendly tools in their workforce planning, monitoring and reporting modules, covering all type of non-staff employees. This will assist organizations in improving their effectiveness in their future workforce planning and monitoring functions.*

III.   Harmonization of Business Practices (HBP) – HR projects:

11.   An update on the human resources projects under the Harmonization of Business Practices (HBP) was provided by the Senior Business Practices Adviser of the CEB Secretariat. Two follow-up items to the 'Review of Contractual Arrangements' report were underway. The first project, under the leadership of UNESCO, addresses the Harmonization of vacancy advertisement and selection process at country level for General Service and National Officer positions, which had been reviewed by the HBP Steering Committee and approved in principle. This was considered a difficult topic that needed significant political support from the highest levels of management in the organizations. The second project, under the leadership of WHO, concerns the Harmonization of key elements of performance appraisal systems, including UN Country Teams.

IV. **Harmonization of vacancy advertisements and selection processes at country level for GS and NPO positions** *(led by UNESCO)*

12.   The UNESCO representative explained that the project would only deal with the first two elements of the recruitment and selection process, i.e. definition of needs and establishment of job profile, and tools for the evaluation stage. The intention was to reduce competition locally, and ultimately take advantage of economies of scale. With this in mind, the project would also look at inter-agency participation in the process, sharing of rosters of pre-screened candidates and reciprocal agreements with other agencies.

13.   The organizations expressed concern about the wider potential implications of the project, including issues related to inter-agency mobility for locally-recruited staff. However, both UNESCO and the CEB Secretariat stressed that as the scope of the project was limited to the first two phases of the recruitment and selection process, such concerns could be addressed at a later stage, once the pilot had been proved successful. It was nevertheless noted that the pilot should be a tool for implementation in a wider context in the future, and not just a "stand-alone" exercise.

14.   It was agreed that it would be preferable to use internal staff resources on detachment, if possible, rather than hiring external consultants. The final choice would be made by the HR Network on the basis of proposals from the organizations.

15.   Members also agreed that it would be more straightforward to choose pilot countries which do not have multiple duty stations. The initial conclusion was to propose Uruguay and Viet Nam to the next meeting of the HLCM, in late September 2011.

V. **Harmonization of key elements of performance appraisal systems** *(led by WHO)*

16.   Harmonization of performance appraisal systems was considered a complex area, given that at present there were no monetary or non-monetary incentives in existence in the UN common system. In the UN system, as in the public and private sectors, there were many different performance appraisal systems. Members agreed that harmonization did not mean identical systems across the organizations, but rather organizations should be moving in the same direction. It was hoped that the project would also serve to stimulate the required inter-agency collaboration. The pilot was not intended to introduce a new system, but rather to develop a tool that could be used in existing systems.

17.   The Network agreed that the proposal needed more work before submission to HLCM. A Working Group, comprised of UNWRA, UNOPS, FAO and WHO, would look at the different performance appraisal systems and identify common elements. Their work should be completed by February 2012.

VI. **Report from the Working Group on Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the UN Common System of Salaries and Allowances**

18.   The Working Group had not been able to make any significant progress over the summer months. Although the principle of minimal change had been agreed upon, the Accord had

presented too radical a change. Work was ongoing to make the Agreement more binding, although this was proving to be complex and required additional work on separation modalities and disciplinary measures. The draft Agreement as it stood at present was not sufficiently advanced to distribute formally to the organizations.

19.   The Network was informed that UNDP had been working on an exchange agreement which could either be part of the Inter-Organization Agreement, or an addendum to it, and that UNICEF was in the process of compiling organizations' practices as regards the use, or non-use, of the Agreement.

20.   In summing up, the Chairperson indicated that this subject should figure on the agenda of the next HR Network meeting. The revised text of the Agreement should be ready for submission to HLCM at its Spring 2012 Session.

VII.   Other Business

a) Update on the Mandatory Age of Separation

21.   A representative of the UN Secretariat, member of the Working Group, informed the meeting of two recommendations made by the Working Group, namely that:

   a. the HR Network should study the harmonization of age-related data, and
   b. the HRNetwork should regularly carry out analyses of age-related data, either biennially or preferably annually.

22.   As organizations were divided on the question of increasing the age of separation to 62 for all staff and staff representatives wished to maintain acquired rights of staff, there was no demonstrated desire to change the present situation. The Working Group was required to submit a paper to HLCM, and would probably be disbanded thereafter. The Network noted that ICSC was expecting recommendations from HLCM, for discussion at its Summer 2012 Session.

b) Review of EMSEA by ICSC

23.   CCISUA indicated that some new elements had arisen at the last ICSC session, for example a review of EMSEA, and it wished to have the HR Network's reaction. The staff federations were not convinced that security-related entitlements fell within the ICSC's mandate, and were also concerned that EMSEA might suffer the same fate as SOLA and R&R.

24.   The organizations shared the staff federations' concerns, and would be recommending no change to the EMSEA. However, it was premature to discuss the issue until the ICSC's intentions as regards the review were known.

c) 2012 Spring Session of the HR Network

25.   As the Spring Session of the ICSC would be held in Bangkok in the last week of February/first week of March 2012), it was suggested that the next meeting of the HR Network be held in Europe to enable the participation of those smaller organizations who would not be able to attend ICSC. A possible host would be UNOV in Vienna.

Closed Meeting for HR Network Members

d) Human Resources Management Framework, and the pay and benefits system

26.   The Chairperson explained that this latter issue had arisen in the Retreat (July 2011). It was felt that the pay and benefits system was too old (dating back to the 1940s) and was in need of review to make it more modern and competitive.

27.   Other organizations who had been present at the Retreat added that the intention had been to develop a long-term strategy, rather than applying a "quick fix" to the system. The discussion in the Retreat had taken the form of a brainstorming on the vision for the future. The fact that the simplification of the pay and benefits system was now on the ICSC agenda was unexpected.

28.   It was agreed that the Chairperson would brief Ms. Pollard on the HR Network's position, ready for her intervention at HLCM.

e) Situation in Abuja, Nigeria

29.   Those organizations which had been affected by the tragedy in Abuja indicated that the provisions of their Staff Regulations, Rules and insurance policies were being applied to the letter and that no exceptional measures were foreseen. As regards non-staff personnel, the Office of the Legal Adviser was being consulted but for the moment, no action had been taken.

30.   Other organizations indicated that, although they had not lost any staff in the Abuja tragedy, they would probably have wished to grant some compensation to non-staff personnel. This situation highlighted the fact that the HR Network had still not been able to arrive at a consensus on action to be taken regarding non-staff personnel.

31.   The excellent collaboration among doctors and staff welfare officers/counsellors was noted, and it was agreed that a letter of appreciation would be sent.

32.   It was also recalled that the Inter-Agency Rapid Response Team (the establishment of which had been endorsed by HLCM and the CEB in 2010) had no leader at present. The Network agreed that leadership would focus mainly on the coordination role required, and in this context could be rotated, without loss of institutional knowledge.

33.   Organizations were encouraged to give wide circulation to the three security brochures, which dealt with entitlements in such situations. They were being updated and would be redistributed to organizations.

f) Briefing on mission to South Sudan

34.   A representative of the UN Secretariat informed the meeting of very poor conditions found at various locations in South Sudan at the time of a mission in which the Chairperson of the ICSC participated.

35.   In the light of prevailing unhygienic and insecure conditions, the mission suggested creating "hubs", especially for staff who are only on the ground for a short period of time (for example, 10 days). It was felt that the creation of "hubs" to service offices would be a workable solution. The organizations were interested in this possibility, and looked forward to receiving more information.

Annex I – List of Participants

Co-Chairs: **Ruth de Miranda (UN)**
Shelly Pitterman (UNHCR)

Organization	Name – Title – Division
UN	**Ms. Ruth de Miranda**, Chief, Human Resources Policy Service
	Mr. Arnab Roy, Chief, Policy and Conditions of Service Section
ILO	**Ms. Telma Viale,** Director, HR Development Department
	Mr. Juan Llobera, Chief, Policy and Social Benefits Branch
FAO	**Mr. Tony Alonzi,** Director, Human Resources Management Division
UNESCO	**Ms. Annick Grisar**, Chief, Policy and Compensation
WHO	**Ms. Monika Altmaier**, Director, Human Resources Management
	Ms. Eva Lustigova, Chair, Global WG on Performance Management & Development, HRM, Policy and Administration of Justice
ITU	**Ms. Julia S. Watt,** Chief, Human Resources Management
	Mr. Eric Dalhen, Head, HR and Planning Division
	Ms. Sherine Greiss, Human Resources Officer, Policies & Legal Matters
WMO	**Mr. Shuibao Liu**, Chief, Human Resources Division
WIPO	**Mr. Gisbert Bruns**, Director, Human Resources Management Department (HRMD)
	Ms. Michel Ciampi, HR Policy Officer, HR Policy Development Section
IFAD	**Mr. Justin Kouka**, Human Resources
UNIDO	**Mr. Konstatin Ivanov,** Chief of PSM/HRM/SSR and Deputy Director, HRM Branch
WFP	**Ms. Ruth Grove,** Acting Director HR
UNICEF	**Mr. Peter Frobel**, Sr. Human Resources Policy Specialist, DHR
PAHO	**Mr. Paul de la Croix-Vaubois,** HR Advisor, Compensation & Entitlements Mgt, HRM
UNDP	**Ms. Henrietta de Beer,** Chief, HR Policy and Compensation Unit
UNRWA	**Ms. Cornelia Moussa**, Director, Human Resources
UNHCR	**Mr. Shelly Pitterman**, Director, Division of Human Resources
	Mr. Bertrand Mutter, Chief, HR Policy Section
UNAIDS	**Ms. Nancy Raphael**, Chief, Human Resources Management
UNOPS	**Mr. Pierre Moreau-Peron,** Director, HR
ITC	**Ms. Micky Khodara,** OIC,Human Resources, HR Section, Division for Programme Support
	Mr. Filip Borkowy, Associate HR Policy Advisor
UNWOMEN	**Ms. Sonica Urizza**, Chief, HR Centre
CEB Secretariat	**Mr. Remo Lalli**, Secretary, High Level Committee on Management
	Ms. Marta Leichner-Boyce (ICSC, temporarily with CEB)
	Ms. Sue Hudson, Acting Inter-Agency Advisor, Human Resources Management
	Ms. Petra ten Hoope-Bender, HR Programme Coordinator, Dual Career & Staff Mobility
	Mr. Alejandro Henning, Consultant (by skype)
FICSA	**Ms. Marie-Thérèse Conilh de Beyssac,** General Secretary
	Ms. Leslie Ewart, Research Officer
UNISERV	**Mr. Jean-Luc Sintes**, UNISERV/FFINU Secretary-General
CCISUA	**Mr. Ridha Zargouni**, President
	Mr. Christopher Land-Kazlauskas, Vice President