Chief Executives Board for Co-ordination

CEB/2006/HLCM/12 30 April 2006

CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES NETWORK

(UN, Vienna, 7-10 March 2006)

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ANNEXES

- I. Agenda
- II. List of Participants

1. OPENING SESSION, ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME

(CEB/2006/HLCM/7/Rev.1 and CEB/2006/HR/11/CRP.1/Rev.1)

- 1. The 11th session of the HR Network was opened by the Deputy Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna who welcomed participants to Vienna. He also drew attention to the report by the Secretary-General on his reform programme for the United Nations. The report would be launched in five hours time and was expected to include a number of important proposals with regard to human resource management, including contractual modalities and mobility.
- 2. The meeting was chaired by the spokesperson from UNESCO. In her opening statements, she informed the Network that Ms. Mary Jane Peters was retiring at the end of April. Ms. Peters, now the Secretary of HLCM, had served the inter-agency community since 1993, when she joined the then CCAQ Secretariat. She had been a key pillar of the HR Network and her departure would be a great loss for the Network. On behalf of all members of the Network, the spokesperson expressed sincere thanks to Ms. Peters for her outstanding contributions and wished her well for the future which, hopefully, would continue to include collaboration with the organizations of the common system.
- 3. The agenda is attached in annex I and the list of participants in annex II.

2. MATTERS RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE CEB, HLCM AND OTHER NETWORKS

4. The Secretary of HLCM briefed the Network on the relevant outcomes of the 11th session of the High-level Committee on Management, which had taken place from 28 February to 1 March 2006. For the first time, HLCM had met concurrently with HLCP and a half-day joint session had been organized. The fact that altogether 100 participants had attended, including two Executive Heads and four Under-Secretaries-General, attested to the importance that the UN system attached to a more holistic approach to the management area in general.

2.1 Accountability and transparency

5. The Secretary of HLCM reported that two studies were undertaken with all urgency in response to the mandate of the Summit Outcome. The first was an external study that would examine governance structures and principles, accountability and oversight. HLCM had established an ad-hoc working group that reviewed and commented on the terms of reference established for the study. The second study would be undertaken by a High Level Panel which had the mandate "to develop concrete and comprehensive analysis and recommendations" on how the UN system could maximize its contribution toward achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Another task of the Panel was to make proposals for "more tightly managed entities in the field of the environment, humanitarian assistance and development". It was expected that the outcome of both studies would have a profound impact on the way organizations did business.

2.2 Safety and security of staff

- 6. The Secretary of HLCM reported on the briefing HLCM had received from the Under-Secretary General for Safety and Security on the status of the implementation of the new security management arrangements and his vision for ensuring the security and safety of staff in light of current and projected threats. Basically, the situation with regard to safety and security of staff had worsened and much needed to be done to improve it. The profile of the security profile was changing, the UN was working with the best security companies in the world and aimed to achieve better cultural and linguistic diversity. The USG had emphasized the importance of avoiding a "NY-centric" approach, of strengthening the designated officials, working with host governments in a more strident manner and entering into partnerships with NGOs. The proposals to strengthen the security management system included the following:
 - Creation of a UN Safety Council for the purpose of promoting good practice;
 - Consideration of a second generation of MOSS and MORSS;
 - Further development of insurances;
 - Initiatives to better provide for the safety and security of locally-recruited staff such as in situations of poor sewage, lack of electricity and local fire services, etc;
 - Expansion of stress counseling capacities.
- 7. With regard to cost sharing, it would be unlikely that the General Assembly would be willing to re-consider a central budget for Safety and Security for the time being.
- 8. In its discussion, the HR Network reflected on various aspects of the above, including the considerations related to MORSS for national staff the application of MAIP to national staff. The Network decided
 - ➤ To ensure that the Network would be consulted on any changes to the MORSS and insurance applications;
 - > To invite the United Nations Insurance Unit to the next session of the HR Network.

2.3 United Nations System Staff College

(CEB/2006/HLCM/R.3)

9. The Secretary of HLCM also briefed the Network on a presentation made to HLCM by the interim Director of the UN System Staff College. He had spoken with candor of the continuing need for a Staff College and had explained his proposal for a core curriculum for the College, which was available to the Network. HLCM had approved the core curriculum, on a "trial basis" and subject to the submission of a business plan which would be reviewed by the Board of Governors of the College.

2.4 Gender mainstreaming

(CEB/2006/HLCM/R.4)

10. The Network was informed of the work carried out by the Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. A system-wide action plan had been developed by a Task Force of the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE). Thirty-seven entities of the UN system had indicated that they were either taking action or had

planned action. Following the Security Council's review of this plan, it had welcomed the action plan and requested the Secretary General to update, monitor and review its implementation and integration on an annual basis. For this reason, organizations were requested to (a) ensure the necessary resources for the execution of the action plan and (b) monitor and assess its implementation and (c) provide an accountability mechanism. HLCM had therefore been requested to determine whether a system-wide approach could be applied to the implementation of the action plan in these three areas. The Secretary of HLCM pointed out that there were important HR implications, for example, with regard to management accountability, leadership and training.

- 11. Members of the Network expressed their commitment to promoting gender balance and the advancement of women. Some members also pointed out that in their organizations, "gender mainstreaming" referred to programme issues whereas gender equality resided in the management/HR areas. It was important to distinguish between those two.
- 12. It was proposed that the Network would organize a specific forum dedicated to the topic.

2.5 Other matters: Joint session of HLCP and HLCM

13. In her briefing, the Secretary of HLCM also highlighted the high impact that the Secretary-General's high-level panel on system-wide coherence was expected to have on the system as a whole. The Panel included three prime minister, one president and one Minister of finance. Members of HLCM and HLCP had met in break-out groups to discuss priorities for the Panel's work. It was important for organizations to be pro-active in their suggestions and contributions and not wait until they "were told to change".

3. ISSUES UNDER CONSIDERATION BY ICSC:

3.1 Resolutions and decision of the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the common system

Background

The General Assembly did not complete consideration of agenda item 131 on the United Nations common system in 2005 and deferred it to its resumed session in 2006.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.2 & Add. 1

Conclusions

- 14. The Network noted that the General Assembly had not been in a position to conclude its deliberations of agenda item 131 on the United Nations common system and to defer to its resumed session a number of decisions on issues of great importance to the organizations of the Network. It was decided to emphasize to the Commission:
 - ➤ The importance of ensuring that there be sufficient time to prepare for the implementation of the new Mobility and Hardship allowance scheme. Should the General Assembly approve the proposed package, organizations would need at least six months to prepare for the implementation;

- The importance organizations attach to maintaining mobility payments for staff serving at "H" and "A" duty stations;
- The need to broaden the criteria for eligibility for Hazard Pay to include also non-medical personnel. For example, some expert staff from FAO were exposed to the Avian Flu.

Decisions of the Commission

The Commission decided to take note of the two reports on the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly; and to make available on the ICSC website, information concerning resolutions and decisions of governing bodies, and implementation by organizations of the Commission's recommendations and decisions.

3.2 Review of the pay and benefits system:

(a) Staffing of field missions: review of conversion of contractual instruments

Background

The document deals with the proposed conversion of contracts for peace-keeping staff currently on 300-series contracts.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.3

© Conclusions

15. The Network noted that this item concerned the proposed conversion of 300-series to 100 series contracts of staff serving on peace-keeping missions. It was therefore decided that the representative of the United Nations would take the floor on this item during the discussions of the ICSC.

Decisions of the Commission

The Commission had a lengthy debate on this item and adopted a number of very detailed decisions, the most important of which were:

- To alert the General Assembly that the present practice of converting mission staff from the 300 series to the 100 series has implications related to long-term contractual obligations of the Organization, financial cost, geographical distribution, gender balance and merit-based transparent and open selection procedures, and to note that this conversion practice created inequities in the compensation packages between mission appointees under 300-series appointments of limited duration and 100-series appointments;
- To recommend that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General:
 - (i) To discontinue the practice of converting mission staff on appointments of limited duration from the 300 series to the 100 series;
 - (ii) To not renew under the same conditions those 100-series mission appointees converted from appointments of limited duration under the 300 series upon the staff members' departure from the mission or the expiry of the mission;
- To request the ICSC secretariat to review all types of current contracts and associated benefits packages in the organizations of the United Nations common system, including the use of appointments of limited duration under the 300 series of the Staff Rules, and to report thereon to the Commission at its 2007 summer session.

3.3 Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories:

(a) Report of the twenty-eighth session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions

Background

The place-to-place survey takes place every five years. Roger Eggleston, formerly of the CEB Secretariat, served as observer, for parts of the survey, for the organizations and staff.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.4

Conclusions

- 16. The Secretary of HLCM summarized the statement prepared by the observer for the organizations and staff, which would be delivered by the Network spokesperson at the ICSC.
 - **Click here for HR Network statement to the Commission**

Decisions of the Commission

The Commission decided to approve the results of the 2005 place-to-place surveys for Geneva, London, Madrid, Montreal, Paris, Rome, Vienna and Washington, D.C., as recommended by the Advisory Committee which are set out in the table below:

Summary of the results of the 2005 cost-of-living comparisons between New York and Geneva, London, Madrid, Montreal, Paris, Rome, Vienna and Washington, D.C., as of the survey date

Duty station	Month of survey (2005)	Exchange rate	Existing PAI	Existing multiplier		Cla AI change ercentage) (pe	ssification change rcentage)
Geneva	September	1.27	162.69	63.5	165.38	1.66	1.15
London	September	0.56	155.02	52.3	165.71	6.89	8.8
Madrid	September	0.82	144.13	39.7	141.89	-1.55	1.57
Montreal	September	1.20	144.87	43.3	145.06	0.13	1.23
Paris	September	0.820	150.84	46.1	154.77	2.6	5.93
Rome	October	0.832	147.23	46.1	149.23	1.36	2.14
Vienna	October	0.832	146.80	42.4	148.46	1.13	4.25
Washington, D.C.	September	1	142.21	38.3	146.75	3.19	6.11

PAI, post adjustment index.

(b) Children's and secondary dependant's allowances: review of the levels

Background

The review of the levels of the children's and secondary dependants' allowances takes place every two years. The levels are determined on the basis of the value of tax abatements and social security payments in the countries of the eight headquarters duty stations. During this year's review, the ICSC Secretariat discovered an anomaly in the methodology, which became obvious because Italy had eliminated all child benefits provided under the Italian social and tax legislation at the reference income level. While six other headquarters duty stations had shown an increase in the percentage of benefit levels and a seventh had remained the same, the 100 per cent decrease in Italy resulted in an overall decrease of 8.05 % of the children's allowance under the current methodology. The Secretariat proposed two options for dealing with this anomaly.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.5

Conclusions

17. The Network:

- Agreed that the time had come to review not only the level of the children's' and secondary dependants' allowances but also the methodology for calculating them. The current methodology seemed overly complex and not in line with the move towards simplification and streamlining that had characterized the calculation and determination of other benefits and allowances. Moreover, as the Secretariat had discovered, it was actually flawed in that it tracked only relative changes and did not make reference to absolute terms. The Network therefore wished to propose to the Commission that the ICSC Secretariat review the methodology for determining these allowances with a view to simplifying it;
- Supported the modified approach as summarized in paragraph 26, under which the current amounts would be maintained, not because this was necessarily the best approach in the long run, but because the second option would require organizations to "grandfather" the current system and amounts, which in turn would present significant administrative difficulties. The time and costs involved in a grandfathering exercise would not seem commensurate with the level of the allowances. Therefore, the modified approach was seen as the only practical and feasible one for the HR Network members.

Decisions of the Commission

The Commission did not accept the organizations' recommendation and decided to apply the existing methodology, in spite of the discovered anomaly. This means that allowances that would be received for the first time as of 1 January 2007 will be reduced from their current levels. Staff already in receipt of the allowance will continue to receive the same amount as before. Specifically, the Commission decided to make the following recommendations to the General Assembly:

- (a) For staff who became eligible to receive the dependency allowances on or after 1 January 2007, the following amounts would be payable:
 - (i) Children's allowance US\$ 1,780 per annum;
 - (ii) Disabled child allowance US\$ 3,560 per annum;
 - (iii) Secondary dependant's allowance US\$ 637 per annum;
 - (iv) At duty stations where the dependency allowances were expressed in local currency, the revised amounts of the children's and secondary dependant's allowances as shown in the Annex to the report
- (b) For staff who were currently eligible to receive the dependency allowances, the current amounts will continue to be payable as follows:
 - (i) Children's allowance US\$ 1,936 per annum;
 - (ii) Disabled child allowance US\$ 3,872 per annum;
 - (iii) Secondary dependant's allowance US\$ 693 per annum;
 - (iv) At duty stations where the dependency allowances were expressed in local currency, the current amounts of the children's and secondary dependant's allowances as shown in the Annex to the report will continue to be payable.
- (c) The dependency allowances should be reduced by the amount of any direct payments received by staff from a government in respect of dependants.

The Commission also decided to review the methodology for the determination of the children's and secondary dependant's allowances at its sixty-fourth session, and requested its secretariat to develop proposals aimed at simplifying and improving the fairness of the system, including those relating to the local currency denomination scheme and the procedure for adjusting the levels of the allowances.

3.4 Conditions of Service of the General Service and other locally recruited staff:

- (a) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in Rome
- **Documentation**
 - ✓ ICSC/62/R.6
- **©** Conclusions
- 18. The Network:
 - Took note of the contents of the document and noted that FAO would submit a separate note prepared by the Local Salary Survey Committee.
- (b) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in New York:
- **Documentation**
 - ✓ ICSC/62/R.7 and Add. 1 and 2
- Conclusions
- 19. The Network:
 - > Took note of the information provided.

Decision by the Commission

Under article 12, paragraph 1, of its statute, the Commission conducted a survey of best prevailing conditions of employment for the Security Service category in New York. Its consideration of the matter was based on document ICSC/62/R.7. Details regarding the survey and the recommendations to the Secretary-General of the United Nations concerning the new salary scale are provided in document ICSC/62/CRP.9. A final document consolidating the reports on the three locally recruited categories in New York — the General Service, the Security Service and the Trades and Crafts categories — will be issued as a document of the sixty-third session of the Commission.

(c) <u>Considerations related to reviewing the Job Evaluation Standards for General Service</u> and related categories

Background

The ICSC Secretariat established a technical working group to review the currently existing eight job evaluation standards for the General Service and related categories. Terms of reference had been agreed at the 61st session of the ICSC. At its first meeting in February 2006, the working group agreed on a work plan. It was felt that the review of the job evaluation standards should be embedded in a more comprehensive review of the changed nature of the General Service work. Accordingly, the working group agreed that the time line originally envisaged by the Commission might be too ambitious. Preceding the first meeting of the working group, its composition was discussed at and following a videoconference in December 2005. The agreement reached was that there should be six representatives from six organizations, two representatives each from FICSA and CCISUA and one representative each from the ICSC and CEB Secretariats. However FICSA and CCISUA had expressed their preference for a greater number of their representatives. The findings of the working group were not yet included in the document before the commission; an oral progress report was therefore provided by the ICSC Secretariat both to the HR Network and the Commission.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.8

Conclusions

20. The Network:

- Emphasized the importance of the reform of the job evaluation system for the General Service and related categories. This was a complex task in that it entailed not merely the development of new tools but a review of the nature of work of the General Service staff, which had undergone significant changes over the last decades;
- Noted that the established deadlines to complete and report on this project would not appear realistic due to the complexity of the task and that some delays could be anticipated. Nevertheless, the Network encouraged the working group to proceed as quickly and as inclusively as possible. The choice of a suitable experienced consultant would be crucial in this regard;
- Endorsed the current composition of the working group and thanked the ICSC Secretariat for its efforts to settle the issues that had arisen in this regard. The six organizations participating in the working group had agreed to organize regular meetings, at their respective locations, with those organizations not represented. This would ensure the contributions of all organizations of the Network to the process.

Decision of the Commission

The Commission concluded that, to facilitate a meaningful and expeditious conclusion of the review of the General Service and related categories, the working group should comprise a limited number of technically competent members of the working group, adopt a focused approach to the content of the work and establish a realistic timetable that would support the reporting dates originally foreseen by the Commission. It therefore decided:

- (a) To approve the revised workplan and schedule;
- (b) To retain the membership of the working group as proposed by the ICSC secretariat: six representatives of the organizations, four representatives of the staff and one representative each from the CEB and ICSC secretariats:
 - (c) To consider the report of the working group at its 2007 spring session.

Note: The revision of the workplan implied that Phase III of the workplan as prepared by the Working Group, was deleted by the Commission. This Phase III had foreseen to link job classification to a range of other HR tools and issues. However, the Commission considered this too ambitious and as outside the scope of the terms of reference of the Working Group. Therefore, the exercise will be limited to the development of a job evaluation standard.

3.5 Common scale of staff assessment locally recruited staff

Background

A standard review that so far has taken place every two years.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.9

Conclusions

- 21. Noting that the tax differences between 1995 and 2005 for both married and single taxpayers had not changed significantly, the Network:
 - > Supported the recommendation that the current common scale of staff assessment continue to apply and be reviewed in two years' time.

Decision of the Commission

The Commission decided to report to the General Assembly that the current common scale of staff assessment should continue to apply and proposed, subject to the concurrence of UNJSPF, that the scale should again be reviewed in four/six years' time or at the time of the next comprehensive review of pensionable remuneration, whichever comes first.

- 3.6 Total compensation comparisons under the Noblemaire principle to determine the highest paid civil service:
- (a) Results of the United Nations/United States grade equivalency studies (SES)

Background

Grade equivalency studies between officials in comparable positions of the comparator civil service (the United States federal civil service) and the United Nations common system are conducted every five years by the ICSC. At its fifty-ninth session, the Commission had decided that it would commence the next grade equivalency study in the latter part of 2004 with an examination of the comparator's Senior Executive Service (SES). At subsequent sessions, the ICSC Secretariat reported delays in obtaining the required grade equivalency data. The document submitted to this session was also still a progress report.

- **Documentation**
 - ✓ ICSC/62/R.10

© Conclusions

- 22. The Network discussed at length the current status of the Noblemaire studies. It was noted that the ICSC Secretariat had again only been able to provide a progress report. The difficulties in obtaining the necessary data were at least partly caused by the changes in the comparator's federal civil service, particularly the SES, which had been moving towards broadbanding and performance-based pay, therefore making it difficult to undertake a full grade equivalency study. The Network was of the view that this showed, once again, the vulnerability of the current pay system of the UN common system, in that it relied only on one national civil service as comparator. The Network reiterated its view that for the past years, the Noblemaire principle had not been applied. This had undermined the competitiveness of the common system and its ability to attract and retain staff of the highest quality.
- 23. The Network recalled that Executive Heads had called for an in depth review of the Noblemaire and its application on many occasions and that the Network had consistently requested the Commission to consider also international civil services as comparators. The Network therefore decided to once again reiterate its concerns to the Commission, emphasizing the need to take a more comprehensive approach to the application of the Noblemaire principle and to do more than just reference checks with organizations such as the World Bank and OECD.
 - Click here for HR Network statement to the Commission

Decisions of the Commission

The Commission, taking into account the changes taking place in the United States federal civil service, considered that work on the SES grade equivalency study should continue according to two separate methodologies.

Accordingly, the Commission decided:

- (a) To take note of the status of the grade equivalency exercise;
- (b) To approve the list of occupations proposed in the annex and to delegate authority to the Chairman to include further occupations deemed appropriate on the basis of additional information, if provided by the organizations;
- (c) To request the secretariat to continue the job evaluation study for positions in the General Schedule and other associated pay systems by reference to the current methodology;
- (d) To request the secretariat to provide a proposal for revising the methodology to be applied to a broad banded pay-for-performance system such as SES;
- (e) To request the secretariat to report to the Commission on the above matters at its 2007 spring session.

(b) <u>Total compensation comparison – Stage II (Belgium)</u>

Background

According to the Noblemaire Principle, the salary levels of United Nations common system staff of the Professional and higher categories are determined on the basis of a comparison with the highest paying civil service. Currently, the comparator is the United States federal civil service. A study to determine the highest-paid civil service, including a total comparison between the United Nations and the US federal civil service has been on the work programme of the Commission for 2005-2006. The practice of the application by the Commission and the General Assembly of the Noblemaire Principle has been to compare with national civil services, combined with a reference check with other international organizations. The purpose of Phase I of the current study was to gather sufficient data in order to identify those national civil services that appear to have the highest cash compensation levels and therefore could be studied in depth in Phase II. At its 60th session, the Commission agreed to include Singapore, Belgium, Switzerland and Germany for further studying. At its 61st session, the Commission reviewed the preliminary findings on Singapore, Switzerland and Germany and decided to not proceed with further analysis as the findings had not indicated that the civil services of those countries compared favourably with the United States federal civil service. The Commission agreed however to undertake a preliminary review of the Belgian civil service.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.11 and CRP.5

Conclusions

24. At its meeting, the Network was only able to review document R.11 which contained initial data on the Belgian civil service. CRP.5, which provided more detailed data on the Belgian compensation package, was made available only after the meeting of the Network and at the start of the Commission's session. On the whole, the findings contained in CRP.5 suggested that the Belgian civil service might compare favourably with regard to salary, pension benefits, health insurance and leave provisions. There were however some inconsistencies in the document which required further clarification.

- 25. The Network therefore decided to note:
 - That the Belgian civil service seemed "better paid" with regard to pension benefits and with regard to leave, holiday and work hours;
 - That the Belgian civil service seems approximately equal to the US federal civil service with regard to health insurance provisions;
 - That, with regard to salary, as stated in paragraph 18 of CRP.5, "at the lowest comparable positions the Belgian salaries were *significantly higher* while at the highest comparable positions Belgian salaries are approximately equivalent to US salaries".
- 26. In summary, the Network believed that the initial compensation findings were encouraging, as was the fact that the size of the Belgian civil service was significant and exceeded that of Switzerland.

<u>Note</u>: At the meeting of the Commission, the Secretariat discovered that an error had been made in the calculation of the Belgian salaries. The revised information indicated that the comparison was not as favourable as initially thought. Both the HR Network and the Staff Representatives requested the Commission to re-examine the figures and revert to the item at its 63rd session. After some debate, the Commission agreed to this.

Click here for HR Network statement to the Commission

Decision of the Commission

The Commission decided to postpone the consideration of the item to its sixty-third session, where it expected a revised consolidated report reflecting the substance of ICSC/62/R.11 and ICSC/62/CRP.5.

(c) Reference check with World Bank and Organizations for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Background

As part of the Noblemaire studies, a reference check is carried out to compare the compensation packages of other international civil services with that of the common system. The HR Network has argued for a long time that international civil services should not merely be considered for reference purposes but also as comparators. The ICSC is not in favour of this.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.12

© Conclusions

- 27. The Network discussed the similarity between the work of the World Bank and organizations of the common system. While the nature of work was similar in many respects, many organizations expected a much greater degree of hardship from their staff. Several members emphasized that they were losing staff to other international organizations as the compensation of the UN organizations was not seen as competitive.
- 28. The Network also noted that the document prepared by the ICSC suggested that the gap between the net remunerations had narrowed significantly compared to the last review; this was seen as questionable.

29. The Network therefore decided:

- > To urge the Commission to consider other international civil services also as potential competitors, given the fact that UN organizations had to compete with them for staff;
- > To request clarification on the reported narrowing of the gap in net remuneration.

Click here for HR Network statement to the Commission

Decision of the Commission

The Commission decided to report to the General Assembly that it had conducted an update of the 1995 reference check with the remuneration levels of both the World Bank and OECD as part of its current Noblemaire study and had found that these organizations were approximately 29 per cent ahead of the United Nations common system. In the 1995 reference check, the corresponding gaps in remuneration levels were 51 per cent in favour of the World Bank and 39 per cent in favour of OECD. In the case of OECD, both 1995 and 2005 exercises included expatriate benefits. Had these benefits been excluded from the comparison process, the difference in remuneration levels between the United Nations common system and OECD would be approximately 14 per cent in favour of OECD.

3.7 Progress report on the development of a Senior Management Network

Background

At the request of the General Assembly, the Network is to report to the Commission on progress made with regard to the Senior Management Network.

Documentation

✓ ICSC/62/R.13

Conclusions

30. The representative of UNDP briefed the HR Network on the progress made with regard to the Senior Management Network (SMN). While progress had been slower than expected, the SMN had never been as relevant as now, given the reform efforts underway in most organizations. The leadership development programme remained the core of the SMN for the time being. Delays had been experienced mainly because of the need for strict conformity with the procurement process and due to implementation issues at the Staff College. It was expected that the procurement process would soon be concluded with the selection of institution(s) that would design and deliver the leadership programme. The inter-agency working group had evaluated the bids received and a videoconference would take place shortly to conduct interviews with the three short listed institutions.

31. The Network

- Thanked the representative of UNDP and the inter-agency working group for their efforts to evaluate and select the institutions that had submitted proposals for the leadership development programme;
- Agreed that further work needed to be done to develop the broader aspects of the SMN, beyond the leadership programme. This should take place under the auspices of the CEB Secretariat.

Decisions of the Commission

At the request, of the Commission, the spokesperson of the HR Network gave a presentation on the purpose, objectives and features of the Senior Management Network. This included a question and answer session. Overall, the presentation was well received by the Commission.

The Commission noted the information provided by the Human Resources Network, which had afforded some clarity on the development and directions of the Senior Management Network and had provided the opportunity to raise concerns and identify challenges inherent in implementing such a network. On the basis of that information, the Commission decided to request similar updates at regular intervals from the Human Resources Network/CEB secretariat.

4. ISSUES RELATING TO THE HR NETWORK AGENDA

4.1 Administrative guidelines for an influenza pandemic

(CEB/2006/HLCM/11)

- 32. Contingency planning for a human influenza pandemic caused by the Avian Flu virus was the subject of three HR Network videoconferences in 2005 and 2006. At its meeting in November 2005, the Network decided to establish a small working group composed of the New York based organizations which would prepare a draft of internal administrative guidelines, applicable to all New York staff members. The draft was subsequently circulated to all organizations with a view to using them as a basis for developing a generic framework that could be applied to staff in the field and at other headquarters locations. A more general summary had already been included in the overall UN System Pandemic Planning and Preparedness Guidelines, issued by the Office of the United Nations System Influenza Coordinator (UNSIC). The administrative guidelines draft was now before the Network in order to arrive at a common approach with regard to the most important aspects of dealing with staff in the event of a pandemic.
- 33. In introducing the guidelines, the representative of the United Nations noted that their preparation had been a group effort, inspired by the shared belief that the same messages had to be sent by all organizations at a duty station. Moreover, the New York working group had not worked alone but in close cooperation with a number of managerial areas, such as budget, finance, comptrollers, and the insurance unit. She outlined the areas for which the Network sought a harmonized approach:
 - Determination of critical staff. The New York group had decided that a maximum of 10 per cent of staff would be determined as critical by each organization. Outside New York, it would be left to each organization and duty station to determine a percentage. It would be important that the critical staff would have the appropriate delegated authority and be prepared to live on the premises for up to six weeks.
 - *Modalities of absence for non-critical staff.* The New York group had applied the principles of flexibility and simplicity and therefore agreed that non-critical staff would be placed on Special Leave With Full Pay (SLWFP).
 - Compensatory Time Off (CTO) for critical staff. Critical functions could be performed on the premises, at alternative offices or from home. The New York group had agreed to apply CTO ratio of double the time off if staff had been on the premises and 1.5 times if work had been done from home.
 - Annual, home and sick leave. The New York organizations had agreed that SLWFP would apply from the date that staff had been expected to return from leave.
 - *Health and life insurance*. New York had had consultations with the insurance companies on a number of arrangements, including the extension of the age until which dependent children were allowed to have flu vaccinations.

34. The representative of FAFICS pointed out that while it was reassuring to see that the common system had undertaken some pandemic planning and issued preparedness guidelines, from the standpoint of FAFICS there were some shortcomings. The word 'retiree' did not feature in the United Nations system pandemic planning and preparedness guidelines; in the guidelines for the New York-based organizations, 'retirement' was mentioned twice. Furthermore, a letter that AAFI-AFICS had sent in November 2006 to the executive heads of UNOG, WHO, ILO, ITU, WIPO, WMO, ITC and UNHCR enquiring about provisions made for retired staff in the case of emergency had met with a limited response. The representative of the United Nations explained that the proposed guidelines were a contingency plan for enabling the organization to function in a time of crisis and therefore did not touch on issues such as local health facilities or provision of medication.

Click here for FAFICS' statement to the Network

35. Network members stressed the importance of contingency planning for a pandemic and a harmonized approach to administration of staff during a pandemic situation. There should be no "haves" and "have nots". The overwhelming majority of organizations agreed to apply the provisions contained in the administrative guidelines for the New York based organizations. Three organizations however reserved their position on the application of the SLWFP modality and the compensatory time off ratio.

36. The Network:

- Thanked the representative of the United Nations and the New York working group for the preparation of the detailed and very thorough administrative guidelines;
- Decided to request the CEB Secretariat to develop generic guidelines based on the New York model;
- Requested those organizations who had reserved their position to inform the CEB Secretariat of their final decision as soon as possible.

4.2 Handover of local salary surveys from UNDP to UN

(CEB/2006/HLCM/8 and INF.1)

- 37. At a videoconference in late 2005, the HR Network was informed that UNDP had decided to hand over the responsibilities for the local salary surveys to the United Nations, with effect from 1 July 2006. The United Nations had informed the Network that it would assume the function under the same budgetary provisions. Subsequently, the Network had approved the budget, re-costed for 2005 standard costs. The Finance and Budget Network took note of the re-costed budget.
- 38. The representatives of UNDP and the United Nations briefed the Network on the status of the handover arrangements. UNDP reported that there had been a number of very constructive meetings and that there was a strong commitment to maintaining the services at the same levels of quality and budget. The representative of the United Nations informed that the current situation was seen as a transitional one and that the UN did not exclude outsourcing some of the functions at a later stage.
- 39. The representative of WIPO raised the question of organizations' participation in the cost sharing budget. While WIPO had no local staff in the field, it had accepted to contribute to the budget on a "solidarity basis". In the future, however, the organization would need an assurance that all organizations would be contributing, including all of those that were in a similar situation as WIPO.

40. The Network recalled that the cost sharing formula had been reviewed at two meetings of a working group in 2004 and 2005. At the time, a number of proposals had been made with regard to a revised cost sharing formula; however, no decision had been taken. It was therefore worthwhile revisiting the issue and to establish a small working group that would prepare an analysis of the options.

41. In conclusion, the Network:

- Noted with appreciation that the hand-over arrangements from UNDP to the United Nations were progressing smoothly and that the quality of service would be maintained;
- > Emphasized the importance of a communications strategy to accompany the introduction of the handover;
- Agreed that for the current budgetary period, there would be no impact on the cost sharing budget and that the cost sharing formula remained the same;
- ➤ Decided to establish a small joint working group of the HR and FB Networks, to be coordinated by the United Nations and UNDP, to review the cost sharing formula for future budgets.

4.3 Other business:

(a) Preparations for monitoring the level of the Education Grant

42. The Secretary of HLCM informed the Network that the CEB Secretariat would shortly start the data collection process for the biennial Education Grant exercise. The Education Grant remained one of the most important expatriate benefits and it was therefore crucial that all organizations appointed a dedicated focal point and submitted their data in time.

(b) <u>Task Force on HIV/AIDS in the UN System workplace: 2006 Work plan</u> (CEB/2006/HLCM/9)

- 43. The Representative of UNAIDS briefed the HR Network on the "UN Cares" proposal. The HR Task Force recognized the current turning point in the response to HIV in the workplace moving from individual agencies' HIV workplace programmes to a more comprehensive and common programme. She explained that "UN Cares", a joint UN system HIV workplace programme, was an integrated package of prevention, care and support to benefit all UN personnel and their families in all duty stations, including headquarters. It was proposed that in the current result-based environment, a common programme would:
 - strengthen collective working arrangements of UN agencies;
 - ensure harmonization in implementation;
 - leverage the comparative advantages of UN agencies and move towards a more effective system wide response to HIV in the UN system workplace;
 - achieve scale economies and cost-effectiveness;
 - have the potential to become be a model for proactive UN Reform.
- 44. The Network was informed of the wide support from different global bodies, including the UNAIDS Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations and the Inter Agency Advisory Group on AIDS. It was argued that there is a need for a central role to drive the UN Cares programme forward. Members were reminded that the status report shared with the HR Network clearly indicated that those

agencies which had invested human and financial resources have made the most progress in implementing their programmes. Presumably the same situation would be true at the global level. Until sufficient staffing and resources were dedicated at the global interagency level, collective progress, beyond individual agencies, would be limited.

- 45. The Network was appraised of a draft Action plan as well as the proposed functions of the Global Coordinator.
- 46. In response, the Network:
 - > Thanked the representative of UNAIDS for her excellent and persuasive presentation;
 - Expressed its full support to the UN Cares proposal and to the move to one integrated UN system programme, which was seen as an excellent opportunity to address this critical challenge in a coordinated way;
 - ➤ Agreed to the appointment of a Global Coordinator to drive the process and requested the Task Force to explore different avenues, including the Secondment of staff from various agencies on a rotating basis and tapping into the UN Volunteers and Junior Professional Officer programmes;
 - Also agreed that the UN Cares programme and the Global Coordinator should be located in the CEB Secretariat which would ensure the high profile of HIV/AIDS workplace issues, the securing of system-wide buy-in and participation to the programme;
 - Agreed that the proposed UN Cares action plan and the terms of reference for the Global Coordinator be reviewed at the Network's 12th session in July 2006; this would include a review of the "UN Cares" title.
- 47. With regard to funding for the Global Coordinator position, the following organizations signaled their willingness to contribute to it: UNDP, UNESCO, WIPO, United Nations, FAO, UNFPA, UNHCR and ILO. Other organizations indicated that they could not commit financially or that they were not in a position to commit at the meeting but that they would take the proposal back to their organizations. The proposal was also made that the UN Care programme be registered for an award which would also be useful for fundraising purposes.

(c) Update on HR Reform in the UN (UN)

- 48. The Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Human Resource Management of the United Nations, provided a summary of the Secretary-General's Report "Investing in the United Nations: for a stronger Organization worldwide". The report was a strategic document which was to lay the foundation for a stronger organization. The proposals were organized under seven headings, dealing with People, Leadership, ICT, Delivering Services, Budget and Finance, Governance and The Way Forward. Of particular importance to the HR Network were the proposals with regard to investing in people, in leadership and in delivering services.
- 49. Prior to the development of the proposals for the "people" component of the report, the Office of Human Resource Management had conducted an outreach programme. A request for views had been sent out to some 80 recipients, including staff representatives. As only 20 responses had been received, the Assistant Secretary-General had sent a letter to all staff members requesting their views. Some 200 replies had been received. Details of the "investing in people" proposals included:
 - An increase in rotational posts, which would constitute the majority of posts in the UN;

- A doubling of the UN's training budget, from \$10 million to \$20 million (representing an increase from 1 to 2 per cent of staff costs). This would include added emphasis on managerial training;
- A work life agenda in relation to mobility;
- The possibility for General Service staff to be recruited by another organization at the same duty station at the current level, not the entry level as was the case in the past;
- One United Nations contractual modality: There would no longer be 200 and 300 series contracts; the 100 series would consist of short-term, fixed-term and continuing contracts;
- A buy-out programme (which was still awaiting finalization);
- A code of conduct for post-contractual arrangements.
- 50. The Assistant Secretary-General noted that the "investing in people" proposals were based on a number of principles which were underlying the overall reform efforts, such as flexibility, simplicity, transparency, accountability, integration and ethics.

51. The Network:

> Thanked the representative of the United Nations for her informative and interesting presentation.

(d) <u>Staff Management relations (FICSA/CCISUA)</u>

- 52. At the 10th session of the HR Network, FICSA had proposed the establishment of a Task Force that would prepare a framework for staff management relations. At a videoconference held in September 2005, the HR Network decided to defer the establishment of a Task Force and first undertake a survey of "best practices" in staff management relations. A first draft of the survey was to be prepared by FICSA and CCISUA in collaboration with the CEB Secretariat.
- 53. The representative of FICSA informed the HR Network that due to other work commitments, work on developing the survey had to be postponed. However, there was renewed commitment to the project following the recent FICSA Council. Responding to questions, he confirmed that the survey questionnaire would be sent to organizations for comments and review prior to its finalizations.
- 54. The representative of CCISUA reiterated her organization's support to the initiative, which CCISUA saw as an opportunity to enhance staff management relations, not just on the basis of financial participation but in terms of best practices with regard to the professionalization of the relationship with management. She also renewed CCISUA's call for a training programme, similar to the one ICTY had organized in collaboration with an institution in the UK. There was a need for induction training for new staff representatives as there was now a much more rapid turnover of representatives than in the past. She likened the situation of staff representatives to that of women a few years ago in their efforts to obtain "equal rights" and to move away from a "them and us" approach. In summary, CCISUA was fully supportive of the initiative, for which ICTY and UNOG would provide focal points.
- 55. In the course of the discussion of this item, the representative of CCISUA also raised the question of staff participation in the meetings of HLCM. Currently, the dialogue with the staff was a standing item at the beginning of the HLCM agenda, after that the staff representatives did not participate in the meeting. In 2004, a request had been made by CCISUA and FICSA to be allowed to return at the end of the meeting in order to dialogue on the outcome of HLCM's deliberations. At the time, the then Chair of HLCM had been positively inclined to considering this request and CCISUA

therefore asked the Network and the CEB Secretariat to follow-up on it. In this connection, she also noted with regret that the Network was holding a private session, from which the staff were excluded.

56. The Network:

- ➤ Reiterated its recognition of the need for strong, positive, productive and transparent staff management relations based on mutual respect;
- ➤ Noted that FICSA and CCISUA, with the collaboration of the CEB Secretariat, would design a survey on best practices in staff management relations, and that the findings would be submitted to the HR Network with the aim of coming up with general principles for staff management relations:
- ➤ Also took note of CCISUA's proposal for staff representation at HLCM.

(e) Implementation of Paternity Leave

57. The representative of ILO requested information from other organizations on their policies and practices with regard to the implementation of paternity leave. It was agreed that the CEB Secretariat would send a request to all organizations and that the information should be sent to ILO and the CEB Secretariat.

(f) Update on negotiations with AIIC

58. The Secretary of the HR Network briefed the Network on the status of the negotiations with Association for International Conference Interpreters. The previous agreement with AIIC, which regulates the conditions of work and remuneration of short-term interpreters, had expired in April 2005. So far there had been three formal rounds of negotiations and several informal meetings. The next round would probably take place at the end of April. At the core of the negotiations were the determination of a daily rates for the headquarters locations and of a world rate.

(g) Other matters:

- (i) Inter-Agency Framework for Rest and Recuperation (CEB/2006/HR/11/CRP.2)
- 59. The representative of UNDP updated the Network on changes made by the inter-agency Committee that maintained the Inter-Agency Framework for Rest and Recuperation. The Committee was proposing a few small adjustments to the criteria for Rest and Recuperation entitlements.

- 60. The Network:
 - ➤ Endorsed the proposals made for the revised Inter-Agency Framework on Rest and Recuperation and requested the CEB Secretariat to inform the ICSC accordingly.
- (ii) Working Groups on long-term care and Appendix D
- 61. The Secretary of HLCM proposed the establishment of a joint HLCM/HR Network/FB Network working group on long-term care. She recalled that a proposal had been made for a system-wide long-term care plan a few years ago; at that time no agreement could be reached. It was now timely and urgent to revisit the issue and make a renewed effort. She mentioned that more and more organizations were quietly financing long-term care out of their individual medical scheme. With the new international accounting standards recently adopted by HLCM, this would no longer be possible. The issue of long-term care had also been raised by FAFICS/AFICS and was currently researched by them.
- 62. The Network also recalled that HLCM had requested the HR Network some time ago to update the Appendix D provisions and that the UN should be the lead agency for this. The United Nations representative emphasized that it would be necessary to join forces with the FB Network on this as the insurance section of the UN was under the authority of the UN Comptroller.
- 63. The Network:
 - Requested the CEB Secretariat to coordinate the establishment of working groups, composed of members of HLCM, the HR Network and the Finance and Budget Network on
 - Long-term care
 - A revision of Appendix D
- (iii) Private Session
- 64. A private session took place at the end of the session.
- (iv) HR Network Spokespersons
- 65. The election of new spokespersons took place in the private session. It was agreed to increase the number of spokespersons in order to ensure continuous representation at the meetings of the International Civil Service Commission. It was also important to secure a good balance of the United Nations especially in view of their representation of the Network at the informals of the Fifth Committee , specialized agencies and funds and programmes. The spokespersons for 2006 are:
 - Dyane Dufresne (UNESCO)
 - Brian Gleeson (UNDP)
 - Julio Camarena (FAO)
 - Martha Helena Lopez (United Nations)
 - Mary Jane Peters (CEB Secretariat)
 - Kristiane Golze (CEB Secretariat)
- 66. The Network noted that Ms. Jan Beagle, who had been appointed Assistant Secretary-General of the Office of Human Resource Management, had decided to no longer be a spokesperson. The

Network expressed sincere appreciation to Ms. Beagle for serving as spokesperson for so many years and thanked her for her excellent representation of the Network's interests, including at the ICSC and the General Assembly.

Special HR Network Presentation: Integrating People and Technology

- 67. A special presentation was given by Cliff Dennett, the Creative Director of Innovation Lab which was established by Electronic Data Systems (EDS) and the London School of Economics. EDS, providers of IT-related solutions for the private and public sector, have embarked on a series of research initiatives, aimed specifically at informing business and international organizations of emerging developments across the world of work. In 2005, EDS created People & Technology: Employing the Next Generation, a project designed to highlight the needs and expectations of the next generation in the workplace. The success of that study prompted EDS to embark on a second initiative in 2006: Integrating People & Technology: The Future Workplace.
- 68. Integrating People and Technology had engaged with high-achieving 18-28 year-olds in Europe and around the globe, with the mission to report on how these groups think the future workplace will evolve. Cliff Dennett presented the findings of an essay competition which had produced some fascinating ideas, concept and futuristic musings from the next generation in the workplace. Following the presentation, the Network discussed the findings of the research study in small groups. There was agreement that the "next generation" would have very different expectations with regard to career development, work life balance, job satisfaction and work processes.
 - > Click here for summary of small group comments and questions

ICSC/62/R.13

Annex I – Agenda

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME CEB/2006/HLCM/7/Rev.1 CEB/2006/HR/11/CRP.1/Rev.1 2. MATTERS RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE CEB, **HLCM AND OTHER NETWORKS** 2.1 Accountability and Transparency 2.2 Safety and Security of Staff 2.3 United Nations System Staff College CEB/2006/HLCM/R.3 2.4 Gender mainstreaming CEB/2006/HLCM/R.4 2.5 Other matters 3. ISSUES UNDER CONSIDERATION BY ICSC Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the ICSC/62/R.2 common system and Add.1 3.2 Review of the pay and benefits system: (a) Staffing of field missions: review of conversion of contractual instruments ICSC/62/R.3 3.3 Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories: (a) Report of the twenty-eighth session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions ICSC/62.R.4 (b) Children's and secondary dependant's allowances: review of the levels ICSC/62.R.5 Conditions of Service of the General Service and other locally recruited staff (a) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in Rome ICSC/62/R.6 (b) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in New York: General Service ICSC/62/R.7 Security Service (ii) ICSC/62/R.7/Add.1 (iii) Trades and Crafts ICSC/62/R.7/Add.2 (c) Considerations related to reviewing the Job Evaluation Standards for the General Service and related categories ICSC/62/R.8 3.5 Common scale of staff assessment locally recruited staff ICSC/62/R.9 3.6 Total compensation comparisons under the Noblemaire principle to determine the highest paid civil service: (a) Results of the United Nations/United States grade equivalency studies (SES) ICSC/62/R.10 (b) Total compensation comparison – Stage II (Belgium) ICSC/62/R.11 (c) Reference check with World Bank and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) ICSC/62/R.12

Progress report on the development of a

Senior Management Network

4. ISSUES RELATING TO THE HR NETWORK AGENDA

4.1 Administrative Guidelines for an Influenza Pandemic CEB/2006/HLCM/11

4.2 Handover of local salary surveys from UNDP to UNCEB/2006/HLCM/8
CEB/2006/HR/11/INF.1

4.3 Other business:

(a) Preparations for monitoring the level of the Education Grant

(b) Task Force on HIV/AIDS in the UN System workplace: 2006 Work plan

(c) Update on HR Reform in the UN (UN)

(d) Staff Management relations (FICSA/CCISUA)

(e) Implementation of Paternity Leave

(f) Update on negotiations with AIIC

(g) Other matters:

(i) Inter-Agency Framework for Rest and Recuperation

(ii) Working Group on Long Term Care and Appendix D

(iii) Private Session

(iv) HR Network Spokespersons

Special HR Network Presentation: Integrating People & Technology

CEB/2006/HLCM/9

CEB/2006/HR/11/CRP.2

Annex II – List of Participants

Org.	Name and title				
	Jan Beagle, Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Human Resource Management				
UN	Martha Helena Lopez, Chief, Staff Development Services				
	Regina Pawlik, Deputy Chief, Conditions of Service Section				
ILO	Herman van der Laan, Chief, Human Resources Policy and Administration Branch				
ILO	Susan Hudson, Policy Advisor				
FAO	Julio Camarena-Villaseñor, Director, Human Resources Management Division				
UNESCO	Dyane Dufresne-Klaus, Director, Bureau of Human Resources Management				
WHO	Josiane Sidibe Pimpie, HR Specialist, Compensation				
UPU	Michael Mauer, Director of Human Resources				
WMO	Telma Viale, Chief, Human Resources				
IMO	Leif Gunnestedt, Deputy Director, HRS				
WIPO	Svein Arneberg, Deputy Director, Human Resources Management Department				
UNIDO	Sotiria Antonopoulou, O-i-c, Human Resources Branch, Division of Administration				
	Paul Maseli, Human Resources Specialist				
IAEA	Brigitte Bin-Human, Section Head, Human Resources Planning Aaron Peacock, Human Resources Specialist				
WTO	Miguel Figuerola, Director, Human Resources Division				
W10	Peter Meyerhoffer, Human Resources Officer				
	Brian Gleeson, Director, Office of Human Resources, Bureau of Management				
UNDP	Duncan Barclay, Chief, Human Resources Policy				
UNEP	Elmi Suleiman, Chief, Human Resources Management Service				
	Mérida Morales-O'Donnell, Director, Division of Human Resources Management				
UNHCR	Marta Leichner-Boyce, Head, Human Resources Policy				
UNICEF	Steven Allen, Director, Division of Human Resources				
UNICEF	Ruth de Miranda, Chief, Policy and Administrative Law Section				
UNFPA	Florence Sykes, Chief, Planning and Policy Branch				
WFP	Rebecca Hansen, Director, Human Resources				
****	Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores, Chief, Human Resources Policy				
РАНО	Paul de la Croix-Vaubois, Human Resources Adviser				
UNAIDS	Devendri Sandrasagren, Human Resources Officer				
ITCILO	Jean-Claude Villemonteix, Chief, Human Resources Services				
UNSSC	Karina Sarajyan, Human Resources Officer				
	John P. Hamilton, Executive Secretary				
	Vladislav Nisichenko, Chief, Cost-of-Living Division				
ICSC	Beverley Young, Chief, Personnel Policies Division				
	Yuri Orlov, Compensation Officer				
	Eleanor Philips, Compensation Officer				
	Robert C. Weisell, President				
FICSA	Vivien Joy Ponniah, General Secretary				
	Susan Thompson, President				
CCISUA	Anthony Spina, President of UN Staff Council at Vienna				
OPCW	Eva Murray, Head, Human Resources Branch				
СТВТО	Yeshiareg Mekonnen, Chief, Personnel Section				
FAFICS	Peter Lillie				
СЕВ	Mary Jane Peters, Secretary, HLCM				
Secretariat	Kristiane Golze, Senior Inter-Agency HRM Advisor and Secretary, HR Network				
200100001100	Mistiane Goize, Senior inter-Agency Their Advisor and Secretary, the Network				