



**CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING
OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES NETWORK
(UN, Geneva, 22-24 February 2005)**

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ANNEXES

I. Agenda

II. List of Participants



I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME

(CEB/2005/HLCM/1 and CEB/2005/HR9/CRP.1)

1. The agenda is attached in annex I and the list of participants in annex II.

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

2. The Network:

- Took note of the briefing provided by the Secretary of HLCM on the following matters:
 - Security: The estimated budget for field-related security of approximately USD 166 million for the next biennium would require a significant increase in cost-shared contributions. A Working Group of the HLCM, at meetings held in January and February 2005, agreed* to recommend to HLCM **apportionment on the basis of actual % of staff, with a minimum amount of USD 75,000.**
 - Costsharing: A working group of the Finance and Budget Network had been tasked by HLCM to review all cost-shared budgets. In this connection, the question once again arose with regard to the basis on which costs should be apportioned. Experience with the 2003 security census had demonstrated that increased effort would be required to obtain accurate staff data which was the basis for cost-sharing of a number of budgets. HR Directors' role in ensuring the validity of their organizations' future census data was emphasized.
 - Meeting of the CEB, October 2004: Of particular relevance to the HR Network had been the outcome of the CEB session with regard to its consideration of the discussions at the 59th session of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) on report of the High Level Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service. As reported in the summary of conclusions of CEB, members had "expressed their deep disappointment to the Chairman of the Commission..." and had considered "that the Commission's negative response to the recommendations of the Review Panel raised strong doubts about its commitment to reform and change and put into question the value of dialogue with the ICSC Chairman".
- Agreed that at the opening of the 60th session of ICSC the spokesperson of the HR Network should inform the Commission of the CEB deliberations.

* WMO and UPU expressed their disagreement with the increase in the "solidarity" share.

III. ISSUES UNDER CONSIDERATION BY ICSC

A. Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the common system



Background

In resolution 59/269 of 23 December 2004, the General Assembly provided its response to the thirtieth annual report of the International Civil Service Commission. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the legislative bodies of the other organizations of the common system that have a bearing on the programme of work of the Commission are summarized in the addendum to the document.



Documentation

- ✓ ICSC/60/R.2 & Add. 1



Conclusions

3. The Network:

- Took note of the contents of the two documents under consideration;
- Requested the spokesperson to convey to the Commission its concern that the summaries contained in the document did not provide a full and accurate account of the discussions in the Fifth Committee and in the future should reflect the full range of views expressed at the meetings of the Fifth Committee. Statements delivered by delegations on the items of interest to the Commission should also be circulated to Commission members;
- Noted that only a few organizations had responded to the request for information on resolutions and decisions adopted by their legislative/governing bodies to be included in Addendum 1 and encouraged a higher response rate for the next report.

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission decided to take note of the information contained in the documents before it. It also noted the comments made by the HR Network spokesperson concerning a more accurate and fuller account of the discussions in the Fifth Committee.

B. Review of the Pay and Benefits System

(a) (i) **Modernizing and simplifying allowances: Spouse benefits (including dependency and single rates, salary structure)**



Background

As part of its review of the pay and benefits system, the Commission reviewed the current system of single and dependency rates. The Commission's Secretariat had suggested that the differential between single and dependency rates might be adjusted, especially at the higher levels, where the ratio of the single to the dependency rate was as low as 91.3 per cent (D-2 level). This differential was seen as rather significant and a proposal was made to bring the differential up to 95 per cent.



Documentation

✓ ICSC/60/R.3



Conclusions

4. The Network:

- Recalled and strongly reaffirmed some of the principles underlying the current system, in particular:
 - **Equal pay for equal work:** This principle was reflected in the fact that the gross salary for United Nations staff is the same for all, regardless of marital status or the number of children.
 - Dependency rates should be regarded as a **social benefit**.
 - They are granted in recognition of the consideration that **additional expenditures** are incurred by staff members with dependants as opposed to those without dependants. As such, they are fully commensurate with the equal pay for equal work principle.
- Emphasized that the current system corresponded to the comparator's and other countries' systems of dealing with the impact of marital status and family size on personal income. These systems resulted in a higher take-home (net) pay for persons with primary dependants. As the UN did not operate with a tax system as such, differentiated rates of staff assessment were applied for staff with and without primary dependants. This system had worked well in meeting the requirements of equity, competitiveness and compatibility with the comparator.
- Recalled the principle established at the start of the review of the pay and benefits system which affirmed that the review should not result in diminished compensation but rather enhance the competitiveness of the compensation package.
- Stressed that any changes to the single/dependency rate system were bound to entail considerable legal and administrative implications which would require extensive study prior to any change.
- Further recalled that Executive Heads had consistently requested the Commission to give priority, first and foremost, to the total compensation comparison which was required under the Noblemaire principle and which constituted the basic foundation of the UN's pay and benefit system. Matters such as the differentials between single and dependency rates were but one piece of the overall picture and could not meaningfully be reviewed until the overall picture was known and understood.
- **In conclusion, therefore, the HR Network decided to recommend that the current system of single and dependency rates should be maintained and that no changes be made to the differential at this point.**

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission decided to maintain the distinction in remuneration between staff with and without primary dependants. It also decided to maintain the current ratios between the single and dependency rates of the base/floor salary scale. Regarding the request of the General Assembly, it decided to report to the Assembly that the contemporary rationale for maintaining dependency and single rates on the base/floor salary scale was directly linked to the practices of Member States that maintain such a differentiation in their own tax systems. The distinction results in higher net salaries for staff with dependants to reflect, inter alia, the additional costs involved with additional dependants as opposed to staff without dependants. This rationale was largely the same as that used by those Member States maintaining such a distinction in their national income tax systems.

(a) (ii) Modernizing and simplifying allowances: Children's and secondary dependant's allowances

 **Background**

The document prepared by the ICSC Secretariat examined the current system for calculating and adjusting the allowances for children and secondary dependants. While acknowledging that the system had functioned satisfactorily, a number of issues were identified that might warrant the Commission's attention, such as the exchange rates that were in force when the local currency amounts were established versus the current exchange rates. Proposals for change included a flat rate scheme and two options for location-specific schemes.

 **Documentation**
✓ ICSC/60/R.4

 **Conclusions**

5. The Network:

- Reiterated its concern that the Commission was reviewing individual elements of the pay and benefits system prior to an in-depth review of the application of the Noblemaire principle;
- Fully concurred with the ICSC's Secretariat's document that "the rationale and the administration of the dependency allowance had not caused any major problems";
- Expressed concern about the implications of the proposed options, which did not appear to contribute to simplification, and would require further study;
- Recommended that no change be made to the present system.

6. In this context, the HR Network also recalled the new working methods that the Commission had adopted a few years ago. Under these new methods, the Commission had agreed to consider at its spring session draft proposals on issues of such importance to ensure that all implications were thoroughly considered before concluding on the matter at its summer session.

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission noted that over the years the current system of children's and secondary dependant's allowances had functioned to the satisfaction of all parties. It had not seen acceptable proposals to improve its operation, in particular with regard to the local currency denomination scheme, and therefore decided that the current system be maintained. It would welcome, however, proposals on improving the local currency denomination scheme at a future date.

(b) Mobility and hardship allowance, hazard pay and strategic bonuses

 **Background**

At its fifty-ninth session in July 2004, the ICSC had decided to delink the mobility and hardship scheme from the base/floor salary scale and to separate the mobility and hardship elements. The Commission also established a working group to study "the range of issues associated with the revision of the scheme". The working group was composed of three members of the Commission, six organizations (UN, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, UNHCR), representatives from FICSA and CCISUA and the CEB Secretariat. (UNICEF was unable to attend the first meeting). The report of the first meeting of the working group (Guatemala City, 29 November to 3 December 2004) outlined initial ideas and proposals. The second meeting is scheduled to take place in the second half of April in Cyprus. The ICSC was expected to agree on

recommendations for a revised scheme at its sixty-first session in July 2005. The recommendations would be considered by the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.



Documentation

- ✓ ICSC/60/R.5



Conclusions

7. The Network:

- Recalled the importance organizations attached to having in place an effective mobility and hardship scheme. This was increasingly relevant in light of changing demographics, the deteriorating security and public health situations in many countries. Moreover, organizations were requiring even greater mobility and needed to rely more than ever on rotation and mobility as core behaviours of staff;
- Also recalled that the Commission's decision to recommend the delinking from the base/floor salary scale and the separation of both elements of the mobility and hardship scheme had not been in line with the recommendations of the organizations and staff.
- Expressed its appreciation to the Commission for establishing and convening a working group charged with studying the issues associated with a revision of the scheme. The Working Group format was a very useful way to review issues as complex as the ones relating to the mobility and hardship scheme and the Network welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with the Commissioners and staff at the first meeting of the working group;
- Noted the recommendation of the Chairman of the Commission and the working group that a revised scheme would be "cost neutral". The Network emphasized the urgent need to obtain accurate data from all organizations on current costs in order to measure the cost neutrality of proposed new schemes. The possibility of HR Network support to the Commission's Secretariat for the purpose of assisting with the data analysis and modeling was considered.
- Expressed the following views on the specific suggestions made in the report of the working group:
 - Mobility:
 - Recalled the special challenges faced by staff of the United Nations system with regard to mobility. Unlike the national foreign services where rotation implied periodic postings in home countries, UN professional staff subject to mobility rarely served in their home countries. The resulting loss of a permanent home base, close to family, friends and professional contacts, and the lack of opportunity to re-integrate at regular intervals into their national environment, carried with it numerous difficulties, including financial and psychological ones. Junior and mid-level professionals were increasingly opting out of a UN career because of these difficulties.
 - Noted the suggestions made in paragraphs 26 (a) and (b) of the report of the working group for the grouping of staff by number of moves and by grade. While this was one possible model, it would be necessary to consider carefully the needs of all organizations across the UN system. Placing a premium on higher-grade staff with a large number of geographical moves might address the mobility bottlenecks faced by some of the highly rotational organizations. Other organizations might need to be more concerned with incentives for mid-level staff, those who often had small children and a working spouse and who might choose to opt out of the UN System altogether rather than accept a reassignment

- to another geographical location if an appropriate financial incentive were not available.
 - Strongly opposed the proposal that no mobility payments would be made to staff assigned to headquarters or those at duty stations currently classified “A” under the hardship element. This proposal ignored the needs and challenges of the current organizational realities. It also represented a conceptual flaw in that it re-introduced a consideration of hardship into the mobility element. This was seen as inconsistent with the Commission’s recommendation to separate mobility from hardship considerations;
 - Hardship:
 - The Network noted that the proposals made by the working group with regard to hardship allowances related mainly to non-family duty stations. It was not as yet clear what provisions were to be made with regard to hardship duty stations that were not non-family, such as C duty stations;
 - Agreed to work towards a common approach for handling the non-family duty stations. In this context, the Network referred to the separate report of the HR Network working group on entitlements of internationally-recruited staff serving at non-family duty stations (see item III F below and the agreement reached on the harmonization of practices with regard to the management of such entitlements, wherever operational requirements so permitted);
 - Alternative Shipment Allowance and Assignment Grant:
 - The Network agreed in principle, with the proposal to study further the proposals made for the Alternative Shipment Allowance (currently the non-removal allowance) and the Assignment Grant, subject to the concerns expressed with regard to lump-sum approaches (see below);
 - Lump-sum payments:
 - The Network cautioned that while an upfront lump-sum approach might result in a reduction of administrative overheads, it also carried with it a potentially severe impact on organizations’ cash flow management. Many organizations reassigned the bulk of their staff at certain points in the calendar year. The feasibility of making large amounts of lump sum payments covering entitlements for two years ahead would need to be very carefully studied and assessed by the comptrollers of the organizations. Moreover, there were a number of other important implications, such as taxation of United States nationals.
- Thanked the representative of the United Nations for her presentation of the report of the Working Group and expressed appreciation to the members of the group, including the staff representatives, for their contribution to this important review.

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission requested all organizations to respond to its secretariat in a timely manner with comprehensive and accurate data that would permit the working group to establish the parameters within which recommendations could be made.

Having noted the interim report and the points raised by the organizations and staff representatives, the Commission decided to provide further guidelines to the working group as follows:

- (a) The approach adopted by the working group should be continued;
- (b) The working group should take into account the views expressed by the Commission, organizations and staff representatives in pursuing further options at its next meeting;
- (c) To the extent possible, proposals for changing the current scheme should be based on comprehensive information provided by all organizations.

(c) Contractual arrangements



Background

The question of contractual arrangements has been on the agenda of the ICSC for several years and reflects the Commission's concern about the proliferation of different contract types and models across the UN system. At its fifty-seventh session in July 2003, the Commission reviewed a proposal for a general framework that would serve as policy guidelines for the definition of three categories of appointments, i.e. indefinite, fixed-term and temporary appointments. Organizations agreed with the proposal to establish a general framework. However, a refined proposal, presented by the Secretariat at the Commission's 59th session in July 2004, was found to be too prescriptive to be a useful tool for organizations. Organizations voiced a number of concerns with regard to the revised framework model. The ICSC Secretariat was requested to undertake consultations with organizations and staff to address the concerns expressed. These consultations took place prior to the 60th session of the ICSC.



Documentation

- ✓ ICSC/60/R.6



Conclusions

8. The Network:

- Expressed its appreciation to the ICSC Secretariat for the positive and constructive spirit in which it had pursued the consultations since the ICSC's 59th session which had ensured collaboration on this matter.
- Agreed that, as a result of the consultative process, the document now took into account many of the concerns expressed by organizations on earlier occasions. The proposed text was now broadly acceptable to the Network as a framework for contractual arrangements.

Decisions by the ICSC:

While it had been understood at the HR Network meeting that the draft before the HR Network was in its final stage, the Commission decided to further review and amend the document. It then adopted it as "the framework of guidelines for contractual arrangements as amended" and decided to submit its final report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. The final version of the contractual arrangements document will be sent to HR Network members separately.

(d) Progress report from piloting organizations on implementation of the pilot studies on broadbanding/reward for contribution

 **Background**

Five organizations agreed to participate in the pilot studies on broadbanding and performance-based pay: WFP, UNDP, UNAIDS, IFAD and UNESCO. While organizations had recommended the testing of several approaches, only one model was approved for the pilot, which is to be reviewed in 2007. The item was included in the agenda of the HR Network to report on progress made.

 **Documentation**

- ✓ ICSC/60/R.2, paragraphs 4 and 5

 **Progress reports by participating organizations and conclusions of the HR Network**

9. Progress reports were made by WFP, UNDP, UNAIDS and UNESCO.

- **WFP** reported that it was in the process of gathering the baseline data and had established a project steering committee. The organization was designing a communications campaign and the recruitment of a communications specialist was underway. An Internet website and an E-helpline had been set up and focus group discussions had started. While the organization continued to be fully committed to its participation in the pilot, WFP had recently decided to postpone the implementation of the pilot until January 2006. This decision was made in response to some resistance and “negative perceptions” that had been encountered in the absence of a communications strategy and campaign. Moreover, WFP had only recently rolled out a performance assessment system and needed to gain experience with the new system for at least one year.
- **UNAIDS** informed the HR Network that the pilot was well underway albeit with significant workload implications. Attitude surveys had been completed and a series of workshops had been conducted. All units in Geneva were covered in groups of ten staff. The organization hoped to have a first round of feedback on the measures of success by the end of March and then conduct an expanded focus group in a retreat setting. A “test of a test” would be conducted in June. Companion guides for the staff and learning plans had been prepared and a linkage to the multi-rater performance assessment (360 degree feedback) had been created. Also underway was the building of linkages with the staff data base which was not considered an easy process. UNAIDS expected to conduct the first individual performance assessments by the end of the year and make the payouts in January 2006. The development of the client feedback module was expected to start in 2006 and the second year would focus on the client feedback on team performance. Overall, UNAIDS concluded, the pilot was going well and had benefited from a lot of engagement, particularly by the younger staff population and new recruits from outside the system. However, much developmental work was still ahead and there was a consistent need for continuous feedback on all aspects of the pilot.
- **UNDP** advised that it had recently gone “live” with the pilot. Participants were the Staff Services and Nordic offices, IAPSO and country offices in the Asia and Pacific region. A project manager was on board, the task forces in place and the workplan had been completed. Three workshops had been held in collaboration with the Staff Council. The role of the Staff Council was an important one and the organization had put a lot of weight on partnering with the Council; as a result, the pilot in UNDP had greatly benefited from the heavy involvement of the

Staff Council. The organization had also advanced on the development of a comprehensive performance management system with an integrated 360 degree feedback tool. Other milestones included the development of a communications strategy, an Internet site and the evaluation methodology. One problem had been encountered with regard to the participation of the country offices in India and Indonesia; as a result of the Tsunami disaster, these offices could no longer participate. In general, UNDP considered the liaison between the project managers of the piloting organizations and their meetings a very useful example of HR Network collaboration. On the negative side, the delay of the recruitment of a project manager in the ICSC Secretariat had been disappointing and concern had arisen as to the full integration of the project manager into the ongoing pilot.

- **UNESCO** briefed the Network on the start-up of the pilot activities in its International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, Italy. The UNESCO Institute employed 40 staff of whom 30 were scientists. Initial consultations with staff and an attitude survey had been conducted, yielding a response rate of 70 per cent. The Institute was using UNESCO's new performance appraisal system which would require only some minor fine-tuning for the purpose of conducting the pilot.
10. The HR Network:
- Thanked the participating organizations for their progress reports and their continued commitment to the implementation of the pilot;
 - Agreed with the concern expressed over the delay in the recruitment of a project manager in the ICSC Secretariat and emphasized the need to ensure a smooth integration of the project manager into the project once s/he was on board.

C. Conditions of Service of the Professional and Higher Categories

(a) Base/floor salary scale



Background

The base/floor salary scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories is set by reference to the General Schedule scale of the comparator civil service (currently the United States). Periodic adjustments are made on the basis of a comparison of net salaries of UN staff at the P-4 step VI mid-point (dependency rate) with the corresponding salaries of their counterparts in the comparator civil service. The adjustment proposed by the Secretariat effective January 2006 amounts to 2.49 per cent on a no-loss/no gain basis, which implies the consolidation of the post adjustment by the same percentage.



Documentation

✓ ICSC/60/R.7



Conclusions

11. The Network:

- Noted the proposal for an adjustment of the current P-4/VI net base/floor level by 2.49 per cent on a no-loss/no gain basis as of 1 January 2006.

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the current base/floor salary scale for the Professional and higher categories be increased by 2.49 per cent through the standard consolidation procedures, on a no-loss/no-gain basis, with effect from 1 January 2006.

(b) Report of the twenty-sixth session of the ACPAQ

 **Background**

The twenty-seventh session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ) dealt with a range of technical questions related to the 2005 round of place-to-place surveys. A number of recommendations were made in the report for consideration by ICSC.

 **Documentation**
✓ ICSC/60/R.8

 **Conclusions**

12. The Network:

- Took note of the report of ACPAQ as contained in document ICSC/60/R.8 and thanked the representative of WHO for her summary of the conclusions of the twenty-sixth session of ACPAQ.

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission decided to endorse the recommendations of the Advisory Committee as contained in its report on its twenty-seventh session. The Commission also agreed that the Committee should hold its next meeting early in 2006 to review results of the place-to-place surveys at headquarters duty stations.

D. Conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited staff

(a) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in Paris (ICSC/60/R.9)

 **Background**

The survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in Paris had been conducted in the course of 2004. The results were to be considered at the spring session of ICSC in 2005.

 **Documentation**
✓ ICSC/60/R.9

 **Conclusions**

13. The Network:

- Took note of the results of the Paris survey and thanked the representative of UNESCO for her presentation on the subject;

- Also took note of the difficulties that had been encountered in securing the participation by employers. This was in line with the concerns expressed by some organizations in the overall context of data collection for the purpose of local salary surveys.

E. Total compensation comparisons under the Noblemaire Principle

(a) Results of the United Nations/United States grade equivalency studies (ICSC/60/R.10)

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). The document of the ICSC Secretariat reported delays in obtaining the required grade equivalency data because of changes in the comparator's data systems.

Documentation ✓ ICSC/60/R.10

Conclusions

14. The Network:

- Took note of the information provided by the ICSC Secretariat
- Noted with interest that within the next several years, 70 per cent of the US federal civil service would be paid according to pay systems outside the General Schedule and that the comparator had had in place a multitude of different pay and broadbanding systems. This approach contrasted with the decision of the Commission to use only one approach for the UN System pilot on broadbanding/reward for contribution;
- Agreed to collaborate closely with the ICSC Secretariat to support the process, as had been done with the last two equivalency studies. The Network was confident that the process should result in a much more streamlined approach due to the new Master Standard;
- Also agreed to request the Secretariat's proposal on how best to deal with the changed situation and realities in the comparator's civil service.

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission decided to take note of the interim report and looked forward to receipt of more detailed information and discussion of the item at its July 2005 session.

(b) Total compensation comparison – Stage I

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 is 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. The Secretariat

proposed Belgium, Switzerland and Germany for in-depth studying. Singapore, known to have a competitive civil service was not included as an ongoing reform of its civil service had not permitted the ICSC Secretariat to obtain the necessary information to include it in the list of civil services to be studied.



Documentation

- ✓ ICSC/60/R.11



Conclusions

15. The Network:

- Thanked the ICSC Secretariat for the information provided in document R.11;
- Recalled that Executive Heads attached the utmost importance to the Noblemaire Principle which constituted the basic architecture of the entire pay and benefits system and that CEB had repeatedly requested that the review of the Noblemaire principle proceed with utmost urgency;
- Welcomed the Secretariat's suggestion to move into Phase II and to study in depth the proposed national civil services, i.e. Belgium, Switzerland and Germany;
- Proposed to also include additional civil services which in Phase I had come out with cash compensation levels below that of the comparator. At this point, it was important to adopt the broadest approach possible and therefore the Network would not recommend excluding some other national civil services, such as Singapore.

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission decided that it would:

- (a) Proceed with a phase II study of the Belgian, German, Singaporean and Swiss national civil services in the context of determining the highest paid national civil services;
- (b) Proceed to collect information on the remuneration levels of the World Bank and OECD as reference check only;
- (c) Request its secretariat to provide it with a progress report at its sixty-first session on both (a) and (b) above so that it could report to the General Assembly.

F. Mission subsistence allowance including Report of the Working group on entitlements of staff serving at non-family duty stations



Background

At its 59th session in July 2004, the ICSC requested organizations to provide to it, "at its sixtieth session, a comprehensive report on their practices relating to the entitlements of staff serving in non-family duty stations and on their efforts to harmonize those practices." In response to this request, the HR Network had established a working group, chaired by UNCTAD, to undertake this work. In addition, the working group on the review of the mobility and hardship scheme, established by the ICSC, also looked at current practices with regard to entitlements at non-family duty stations (see also items III B (b) above.



Documentation

- ✓ ICSC/60/R.12
- ✓ CEB/2005/HLCM/2, subsequently submitted with revisions as ICSC/60/CRP.5

Conclusions

16. The Network:

- Thanked the chair and members of the working group for the very comprehensive report and the succinct overview of the current state of affairs with respect to entitlements of internationally-recruited staff serving at non-family duty stations;
- Expressed its appreciation to the concerned organizations for their excellent collaboration in harmonizing their practices and approaches;
- Fully endorsed the proposed inter-agency frameworks for the Special Operations Approach (Annex 1 of CEB/2005/HLCM/2) and the Rest and Recuperation Scheme (Annex 2);
- Unanimously agreed to in the future, co-ordinate and oversee both the Rest and Recuperation Scheme and the determination of SOA locations through an HR Network Working Group on Non-family Duty Stations;
- Thanked the representative of the WHO for her presentation of the report.

Decisions by the ICSC:

The Commission took note with satisfaction of the information presented by the organizations with regard to the entitlements of internationally recruited staff serving at non-family duty stations, but considered that certain additional questions needed to be addressed before a final decision on the question could be taken. It therefore requested the organizations to present to it at its sixty-first session, in coordination with and through its secretariat, additional information, including:

- (a) The specific rationale for maintaining separately the special operations approach and mission subsistence allowance for staff at non-family locations versus introducing a single, uniform system-wide arrangement;
- (b) An itemized tabular comparison of the various remuneration elements received under the special operations approach and mission subsistence allowance, as well as specific examples showing how the remuneration package under each approach is calculated;
- (c) The number of locations at which more than one of the approaches could be applicable at the same time to staff of different organizations.

The Commission also requested its secretariat to present to it at its next session the financial implications of the proposed change in the basis for calculating special operations living allowance rates exclusively on the basis of the after-60-days daily subsistence allowance.

IV. ISSUES RELATING TO THE HR NETWORK AGENDA

(a) Jointly-funded salary survey activities

Background

A working group of the HR Network met in December 2004 and January 2005 to look at all aspects of the salary survey process, its budget and cost-sharing mechanism, with a view to reaching inter-agency agreement.

Documentation

- ✓ CEB/2005/HLCM/3

 **Conclusions**

17. The Network:

- Took note of the additional calculation models provided by the CEB Secretariat;
- Agreed to conclude the Network's deliberations of the subject as quickly as possible by correspondence and possibly through a video-conference with all concerned, including bilateral discussions between the United Nations and UNDP;
- Noted that IMO should be added to the list of organizations conducting local salary surveys.

(b) Inter-Organization Mobility Accord

 **Background**

At its second session in October 2004, the CEB High-Level Committee on Management had approved the Accord in principle, subject to clarification of a few outstanding issues, such as the paragraph on disciplinary measures, and had asked the HR Network to finalize it on HLCM's behalf.

 **Documentation**

- ✓ *No documentation at Network meeting*
- ✓ For reference purposes: Draft Inter-Organization Mobility Accord (CEB/2004/HLCM/R.19 dated 15 September 2004)

 **Conclusions**

18. The Network:

- Noted that the Accord would be reviewed by the legal counsels of the common system at its upcoming meeting in early March. Network members agreed to brief the legal counsels of their organizations prior to the meeting;
- Decided to revert to the matter at its next meeting in July 2005.

(c) Update on implementation of the Senior Management Service

 **Background**

The establishment of the Senior Management Service (SMS) was endorsed by the CEB in April 2004. The General Assembly, at its fifty-ninth session, discussed the SMS and requested the CEB to report on progress made at the sixtieth session. The CEB was also requested to re-designate the Senior Management Service to reflect its character as a set of collaborative efforts to enhance the managerial capacity and performance of senior staff by respective executive heads and to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, clarifying the scope and content of such efforts, for consideration and action if it deems necessary.

 **Documentation**

- ✓ General Assembly resolution 59/269 of 22 December 2004
- ✓ ICSC/60/R.2
- ✓ For reference purposes: CEB/2004/1 of 3 May 2004 (Summary of Conclusions of CEB)

 **Conclusions**

19. The Network:

- Agreed to provide the CEB Secretariat with suggestions for renaming the Senior Management Service, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/268;
- Noted that an inter-agency group working on the leadership programme would shortly be reviewing the technical and price proposals received from fifteen institutions in response to the Request for Proposal;
- Expressed concern at the current capacity of the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) to manage the development and implementation of the leadership programme.

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| <p>(d) Access to hard currency by locally recruited staff for education of dependent children abroad</p> |
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 **Background**

Access to hard currency by locally recruited staff can currently be authorized in individual cases only for official travel outside the country, for medical expenses incurred in hard currency outside the duty station and under existing special measures provided for in the non-headquarters salary survey methodology. The last review, which had resulted in the described practice, took place in 1988 at a joint meeting of the then CCAQ (PER) and CCAQ (FB).

 **Documentation**

- ✓ CEB/2005/HLCM/4, Note by UNICEF
- ✓ For reference purposes: ACC/1988/6 paras 9-11 and ACC/1988/PER/R.6

 **Conclusions by the HR Network**

20. The Network:

- Expressed its appreciation to UNICEF for its initiative in raising the question of access to hard currency by locally recruited staff for education of dependent children abroad;
- Recalled that access to hard currency was currently provided for local staff for the purposes of official travel and medical expenses;
- Further recalled that in 1988, CCAQ(PER) and CCAQ(FB) had taken the decision not to provide similar access for the purpose of educating children abroad;
- Agreed to establish an informal open-ended working group, to be convened by UNICEF, to study further the matter and provide additional information about the purpose and the implications of the proposal. The working group would be working virtually;
- Agreed to revert to the matter, subject to the findings of the working group, at one of its next sessions. It was emphasized that any proposal in this regard would need to be submitted also to the FB Network.

(e) Re-negotiation of Agreement with AIIC

Background

AIIC is the international association of conference interpreters. Most organizations of the CEB are signatories to an agreement with the association that regulates the conditions of work and remuneration of short-term (freelance) interpreters. Short-term interpreters are staff members when under employment. The current agreement runs out on 30 April 2005 and the CEB Secretariat has initiated the negotiation process leading to a new agreement.

Documentation

- ✓ No documentation at Network meeting
- ✓ *For reference purposes:* Agreement for the period 1 May 2000 – 30 April 2005, available at www.aiic.net/ViewPage.cfm/article404.

Conclusions

21. The Network:

- Took note of the progress report provided by the CEB Secretariat on the status of the negotiation process with AIIC. A meeting of organizations to prepare a common position was scheduled for 14 and 15 March 2005; the negotiation meeting would take place from 13 to 16 April 2005, both in Geneva.

(f) Other Matters

(i) HIV and AIDS in the UN system workplace

Background

The “Inter-agency Human Resources Task Force on HIV and AIDS in the UN System Workplace” reports to the HR Network and provides periodic progress updates.

Documentation

- ✓ CEB/2005/HLCM/HR9/INF.1

Conclusions

22. The Network:

- Thanked the representative of UNAIDS for her presentation of the Information Note;
- Reiterated the importance the Network attached to the issue and to the continued close collaboration on all aspects relating to dealing with HIV and AIDS in the UN System workplace;
- Endorsed the Task Force’s proposed workplan for 2005, which would focus on a number of activities at the policy, prevention and care, support and treatment levels;
- Also took note with appreciation of the progress reports provided by the United Nations, UNFPA, UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, UNHCR and UNIDO;
- Agreed to the organization of an orientation session, to be given by UNAIDS, in connection with the next meeting of the HR Network in July 2005 in New York.

(ii) **Potential HR Issues linked to Procurement Certification Scheme**



Background

The Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group decided in June 2004 to launch the “Common Procurement Certification Scheme for the United Nations” project. The project is implemented by the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITC-ILO) in collaboration with the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC). A number of potential Human Resource issues are linked to the certification scheme.



Documentation

- ✓ “Potential HR Issues linked to Procurement Certification Scheme”: Note provided by the ITC-ILO



Conclusions by the HR Network

23. The Network:

- Thanked the representative of the ITC-ILO for his presentation and for drawing the project and its potential HR implications to the attention of the Network;
- Welcomed the invitation of the ITC-ILO to provide inputs into the further development of the scheme. It was agreed that suggestions and inputs would be provided by email to the ITC-ILO;
- Suggested to consider development of a similar certification scheme on HR management. The work previously carried out by CCAQ(PER) on the development of HR competencies would provide a useful starting point for the design of an HR certification programme.

(iii) **Personnel Statistics**



Background

The Personnel Statistics are prepared annually by the CEB/HLCM Secretariat, in collaboration with the organizations’ HR and IT departments.



Documentation

- ✓ For reference purposes: CEB/2004/HLCM/27



Conclusions

24. The Network:

- Took note of the request made by the Secretary of HLCM to support the data collection process for the 2004 personnel statistics, which were used for many important purposes, including benefit calculations, cost shared budgets and information for Member States. The CEB Secretariat would be organizing briefing sessions for staff involved with the preparation of the data.

(iv) **Spouse Employment**



Background

Organizations of the system have been collaborating with Partnerjob.com, which supports job search efforts of spouses and partners, and the Permits Foundation, which is active in promoting the introduction of legislation facilitating the issuance of work permits to spouses and partners.



Documentation

- ✓ Information available at www.partnerjob.com, and www.permitsfoundation.com
- ✓ For reference purposes: Report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled “Review of the Headquarters Agreements Concluded by the Organizations of the United Nations System: Human Resources Issues Affecting Staff (JIU/REP/2004/2).



Conclusions

25. The Network:

- Endorsed the renewal of membership in Partnerjob.com and the continuation of observer status of the UN System with the Permits Foundation;
- Noted the information provided by the CEB Secretariat that a recent report by the Joint Inspection Unit report had included the recommendation that “*the legislative bodies of the organizations should bring to the attention of the host countries the desirability of adopting, as appropriate, more liberal policies as regards the granting of work permits [...] in favour of the spouses of staff members and officials of international organizations*”.
- Welcomed the suggestion to bring the issue of work permits, wherever feasible, to the increased attention of organizations’ governing bodies.

(v) **DSA for locally-recruited staff**



Background

Locally-recruited staff traveling on official business within the country of duty station receive DSA at the rates established as percentages of the DSA for internationally recruited staff. These rates vary among duty stations, as does the application by organizations of the differentiated rates.



Documentation

- ✓ For reference purposes: ACC/1987/PER/R.9 & ACC/1987/4, para. 73



Conclusions

26. The Network:

- Welcomed the suggestion made by the ILO to review the application of DSA for locally recruited staff with a view to harmonizing the existing practices;
- Requested the CEB Secretariat to conduct a survey of current practices;
- Agreed to include the matter in the agenda of its next meeting in July 2005.

(vi) **Governance arrangements with regard to collaboration between the ICSC and the HR Network**



Background

The establishment by the ICSC of inter-sessional working groups, composed of representatives of the Commission, the organizations and the staff, which focused on specific issues of critical importance to all concerned, constitutes an important feature of the Network's collaboration with the ICSC.



Documentation

✓ None



Conclusions

27. The Network:

- Noted the suggestion made by UNDP to facilitate the continued active involvement of organizations in working groups established by the ICSC through the increased use of forward planning and alternative mediums, such as video-conferencing. The ICSC should be asked to give greater attention to the issue of budgetary implications, the possible combination of working groups requiring participation by the same representatives and a more strategic selection of venues.

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Agenda

- I. **Adoption of the Agenda and Work Programme** CEB/2005/HLCM/1
CEB/2005/HR9/CRP.1

- II. **Matters related to the work of the CEB, HLCM and other Networks**

- III. **Issues under consideration by ICSC:**
 - A. **Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the common system** ICSC/60/R.2 & Add.1

 - B. **Review of the pay and benefits system**
 - (a) Modernizing and simplifying allowances
 - (i) Spouse benefits (including dependency and single rates, salary structure) ICSC/60/R.3
 - (ii) Children's and secondary dependant's allowances ICSC/60/R.4

 - (b) Mobility and hardship allowance, hazard pay and strategic bonuses ICSC/60/R.5

 - (c) Contractual arrangements ICSC/60/R.6

 - (d) Progress report from piloting organizations on implementation of the pilot studies on broadbanding/reward for contribution

 - C. **Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories**
 - (a) Base/floor salary scale ICSC/60/R.7

 - (b) Report of the twenty-sixth session of the ACPAQ ICSC/60/R.8

D. Conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited staff

- (a) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in Paris ICSC/60/R.9

E. Total compensation comparisons under the Noblemaire Principle

- (a) Results of the United Nations/United States grade equivalency studies ICSC/60/R.10
- (b) Total compensation comparison – Stage I ICSC/60/R.11

F. Mission subsistence allowance including Report of the Working group on entitlements of staff serving at non-family duty stations

ICSC/60/R.12
CEB/2005/HLCM/2

IV. Issues relating to the HR Network agenda

- (a) Jointly-funded salary survey activities CEB/2005/HLCM/3
- (b) Inter-Organization Mobility Accord
- (c) Update on implementation of the Senior Management Service
- (d) Access to hard currency by locally recruited staff for education of dependent children abroad:
Note by UNICEF CEB/2005/HLCM/4
- (e) Re-negotiation of Agreement with AIIC
- (f) Other

List of Participants

| Org. | Name and title |
|---------------|--|
| UN | Jan Beagle , Director, Division of Organizational Development |
| | Martha Helena Lopez , Chief, Staff Development Services |
| | Regina Pawlik , Deputy Chief, Conditions of Service Section |
| ILO | Satoru Tabusa , Manager, HR Policy and Administration Branch |
| | Susan Hudson , Senior Human Resources Officer |
| FAO | Doug Smith , Chief, Human Resources Development Service |
| UNESCO | Dyane Dufresne-Klaus , Director, Bureau of HRM |
| WHO | Mercedes Gervilla , Coordinator, Human Resources Policy Development |
| | Sigrid Kranawetter , HR Specialist (Remuneration Policy), HR Services |
| UPU | Michael Mauer , Director of Human Resources |
| ITU | Yajaira Freudiger , Head, Entitlements and Benefits Section |
| | Eric Dalhen , Administrative Officer, Research, Policies & Legal Matters |
| WMO | Désirée Khoury , Human Resources Officer |
| IMO | Leif Gunnstedt , Deputy Director/Head, Human Resources Services |
| WIPO | Svein Arneberg , Deputy Director, HRM Department |
| UNIDO | Paul Maseli , HR Specialist, Alternate Security Coordinator |
| IAEA | Unni Vennemoe , Director, Division of Personnel |
| WTO (Tourism) | Peter Shackelford , Director of Administration |
| UNCTAD | Noha Droz , Officer-in-charge, Human Resources Management |
| UNDP | Brian Gleeson , Director, Office of Human Resources, Bureau of Management |
| | Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores , HR Advisor, Policy, Office of HR |
| UNHCR | Werner Blatter , Director, Division of HR Management |
| | Marta Leichner-Boyce , Senior Policy Co-ordination Officer |
| | Anna Bystrom , Policy Officer |
| UNICEF | Steven Allen , Director, Division of Human Resources |
| | Mieko Tarui , Deputy Director, Division of Human Resources |
| UNFPA | Sean Hand , Chief, Office of Personnel and Training |
| WFP | Rebecca Hansen , Director, Human Resources |
| UNOPS | Michèle Page , Chief, Division for HR Management |
| UNAIDS | Johanne Girard , Manager, Human Resources Management |
| ITC | Jay W. Wormus , Chief, Human Resources Section |
| ICTILO | Jean-Claude Villemonteix , Chief, Human Resources Services |

| Observers | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ICSC (by video conference) | Manfred Ordelt , Officer-in-charge, Chief, Salaries and Allowances Division |
| | Beverley Young , Chief, Personnel Policies Division |
| | Yuri Orlov , Compensation Officer |
| | Ruth de Miranda , Compensation Officer |
| WTO (Trade) | Miguel Figuerola , Director, Human Resources Division |
| | Peter Meyerhoffer , Human Resources Officer |
| FICSA | Maria Dweggah , Member for Compensation Issues |
| | Leslie Ewart , Information Officer |
| CCISUA | Susan Thompson , First Vice-President |
| | Shuibao Liu , Executive Secretary |
| | Ridha Zargouni , Staff Coordinating Council |
| OPCW | Eva Murray , Head, Human Resources Branch |
| CFC | Rebecca Hinchliffe , Personnel Assistant |
| ICJ | Evgueni Andronov , Head of Personnel and Administrative Division |

| CEB Secretariat | |
|-----------------|---|
| | Mary Jane Peters , Secretary, HLCM |
| | Kristiane Golze , Inter-Agency HRM Advisor |
| | Remo Lalli , Inter-Agency FB Advisor |
| | Richard Maciver , ICT Specialist and Webmaster |