



Summary of Conclusions of the 37th Session of the Human Resources Network

**Part 1: Closed session
04 and 06 July 2018
UN Volunteers, Bonn**

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Adoption of the Agenda

i. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

1. The Human Resources Network held its 37th session from 04-06 July 2018, hosted by UN Volunteers in Bonn. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Martha Helena Lopez, Assistant Secretary-General, Human Resources, UN Secretariat, Ms. Eva Mennel, Director, Human Resources, UNICEF and Ms. Cornelia Moussa, Director, Human Resources, WIPO.
2. The agenda was adopted as reflected in the table of contents.
3. The list of participating organisations and their representatives at the meeting is provided in Annex 1.

ii. Opening and Updates from other Networks and fora

a) Announcement of personnel changes among organisations

4. The Co-Chair announced personnel changes among the organisations and welcomed new participants to the HR Network session.

b) Update from the 35th HLCM Meeting

5. The Co-Chair provided an update from the 35th HLCM meeting which took place in Valencia, Spain 12 to 13 of April, 2018. The main items of the agenda included:
 - a. Moving from risk aversion to risk management: creating value for the UN system
 - b. Duty of Care for UN personnel
 - c. Addressing sexual harassment within the organisations for the UN system
 - d. Innovation and data for a new working culture
 - e. Advancing common business operations in UN country teams
 - f. Collaboration with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)
6. *Conclusion: The HR Network took note of the ongoing reform and business improvement initiatives throughout the UN System, as discussed at HLCM, and highlighted their impact on the Human Resources functions including the need to change behavioural patterns and organizational culture. The Network confirmed its commitment to actively work on those items.*

iii. Recruitment and Outreach – update from the work of the Working Group

7. The CEB Secretariat updated the Network on the latest workshop held by the newly established working group on 29 to 31 May, 2018, in Copenhagen at UNOPS. The core team is currently comprised of the UN Secretariat, WIPO and UNOPS, supported by the CEB Secretariat.
8. Key discussion items during the workshop included Outreach, Talent Acquisition and Employer Branding, experience with Recruitment Process Streamlining, and Testing and Assessments. The working group sought feedback and guidance on the work completed, proposed joint actions and the way forward.
9. Organisations expressed interest in the proposals made in the presentation and stressed the importance of efficient and professional recruitment practices. In this regard, collaborations with external partners were important and had to be chosen carefully. Several organizations shared good practices such as partner expert programmes with from partner organisations, academic institutions and the private sector. Other organizations indicated readiness to share experience or open up national recruitment programmes for targeted nationalities to other agencies. The

importance of a professional approach and a common standard to employer branding including the idea of common UN branding for recruitment, UN staff ambassadors and different forms of social media was stressed and perceived as key to talent attraction. Overall, clear HR planning was an important underpinning of recruitment, to ensure the right competency profiles are targeted which organisations sought to attract.

10. Representatives of organisations referred to the exchange of best practices on assessment centres, role plays during the recruitment process and the option for closer collaboration in this regard including LTAs. Talent sharing, achievement of cost savings, economies of scale and joint branding could be considered.
11. Organisations pointed out to the tension experienced regarding recruitment time, management decision taking and the consideration of diversity questions.
12. Another area of discussion was the different avenues organizations take to approach gender parity at all levels, and to ensure adequate geographical balance of staff, including internal rosters.
13. Positive feedback on the workshop held in Copenhagen was confirmed and the importance for the definition of clear deliverables and outcome of the working group stressed going forward.
14. The representative of UNWOMEN shared some information on their candidate data base for female experts and invited other agencies to support its expansion where practical.
15. Finally, in the context of inter-agency mobility of candidates, it was suggested to revisit the inter-organisation agreement and to examine comprehensively how to tap into the pool of internal candidates and alumni, including former interns and staff that left the organization. In this regard the topic of a recruitment and retention bonus was touched upon.

16. *Conclusion: The HR Network*

- a) *thanked the Working Group members for their participation throughout the Working Group as well as all the members participating in the Copenhagen Workshop in May 2018 for the excellent work.*
- b) *highlighted their continuous support and the need for maximization of resources allocated to the work of the Working Group to achieve further professionalization in this area going forward.*
- c) *confirmed the core group of the Working Group made up of UN Secretariat, UNOPS, WIPO, UNDP, ITU and UNFPA and requested that all organisations who would like to participate and contribute to the work of the Working Group name their respective focal points to the CEB Secretariat.*
- d) *requested that the Working Group to deliver a comprehensive project plan, including defined work products which can be delivered within the next six months as well as longer time period of two to three years by end October 2018 for review by the HR Network at large.*

iv. Discussion on HR Planning and a potential new contract modality

17. The Co-Chair opened the discussion with a review of developments on this topic. In March 2017, a first proposal was presented to the Network. A revision of terms and reference and whether the framework is still valid was proposed. In this regard, the establishment of a working group was suggested to address the topic more comprehensively. It was recalled that the initial driver behind the discussion was the identified need to have an adequate contract modality for confined project work with clear term limits that can extend beyond two years.
18. The idea of the introduction of a working group for non-staff contracts was welcomed by some organisations. It was pointed out that the Duty of Care taskforce was also dealing with some non-staff topics and suggested to avoid any overlap and consider collaboration. One organisation raised a concern to consider the establishment of two working groups when looking both at contract modalities as well as all different kinds of contracts. Others suggested to have two sub streams instead.

19. UNHCR, UNICEF, UNICEF, IOM, UNV, IMO, UNWRA, UNOPS and WFP were volunteering to be part of the working group.
20. WHO offered to volunteer for the working group on contract modalities if there were two working groups to be established.
21. The representative of one organisation pointed out the importance for a clear definition of the purpose, goals and timeline of the working group and saw a great opportunity in the possibility to address the open questions around staff vs. non-staff. Furthermore, it was suggested to have only one working group. One organisation highlighted the importance of using various contract types according to their original intention, in order to avoid potential workplace motivation issues if staff doing the same job work under largely different contract modalities. Additionally, the importance of considering the underlying funding models was discussed.

22. *Conclusion: The HR Network*

- a) *agreed on the necessity to comprehensively assess the arrangements for staff and non-staff contracts from an overall talent management perspective.*
- b) *agreed to establish a Working Group consisting of a core team with two cells/ sub groups. The core Working Group to include UNHCR, UNV, UNOPS, WFP, UNICEF, IOM and UNWRA, supported by the CEB Secretariat, based on the work done thus far.*
- c) *requested the Working Group to deliver a comprehensive project plan by end October 2018 for review by the HR Network at large.*

v. **Spousal employment**

23. The UNICEF representative introduced the item by sharing the observation that staff engagement scores of female staff tend to be consistently lower than those for male staff. One of the issues seem to continuously be the challenges for spousal employment opportunities, in particular infield duty stations. The new Executive Head of UNICEF intended to address this issue which cannot be solved by one organisation alone. At this stage some initial brainstorming of potential ideas such as an internal job market was enquired before establishing a formal structure for a pilot and report back to the HR Network.
24. The representatives from UNV briefed the Network on the UNV contract modalities and presented suggestions how these could be a possible useful tool as UNV would technically be ready to manage an initiative including a spousal roster on behalf of the agencies if the funding was agreed upon.
25. It was pointed out that there were two types of spouses, either also employed in the UN system or not. For both categories, different support interventions may be adequate. Measures such as special leave, teleworking, pro bono programmes, dedicated career support or allowing continuing contribute to the pension fund may be ideas to support UN staff spouses.
26. Organisations expressed support for the suggestions presented by UNV as this was considered a pragmatic contribution to addressing a long-standing problem with limited resources. Colleagues working in field locations could be involved to refine a possible solution.
27. The discussion confirmed that the topic was still relevant and increasingly so given the various attempts to foster geographic mobility and gender parity. Obstacles such a missing work permits were also identified, noting that this was a long-standing challenge difficult to address at short term.

28. Conclusion: The HR Network

- a) *thanked UNICEF for bringing up the topic to the attention of the HR Network and UNV for their presentation on potential fields of expertise UNV could cover in this matter.*
- b) *agreed to the establishment of a focus group chaired by UNICEF to take stock of previous work done in the past on this topic and drafting of a proposal of focus points including the identification of options, one of them being the proposal by UNV and how that could be realised, a second being the consideration and establishment of one database for topics such as work permits, telecommuting and partnerships with external international companies and organisations going forward addressing both UN and non-UN staff.*
- c) *requested the focus group to report back at the next HR Network session on progress made.*

vi. UNIN session on Innovation

29. The UNIN representative presented on latest trends in innovation including some IT related examples and their impact. Innovation was very high on the agenda of the SG, hence one reason for the presentation was to engage with the HR Network to start the conversation on how to embrace the initiative and have an open dialogue, starting the discussion to be incorporated into the work plan. A reference was made to the F&B Network where UNHCR has taken a lead to introduce automation for repetitive and transactional processes; decentralisation of databases and chat boxes were provided as further examples of technical possibilities when it comes to artificial intelligence.
30. The question of cost-effectiveness in this context was raised. UNIN replied there was no real answer other than that the aim should be to replace costs instead of adding costs.
31. One representative referred to lack of funds not being an obstacle but rather the seed for innovation especially when talking about a cultural change which cannot be addressed by financial means.
32. One organisation saw potential in taking the answers of questions raised in a web chat to build solid FAQs which are legally sound, and risk proven. A web based robotic first tier answer platform for benefits and entitlements could be installed. UNIN expanded to consider the number of processes which could potentially be automated and the capacity which could be released to focus on other topics.
33. The discussion was followed by a group discussion at each table on the following two questions: What are the biggest opportunities and what can we do to better enable innovation as well?
34. The answers for the biggest opportunities included: continuous policy and process improvement, use of HR analytics (incl. better use of data), strategic use of data and whole area of transactions, the need to be more agile, quicker around the recruitment processes (question: how to deal with AI bias? (big issue being discussed in the tech scene), ensure sound business models in various business entities e.g. performance management, the staff members themselves, business processes, translation of instructions and forms, transactional work, screening candidates, travel processing, use of data to predict data (e.g. absenteeism).
35. The answers for the question regarding what can be done better to enable innovation included: high visibility projects, recognition, one system for the UN, have the systems talking to each other, improved structured training programmes which are built properly for organisations, failure acceptance, promote a culture to allow failure, client orientation, app for on boarding and an app for reporting on cases of sexual harassment.
36. UNIN outlined possible next steps such as exchange of best practices, connection with innovators (understanding how HR could support in their work), invitation of external experts (vision sharing), testing of new approaches and tools (and experience sharing with the HR Network), consideration of jointly identifying a few opportunities for improvements and adding them to the Network's plan.

37. *Conclusion: The HR Network*

- a) *thanked UNIN for their presentation and highlighted that the HR Network is committed to be an enabler for innovations in the organisations and for the HR community.*
- b) *agreed to contribute to the system-wide innovation discussions as appropriate, highlighting in particular the need for Senior management support for a cultural change.*
- c) *requested that the Recruitment and Outreach Working Group, as part of their work planning, identify potential innovation contributions of the HR Network.*

vii. Any other business

38. *The HR Network:*

- a) *agreed to consult the Legal Network regarding the new EU regulations in protection of personal data in regards to HR topics and potential impacts for the organisations.*
- b) *agreed on a closer liaison on topics where relevant with other networks including F&B, Legal, Ethics, Security, and others going forward.*
- c) *agreed to review the number of Working Groups in the HR Network and the respective workload of participants to ensure a continuous revisit and the efficiency of the working format.*
- d) *announced the appointment of Mr. David Bearfield as the new alternate chair of the UN Funds and Programmes.*

viii. Wrap-up and closure: summary of next steps

39. *The HR Network:*

- a) *agreed to continue its discussions between the physical Network meetings, through form of a VTC in fall, to prepare and/or de-brief from HLCM and CEB.*
- b) *announced that the next HR Network session is planned for 19-22 February 2019, for four days to allow in-depth topical discussions, hosted by UNESCO in Paris.*
- c) *thanked UN Volunteers for their renewed hospitality in hosting the HR Network session for a second time in 2018.*

List of participants

Name	Organisation
Martha Helena Lopez	UN Secretariat
Maxim Golovinov	UN Secretariat
Robert K. Smith	UN Secretariat
Sarah Castree	FAO
Fernando Servan	FAO
Vittoria Vecchione	FAO
Kate Rojkov	IAEA
Suzanne Dee Pedersen	ILO
Karen Schmidt Juergens	ILO
Sarah Rose	ICAO
Pierre Moreau-Péron	IFAD
Liya Dominic	IMO
Alison Holmes	IOM
Eric Dalhen	ITU
Ulrika Martinius	ITU
Paolo Bernasconi	OPCW
Andrzej Antoszkiewicz	OSCE
Niels Lohmann	UN Volunteers
Naoual Driouich	UN Volunteers
Cristiana Baroglio	UNAIDS
David Bearfield	UNDP
Henrietta De Beer	UNDP
Fikerte Assefa Ezezew	UNDP
Annick Grisar	UNESCO
Hong Kwon	UNESCO
Michael Emery	UNFPA
Jan Weidmann	UNFPA
Lorenzo Pasquali	UNHCR
Dubravka Suzic	UNHCR
Michelle Wong	UNICEF
Eva Mennel	UNICEF
Konstantin Ivanov	UNIDO
Victoria Campbell	UNOPS
Tina Friis Hansen	UNOPS
Antonino Brusa	UNRWA
Greet De Leeuw	UNWOMEN
Paolo Velasco	UNWTO

Aitor Maguna	WFP
Andrew Patterson	WFP
Françoise Nocquet	WHO
Cornelia Moussa	WIPO
Therese Dayer	WIPO
Bruce Noronha	WMO
Christian Dahoui	WTO
Ole Emmrich	CEB Secretariat
Pieter Kraakman	CEB Secretariat
Ben Riemenschneider	CEB Secretariat
Michael Rosetz	CEB Secretariat
Rebecca Hinchliffe	CFC
Michele Schwarz	CFC

Summary of Conclusions of the 37th Session of the Human Resources Network

**Part 2 (Open session)
05 and 06 July 2018
UN Volunteers, Bonn**

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Adoption of the Agenda (Open session)

ix. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

40. The Human Resources Network held its 37th session from 04-06 July 2018, hosted by UN Volunteers in Bonn. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Martha Helena Lopez, Assistant Secretary-General, Human Resources, UN Headquarters, Ms. Eva Mennel, Director, Human Resources, UNICEF and Ms. Cornelia Moussa, Director, Human Resources, WIPO.
41. The agenda was adopted as reflected in the table of contents.
42. The list of participating organisations and their representatives at the meeting is provided in Annex 1.

x. Staff Engagement – feedback from the work of the Working Group and findings from recent Engagement Surveys

43. The Co-Chairs of the Working Group presented an update of the work of the working group as well as the findings and outcome of the most recent engagement surveys, seeking further guidance on the way forward.
44. One proposal included the further sharing of engagement survey questionnaires and results, through the CEB Secretariat as a “neutral party”, with the aim to enable more in-depth benchmarking and joint survey design. This was supported by participants. The question was raised whether there was appetite to share engagement data and survey.
45. The presenters referred to the following good practices identified by the Working Group.
 - a. Steering Committees reviewing level of progress across (decentralized) organisation using concrete trackers of progress. This should be supported by a communication plan to reflect level of progress.
 - b. Differentiation between priority/immediate issues to be addressed at local level and medium term and systemic actions.
 - c. Appointment of senior champions to certain initiatives/work streams, but engage staff at large concretely at implementation stage.
 - d. Align global initiatives and local action plans through “shared priority areas”.
 - e. Creating incentives and accountability: i.e. Incorporate elements into the performance assessments of management.
 - f. “Ready Response Toolkit” to assist managers in discussing engagement survey results with their staff, with resources categorised in themes with articles, videos.
 - g. Finding synergies with existing activities and mainstreaming action on ongoing programmes.
 - h. Finding the balance between pushing for change but not going beyond what the organisation can handle.
46. UNISERV congratulated on the excellent presentation, pointing to the importance of managing engagement levels of staff and affiliate personnel alike.
47. Participants indicated keen interest to explore engagement issues across organizations, to distil which ones are organization-specific and which ones are common across UN System organizations. They pointed out the importance of buy-in from Executive management and to demonstrate return of investment. It was important to establish a link between the survey results and overall performance of the organisation. In this respect the level of attrition, sickness leave data and staff performance results played a role as well. Furthermore, it was about leadership and building leadership skills and leader participation.

48. Systematic monitoring and management of staff engagement was seen as a critical task for Human Resources and management as a whole. This should be an end-to-end process, start from monitoring candidate experience when applying and go through to exit survey when leaving the organization. Gender-disaggregated data and analysis would support the implementation of the SG Gender Parity Strategy.

49. *Conclusion: The HR Network*

- a) *thanked the Working Group for their presentation and work achieved and acknowledged the great interest by HR Network members in the topic and the mentioning of utilized resources.*
- b) *endorsed the Staff Engagement data sharing through the CEB Secretariat as a benchmarking facility. Organizations were encouraged to share their latest surveys and results on engagement with the CEB Secretariat.*
- c) *requested the Working Group to further explore the links between individual and organizational performance.*

xi. Duty of Care in high-risk duty stations

50. The Co-Chair opened the discussion for the duty of care and added that it would become a standing item on the upcoming HR Network meetings. The 35th HLCM meeting has endorsed all the recommendations proposed and enquired to expand the scope including every personnel (also non-staff), which lead to the implementation phase which would include decentralised implementation but centralised reporting. The identification of volunteers was further enquired.
51. One organization added that agencies needed to customise the work put forward as well as the pre-deployment packages needed to be customised and implemented including each country specific information which would still require a lot of work. No dedicated budget had been defined for this part of the project.
52. UNDP pointed out that the HR Network should consider that it had the standing committee being the field group which would have quite a lot of the recommendations tasked under it. Therefore, the field group itself could be a great source of resource to support the task force representative
53. Several organizations highlighted that the currently planned speed of implementing country-specific health risk assessments would not be sufficient, and pointed to the interlinkages with the current duty station classification discussions in general and the debate on D&E duty stations in particular.
54. The Co-Chair briefed the Network on the current status of the Mental Health Strategy Implementation which was part of the Duty of Care initiative. A dedicated coordination resource at P5 level was approved by the General Assembly last year and is under recruitment. An implementation board was about to be created, and individual organizations as well as the Network itself, along with the UNSSCG and the Medical Directors WG would soon be requested to nominate representatives. Organizations were called upon to explore funding contributions to the work on Mental Health. Organizations expressed interest in being involved in the selection given the inter-agency nature of the work.
55. FICSA added that a representative had already been proposed and that the mental health strategy was supported. FICSA encouraged all organisations to contribute, and added that the role out plan would merit further refinement and detail.
56. UNISERV stated that the mental health strategy should be accompanied by a firm engagement and commitment by the leadership. UNISERV would appreciate more focus on mental health prevention, including questions of leadership style and abuse of authority, especially in hardship duty station.

57. Conclusion: The HR Network

- a) *thanked the Duty of Care Working Group for the presentation and for all the work achieved, and emphasized the need for keeping momentum.*
- b) *agreed to nominate IOM and UNIDO as its representatives in the Duty of Care Taskforce.*
- c) *asked its members for volunteer to represent HRN on the Board for the Mental Health Strategy Implementation.*
- d) *requested its members to explore the possibility of voluntary additional funding for the implementation of the mental health strategy.*
- e) *requested the newly created WG for reviewing working arrangements of all personnel to include activities on Duty of Care for non-staff personnel in its scope of work, and the Field Group to address the specific entitlements-related issues as outlined in the last HLCM Report.*

xii. Topics for discussion at upcoming ICSC session including

a) Local Salary Survey methodology review

58. The representative from the ICSC Secretariat provided a presentation with reference to the related ICSC publications stressing that at this stage the intention did not include the proposal of solutions but the comprehensiveness of the coverage of all items raised in the respective paper. The scope and nature of the topic called for the establishment of a working group.
59. FICSA stated that they had established a task force for this particular item. Numerous and large problems were apparent with the current methodology. FICSA sought confirmation that whatever would be proposed as the time frame would allow sufficient time to consider novel approaches thinking out of the box.
60. The HR Network Co-Chair saw a concern in the proposed timeframe by the ICSC until the summer of 2020 for the work of the working group which would be too long. The preference was to commence this year and complete by summer of 2019. The HR Network was prepared to carry out a comprehensive review and fix any prevailing issues.
61. The representative of the HR Network focus group on the topic gave a presentation on the findings of the working group.
62. Staff Federation representatives appreciated the work done by the working group. Two issues of concern were raised, namely the perceived shift in role of the LSSC that may be considered a devaluation, and the inclusion of the national civil services as a reference for the surveys. CCISUA planned to conduct a separate survey in parallel. Further obstacles were seen in the job matching of very specific job profiles such as trades and crafts, language teachers and security personnel based in New York City. The representative of the working group elaborated that in such cases a tracking of the overall movement of the labour market was applied.
63. FICSA raised a concern regarding the proposed use of external data for purposes of the survey, especially when the responsibility of the LSSC could potentially see limitation to communication only. If the decision was to switch to use of external data, then the role of the LSSC should include validation of such data.
64. The representative of the HR Network focus group stated that the role of the LSSC was not precisely defined yet, and that the work of the focus group served as input to the ICSC Working Group meetings to be scheduled. In the current setup, the LSSC spent a lot of time on deliberations and chasing for data of external companies. The responsibilities of the LSSC could be much more defined and efficient when external data was purchased. Regarding the inclusion of national civil service, a global average could be applied rather than a one by one survey.

65. *Conclusion: The HR Network*

- a) *thanked the Working Group for the hard work and emphasized the commitment to identify the best possible solution and willingness for a timely comprehensive review to establish a robust system going forward overcoming ongoing debates; also start working on the 2020 budget.*
- b) *confirmed that the 2018/2019 budget was endorsed by the F&B Network and requested that the cost sharing formula needs to be revisited and new participants in the network to be included.*
- c) *requested to check whether the local salary scales were being utilized for other purposes such as consultants and non-staff as well and reminded all organisations which have not yet paid their contribution to the 2018/19 and previous budgets to do so immediately.*

b) D&E family duty stations

- 66. A brief overview of the latest developments by the working group including the last face-to-face meeting in Rome was provided as well as a summary regarding the proposal in this respect.
- 67. UNISERV stated that all three staff federations supported the paper. It was not in the interest of staff to make all duty stations equal and it was tried to provide more flexible arrangements, while it was rather difficult to incorporate a separate allowance in the UMOJA system. A side remark was made that the US system would also provide for an option not to take family members and offered to pay smaller rates.
- 68. Participants clarified that the Network's intention which was not to create a new allowance type. The intention was to offer the flexibility and give the staff members the opportunity to make a choice in cases where the duty stations did not offer the basic requirements to host families. When staff opted not to bring the family along, then the right allowances and benefits should be provided. The approach suggested by the organisations was one that would strengthen the notion of the common system. A limited number of D&E duty stations was considered. Some disappointment was stated that, while the proposal of organizations was made clear during the working group, no alternative proposal or compromise solution could be worked out during the Working Group meeting.
- 69. UN Globe stated that the mandatory approach was unacceptable and outing of families could be a security threat to staff members. Additionally, UN Globe would welcome to be part of the working group as well if possible.
- 70. The ICSC Secretariat representative suggested the HR Network to provide a written position to the ICSC Secretariat including the facts, reasoning and fears for the position of the HR Network.
- 71. Network members stressed the need for simplicity and ease of administration on the matter.

72. *Conclusion: The HR Network*

- a) *emphasised that this is a priority of the SG and is a very important topic for the HR community which should be an option but not create more problems than at present.*
- b) *enquired the ICSC Secretariat to reconsider the agenda of the 87th ICSC meeting as the topic is scheduled during the second week where most HR directors are not present.*

c) End-of-service grant

73. The representative from the ICSC Secretariat provided a presentation with reference to the related ICSC publications.
74. Participants raised the question how the old system fit in with the notion of the future candidate profiles and career paths regarding the eligibility criteria. The proposed option C seemed superior to the others but still did not serve up to the purpose. A growing number of people would be on temporary assignments and not renewed. This topic was a very strong business case. There was a discrepancy between the goals of the organisations and what was done. Considering each of the topics by itself it didn't seem to have a great impact, however, they added up to make a big difference combined. It was further appealed to the ICSC Secretariat to stress the difference of the nature of this proposal to avoid a mixture of other kinds of payments and respective purposes. WHO shared positive experience with the end-of-service grant which was already implemented in the organization, and pointed out the opportunity to reinforce the notion of fixed term appointments as term-limited arrangements.
75. Further discussions included the link to performance ratings, the adequate tenure requirements for receipt of a grant and potential cost implications.
76. UNISERV stated that many staff working in the field are leaving earlier than ten years. Peacekeeping was becoming more of a short-term career.

77. Conclusion: The HR Network

- a) *emphasised the gratefulness to have the support of the Commission two years ago that this topic was presented and recognised the effort that has been done by both Commissioners as well as the ICSC Secretariat.*
- b) *agreed that option C of the paper "End-of-service severance pay" (ICSC87R3) is the preferred option, however, highlighting the difficult environment for such discussions and will maintain that the absolute minimum will remain option A.*

d) Pensionable Remuneration

78. The representative from the ICSC Secretariat provided a presentation with reference to the related ICSC publication.
79. Participants raised the question whether there was a grandfathering for any staff who would otherwise face negative impacts, which was confirmed by the ICSC representative. Only a very small number of locally recruited staff were affected and this would be addressed with grandfathering solutions.
80. The ICSC representative confirmed that a very detailed presentation by the Pension Board was intended during the upcoming ICSC session.
81. One participant highlighted the potential need for re-configuration in the ERP systems of some organisations.
82. A participant inquired about any estimation of the outcome/ impact if the underlying assumption of the separation age of 62 years was amended. The ICSC representative replied that the difference when changing the retirement age did not have much of an impact as the major underlying assumptions were length of service and return on investment.

83. Conclusion: The HR Network

- a) *thanked the ICSC Secretariat as well as UNJSPF for the work in preparing the paper and was pleased with the preparation and conduction of the Tripartite Working Group noting with satisfaction that the suggestions presented in the document are in line with the outcome of the meeting.*

- b) *agreed with the current proposal for a new Pensionable Remuneration scale as outlined in document R2 and suggested for further detailed simulations and illustrations on the matter, including the illustration of the impact – if any – on the sustainability of the UNJSPF which should not be compromised.*
- c) *emphasised to avoid any negative impact for staff members with regards to Pensionable Remuneration in view to acquired rights of staff.*
- d) *highlighted the importance of a dedicated communication strategy to be established prior to the implementation of any changes to Pensionable Remuneration, in order to ensure transparency and address potential questions from staff of organizations.*

e) Post Adjustment Methodology Review

- 84. The representative from the ICSC Secretariat provided a presentation with reference to the related ICSC publication. A working group meeting was anticipated during the last week of November and participation of the right colleagues from the organisations was anticipated.
 - 85. FICSA reminded to ensure that the issues and concerns raised would be properly addressed during the review and that the revised methodology would be fit for purpose, easily understandable and transparent. A strong focus was put on the recommendations made by the external consultant but sufficient time should also be allocated on the conceptual review especially in regard to the housing component.
 - 86. Participants reiterated the importance of the reason for the comprehensive review, proper time allocation and weighting of topics especially regarding the housing component, the need for participation of the right stakeholders, adequate oversight/ supervision structure of the project as well as time for modelling and testing.
 - 87. The ICSC representative noted the points stated.
 - 88. Participants acknowledged the good will for collaboration and establishment of a working group, and re-iterated the need for a holistic review and pointed out potential overlaps with the Local Salary Survey working group.
89. *Conclusion: The HR Network*
- a) *emphasized the importance of a joint and collaborative comprehensive review and an improved working relationship with the ICSC. Components to be considered are the robustness of the methodology itself, well-structured and overseen project plan, sufficient testing and simulation, right balance of housing components, sufficient but also efficient timing.*
 - b) *emphasized the identification of a common understanding of the topic and the intention to have the topic closed by summer 2019 and suggested the establishment of a Working Group this year to commence work in September when the newly appointed chair has also taken up his position.*
 - c) *emphasised the joint collaboration and enquiry of an agreement of the review together with the ICSC.*

f) ICSC Review

90. The Co-Chair opened the discussion with a short overview of the development of the topic. The HR Network had asked to put a review of the working procedures of the ICSC on the agenda of the ICSC session. It was asked for a launch of a tri-partite working group to review and discuss the collaborative arrangements between organisations, staff and ICSC. The idea was to take stock of the current state and challenges of the collaboration and propose improvements, the implementation of prior proposals and decisions on the matter, find ways to increase efficiencies and effectiveness in the collaboration including the work of the ICSC Secretariat. A collaborative review including the participation of the new appointed ICSC Vice Chair and the prospective new Chair was intended. The HCLM established a Strategic Group to advise on the matter.
91. FICSA stated it had requested a review of the ICSC, subsequent to which some informal contacts with the ICSC had taken place at which time clarification had been sought in respect of the scope of FICSA's request. FICSA subsequently clarified that its request would be restricted in a way as to avoid requiring approval from the GA at this point in time. FICSA stated that it had, at the same time, become aware of the HR Network request and, considering that it would be duplicative to have two differently worded items on the ICSC agenda when FICSA believed that the objectives were the same, decided to align the wording of its request to that of the HR Network request so that the two requested agenda items could be combined into one. This was then signalled to the ICSC Secretariat. FICSA raised a concern regarding the statutes of the ICSC; the inclusion of the requested item on the provisional agenda and hoped that the topic would not be discarded when adopting the Commission's agenda. A reference was made to an earlier review of the ICSC in 1997 and FICSA expressed its hope that all items already raised then would be taken into account as well. FICSA would appreciate the formation of a tri-partite working group and the consideration of the conclusions of the 35th HLCM. A written statement would be prepared for the upcoming ICSC session stating the major points of concern.
92. CCISUA stated three points for consideration; the revision of the commission statute for more transparency, the revision of the methodologies in case of the post adjustment review and noted lack of willingness by the ICSC to provide more details. The third point was about the tri-partite structure in which an equal vote for the staff in the decision-taking process would be appreciated.
93. UNISERV confirmed the need for a review and reform of the ICSC and the respective positioning of a tri-partite working group and ensure the restoration of trust in the working relationship. Furthermore, a clear time frame for the review was suggested.
94. The Co-Chair elaborated that the enquiry of a review of the ICSC would not have to see GA approval at this stage. The focus of the review should be the rules and procedures and the identification of what else needs addressing and then raise it with the GA.
95. FICSA referred to a GA resolution dated 2006 and noted that three items contained therein had still not been implemented; the capacity of the Commission as a technical body should be further strengthened, encouragement by member states to achieve greater gender balance in the Commission and thirdly, due consideration be given to the statutes when proposing members to serve on the Commission.
96. *Conclusion: The HR Network emphasised that a good working relationship with the ICSC is of utmost importance and agreed to advance the topic of review as agreed upon in the 35th HLCM meeting in a comprehensive, collaborative and reflective matter by raising and discussing it at the upcoming 87th ICSC meeting as part of the agenda.*

g) Dependency allowance

97. The ICSC representative provided a summary of the background of the topic and shared that the last review commenced in 2010. Geneva stood out with a very good child allowance scheme and had a big weight due to the fact that it was a populous location. A general trend was established that out of eight HQ duty stations in five the child allowance had raised. Explained by a recent tax

change New York City had been exposed to an increase of nine percent, while in Madrid and Paris the child allowance was actually reduced due to changes in the legislation. Overall the majority of locations analysed had seen an increase.

98. Two different proposals were explained referencing the respective ICSC publication. It was stated that option one was the preferred option of the ICSC Secretariat with an increase of 40 percent, while option two would provoke a doubling increase.
99. One participant asked a technical question regarding option one and the applied scenario of new compensation package. In the case where a staff member received a single rate and was not entitled to spouse allowance because the spouse is also employed, then the spouse would file single when paying taxes. The only scenario they would file jointly would be as US permanent resident. Considering option two, why would the comparison make the assumption of filing jointly, when in a lot of instances, the staff would file single. A technical clarification was enquired, why option two was ruled out. The ICSC Secretariat representative confirmed the validity of the point raised. The analysis considered what the comparator, the regular US employee, would get in terms of regular child benefits through social legislation. Some cases included single parenting; staff who had a working spouse in the US would not necessarily file separately, however, married filing separately only accounted for five percent.
100. Another participant asked whether there was a particular reasoning behind the fact that the ICSC proposed two options while having a clear preference for one option only. It was replied that the ICSC was requested to investigate both scenarios, however, the ICSC had suggested option one during the previous analysis as well.
101. *Conclusion: The HR Network*
 - a) *thanked the ICSC Secretariat for the work in preparing the paper and welcomed the review of the level of the subject allowances, noting that the last material adjustment of the level dates back from 8 years ago.*
 - b) *noted the upward trends in the level of child benefits in a number of headquarters locations resulting in the options contained in document R7.*
 - c) *recommended the approach used in option one and supported the levels resulting from applying this option for implementation in 2019; option two is not supported as it would use single parent's situation as the default and base for calculation for all situations.*

xiii. Gender Parity Strategy

102. Two representatives from UNWOMEN provided an overview and presentation on the gender parity strategy and potential database for female candidates to target positions in specialised areas.
103. The presenter enquired feedback on the review outline for feedback and submission of good practices, policy examples or case studies and aimed to finish the proposal in August for an enquiry of final comments from the HR Network. The work had been done closely together with OHRM and EOSG.
104. Organisations thanked for the opportunity to have the option to review and invitation to share some best practices and leadership accountability. One of the struggles experienced was around the involvement of male leaders in this topic; asked for a closer explanation of the barbershop concept mentioned. UNWOMEN replied that part of the discussion really was on how to include male staff. The barbershop concept was a close group for men only contrary to the concept "Men Engage" which also allows the inclusion of women in the discussion.
105. Organisations shared experiences in relation to the gender champion initiative and sought some guidance on how to overcome the gender gap in female applications for director positions especially. It was extended by the importance to consider the wording in vacancy announcements which had a subliminal influence on women. Additionally, experiences of having

used a software to test ad texts on gender neutrality was shared. Furthermore, the achievement of target should be down to the local level and sanctions be introduced for areas that do not meet the targets. Regarding working hours, a system of time credits works well for some women as an alternative concept to part-time.

106. UN Globe recommended to consult the UN Globe guidelines on mobility. 98 percent of the guidelines were gender neutral, which was very good, however, pointed out to also include trans persons, where it mentions female only.
107. Positions which include political appointments were still an obstacle in regards to gender parity and any ideas around how to address this adequately would be appreciated.
108. One organisation stated that the report lacked to address some of the structural issues of women leaving an organisation and discouraging them to return. It seemed that the UN disadvantaged their staff for part time work. The medical and pension structure furthermore prohibited part time in the current setup. Childcare was also hardly feasible at some duty stations. The topics required a more active approach by the HR Network.
109. UNWOMEN was asked whether they had any challenges with other selection criteria such as geographical distribution and professionalism. This was responded that the initiative was not to compromise on integrity and professionalism but rather to offer equal opportunities.
110. One representative shared experiences of having run a pilot with a talent programme for high performing national colleagues. It was identified that many women belonging to this group wished to remain in the home country, and were not necessarily keen to develop into an international career path. The idea of a national and international database was supported.
111. *Conclusion: The HR Network*
 - a) *thanked UNWOMEN for their presentations and the collaboration.*
 - b) *requested participants to provide any required input such as guidelines, policies, etc. to the UNWOMEN Working Group as required for their work and confirmed the continuous support for this important topic going forward.*
 - c) *looked forward to receiving a draft of the Guidelines for Enabling Environment for review and further input.*

xiv. UN Globe

112. The representative from UN Globe provided a presentation of the key goals and recommendations sought to bring forward among the HR Network with reference to the background documents and thanked for the opportunity to present.
113. One representative enquired a definition of the terms gender non-conforming staff. UN Globe replied that a gender-non conforming staff member, did not use gender expression, did not align with his/her sex assigned and did not align with the sex role in that particular culture.
114. Organisations thanked for the presentation and appreciated the issues raised while stating that some issues were more easily to be addressed than others. For example, underrepresented gender vs. overrepresentation, it was harder when it came to applications and fears regarding the reviews. It was supported that applicants and staff were given their own choice for disclosure. This statement was echoed and a more comprehensive list of recommendations and first priorities was enquired.
115. A question was raised around the pressure trans and non-gender conforming staff were facing and whether a disclosure through an application process could potentially strike back on the applicant. UN Globe reverted that the filled in application form was only accessible by a limited audience.
116. One organisation shared experiences gained around the introduction of bathrooms, discrimination on grounds of sexuality. An agenda beyond male and female genders was

introduced and the organisation was careful not to put staff on the spot. Awareness both within organisations but also on the member state side needed to be raised.

117. UN Globe was asked whether any response regarding the recommendations had been received from organisations and whether a summary of responses could be shared.
118. UN Globe elaborated that ILO had introduced gender inclusive bathrooms and cubicles. A survey in 2012 suggested that 82 percent of the ILO staff were willing to work with trans colleagues, but 32 percent of trans colleagues did actually come out as trans. Initiatives were aiming to create allies rather than fostering coming outs. Furthermore, UN Globe was willing to share a summary of responses from organisations to the recommendations. UN Globe had successfully challenged the 5th committee in 2014/2015.
119. FICSA thanked UN Globe for their courage to give the presentation. Issues on gender diversity were a concern of some FICSA members and some felt that the organisations could provide more support in the context of public and member state commitment. Major issues related to safety, opportunity and mobility in duty stations. Some countries did not provide spousal visa to such colleagues. FICSA hoped that organisations would step up their efforts in respect of the issues mentioned.
120. UN Globe thanked FICSA for the support and confirmed that safety and mobility in duty stations was a major concern. Further appreciated UNOPS great online efforts and replied to ILO that the amendment of application forms was a rather easy first step to see implementation.

121. *Conclusion: The HR Network*

- a) *thanked the UN Globe representative for the presentation and constructive input and acknowledged that the topic is complex and requires continuous joint addressing going forward.*
- b) *agreed to reflect further on the main issues presented and to continue the dialogue, in order to foster Diversity and Inclusion which are important considerations for the UN System organizations.*

xv. Update from the ASHI Working Group

122. The Chair of the ASHI Working Group presented on the latest developments of the working group and next steps.
123. Several participants pointed out the importance of social security elements in attracting the right candidates. Unlike the enrolment in the social scheme of many home countries, UN staff did not have any coverage. This was an aspect any proposals for potential accrual and entitlement provisions would have to consider. Careful further study was suggested before decision taking. One participant further added that organisations count the years of eligibility differently and that this would be worthwhile an examination as well.
124. FICSA followed the work of the working group closely. Some of the ASHI eligibility criteria were an enormous concern to the staff. The ongoing discussions relative to the possibility of moving to accumulation levels and other ideas raised concerns about the fairness and acquired rights. FICSA believed that the current proposals were unacceptable. Furthermore, the adoption of either one of the proposals would have a negative effect on the organisations. Organisations already facing difficulties in attracting the right staff would find themselves faced with an even worse situation.
125. One participant suggested to further explore the opportunity of staff to pay continuously into their home country's national security system to avoid gaps in case of contract closure.
126. The representative from ICAO provided clarifications on potential participation of their staff in the Canadian public social security system.
127. Some organizations expressed reservations about the need for another formal standing Working Group on insurance matters, pointing to the fact that an Insurance Roundtable of International

Organizations is already in existence and serves well as a forum for experience exchange and further collaboration.

128. Conclusion: The HR Network

- a) *thanked the Working Group for the presentation and work achieved and emphasised the critical importance of social security as an element of employer attractiveness in the international mobile environment the UN is working in.*
- b) *expressed its commitment to work closely with the FB Network on the finalization of the report, and on exploring suitable ways for further experience exchange and collaboration on related insurance topics.*

xvi. Prevention of Sexual Harassment, and all sorts of harassment

129. The Co-Chair provided an update of the HLCM task force on sexual harassment. The task force was expected to deliver their report by the end of the summer 2018 which would then serve as a basis for the agencies to update their policies. It was stated that the definitions had been endorsed during the 35th HLCM meeting and that the task force would work on the sexual abuse tracker in parallel. The tracker was delivered and was being populated. The UN Secretariat would be approaching the organisations' focal points in due time. Furthermore, it was stated that the UN Secretariat had completed on boarding of 26 staff members since last year; additional six investigators had just been approved. Once the on boarding had been completed speedy investigations can be pursued. It was mentioned that the UN Secretariat had updated the online training on prevention of sexual harassment and was willing to share this with the organisations as it was not exclusively designed for the use by the UN Secretariat. Up to date nearly 15.000 staff members had completed the training. A survey on sexual harassment would also be taken out in the coming months.
130. Some participants raised the question whether the capacity of the investigators could also be used in a joint manner at HR Network level, particularly by organisations which lack sufficient resources. Outsourcing or joint investigation capabilities were discussed. Others expressed particular interest in the topic and the planned survey and highlighted the question of avoidance of underreporting. It was stressed that Member States had shown interest in reviewing the efforts undertaken.
131. Various initiatives for mandatory online courses on prevention of sexual harassment were presented and discussed, including measures to stress the mandatory nature of participation.
132. One organization emphasised the importance of the language used in respective policies and procedures to encourage harassment claims. An update of the policy was published, a hotline established and services were offered in three languages. Further resources had been on boarded and a communication package adapted to country specific needs rolled out.
133. Many organizations confirmed their interest in participating in a jointly designed staff survey on the matter, and welcomed the initiative of the UN Secretariat to design such a survey. Several organizations encouraged a more substantive discussion on related policies at the HR Network level, including an exchange with the legal, ethics and ombudsman network. Concern was raised about the situation when staff members, during an investigation, had moved to another UN organisation. A solution for a mechanism to ensure continuation of the investigation would be advisable. An addition to the inter-agency agreement was suggested as an option to be explored. An analysis and alignment of difference in policies and sanctions among organisations was suggested as well as a removal of status limitations, an ability of third party reporting and anonymous reporting.
134. CCISSUA stated a concern among staff regarding the plausibility and correctness of the information which would be included in the joint databases.

135. The Co-Chair concluded that the topic is complex and needs thorough discussion, in particular when it comes to investigation and sanctioning practices. With regard to the proposed survey, the great interest in the proposed survey was well noted, along with suggestions to involve the WG on Staff Engagement. Regarding the information contained in system-wide databases, it was clarified that staff would only be added after they had been formally disciplined and been informed accordingly.

136. *Conclusion: The HR Network*

- a) *exchanged latest experiences and developments in regards to the topic.*
- b) *agreed to continue in-depth discussions on the topic in the upcoming HR Network sessions.*
- c) *encouraged the UN Secretariat to keep other organizations informed about a possible contribution to and participation in the planned sexual harassment survey.*

xvii. Preparatory discussion on upcoming Pension Board

137. The Co-Chair opened the discussion and shared some information regarding the draft agenda of the upcoming board meeting.

138. Concern was raised about the current leadership situation at the Fund, and about the draft outcomes of a governance audit conducted by UN Secretariat OIOS. It was agreed to closely collaborate and discuss among organizations present at the Board meeting and to ensure non-participating organizations are briefed adequately at a later stage.

139. *Conclusion: The HR Network agreed to include the topic in the Network VTC in fall 2018, and keep it as a standing item in the summer HRN meetings.*

xviii. Update on Joint HR Facility on reference checks and classification, including inter-agency tracking of misconduct and other unethical behaviour

140. The Co-Chair provided a presentation and brief overview of the history and latest developments of the initiative and emphasised the importance given the fact that joint service delivery became a priority of the SG. At the beginning of the year the light mode of services on offer was started. The host government was very supportive as well. The Co-Chair thanked all the volunteers and IT staff for their support.

141. Some organizations congratulated on the achievements and saw a possibility for a discussion on when and how to add additional service lines. This point was confirmed by ICAO. Regarding the reference checking it was enquired to add social media reference checking to the package. Some participants mentioned that a growing number of donors enquired on background checks for staff members interfacing with children and other vulnerable groups.

142. A number of participants desired to explore the pricing models and options in more detail in order to cater for the different situations and needs in organizations. Regarding joint classification, increased harmonization of classification practices was highlighted as a potential benefit. Some organizations that are not clients of the centre inquired about the possibility for further collaboration in reference checking of internal candidates without a formal participation in the centre.

143. *Conclusion: The HR Network thanked everybody involved in the initiative for their contribution and work achieved especially given the many challenges that were overcome to drive this project forward and encouraged organisations who have not joined the initiative so far to consider options for further collaboration.*

List of participants

Name	Organisation
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Maxim Golovinov	UN Secretariat
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