



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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Report of the High-level Committee on Management on its nineteenth session, Turin, Italy, 22 and 23 February 2010

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I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) held its nineteenth regular session in Turin, Italy, on 22 and 23 February 2010. Owing to the illness of its Chairperson, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, Josette Sheeran, the meeting was chaired by the Committee's Vice-Chairperson, Deputy Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Jan Beagle.

2. However, Ms. Sheeran was able to join in the opening of the meeting by teleconference from Bangkok. She warmly welcomed Ms. Beagle as the new Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, and thank her for taking on the responsibility for chairing its nineteenth session at short notice.

3. In her introduction, Ms. Sheeran highlighted the most critical issues on the agenda of the HLCM session, particularly the safety and security of staff, as well as her initial reflection on the recent earthquake in Haiti; with respect to United Nations system mechanisms and provisions to ensure support for staff and their families. The HLCM Chairperson, who had witnessed in person the situation on the ground just a few days after the event had occurred in Haiti, placed particular emphasis on the urgent need to feed into the Committee's discussions and deliberations the lessons learned in those tragic circumstances as they related to the ability of the United Nations system to protect its staff, both national and international, as well as non-staff personnel, and to adequately compensate them or their families in the event of service-incurred injuries, illness or death, resulting from both natural events and malicious acts. With regard to the new security-level system, the Chairperson highlighted the need to develop a methodology for determining programme criticality.

4. Ms. Sheeran concluded her input by expressing her deep appreciation to the United Nations System Staff College and its Director, Dr. Carlos Lopes, for generously hosting the meeting.

II. Adoption of the agenda

Documents

- Revised provisional agenda (CEB/2010/HLCM/1/Rev.1)
- Revised programme of work (CEB/2009/HLCM/1/Add.1/Rev.1)
- Revised list of documents

5. The agenda, as adopted by the Committee, is reflected in the table of contents of the present document. The list of participants is provided in annex I; the list of documents, in annex II. All of the documents related to the session are available from the website of the CEB secretariat at <https://hlcm.unsystemceb.org/documents/February2010/>.

III. Dialogue with the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations and the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System

6. The Committee welcomed the representatives of two staff federations: the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) and the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA). The full statements made by each federation are contained in annexes III and IV.

7. The newly elected President of FICSA, in a letter (also contained in annex III) read by one of its representatives, suggested that there should be better coordination between the Committee and the International Civil Servants Commission (ICSC) in setting meeting dates. The President also elaborated on the issue of the release of and funding for the FICSA General Secretary until the statutory expiration of her mandate in February 2011. In advocating a balanced solution to that matter, the President emphasized that the issue was at the very heart of staff-management relations, and that the right of staff to choose freely and independently their best representatives was in jeopardy.

8. Appreciation was expressed by FICSA for the positive measures and improvements regarding conditions of service in the field and the attention that was being given to improving security measures for all staff. The Federation strongly welcomed the report on the new security-level system and its pilot testing in duty stations, and stressed that adequate training on the correct implementation of that system was vital, particularly with respect to concerns over delinking the system from the automatic triggering of security-related entitlements and the delegation of decision-making to the security management team and the designated official.

9. The following issues were brought out in the CCISUA statement:

(a) CCISUA welcomed the survey of the Joint Inspection Unit on staff-management relations and expressed the hope that it would shift those relations from consultation to negotiation;

(b) It welcomed the proposals of the Human Resources Network on the safety and security of staff, underlining that all offices and United Nations premises should be compliant with the minimum operating security standard guidelines. It called on the Secretary-General to adopt a strong stance with host Governments in relation to the protection of staff, and requested an end to discriminatory treatment of national staff with regard to benefits and entitlements in difficult duty stations;

(c) It welcomed the draft occupational health and safety policy, urging all United Nations system organizations to develop their own policy, with the overarching aim of providing a safe and healthy workplace;

(d) It expressed concern about the new contractual framework of the United Nations and the failing efforts to maintain continuing contracts;

(e) Finally, it welcomed the new system for the administration of justice and the increased speed with which cases would now be judged, but it expressed concern about the lack of consistency in judgements among the various tribunals and about the lack of support for staff.

10. The Committee thanked the federations for their statements. On the matter of continuing contracts, the representative of the United Nations indicated that a revised proposal addressing the concerns raised by the General Assembly was being developed for submission to the Assembly in the third quarter of 2010.

IV. Security and safety of staff

Documents

- United Nations Security Management System report on security-level system and guidelines for acceptable risk (CEB/2010/HLCM/2)
- United Nations policy and guidelines in estate safety and security (CEB/2010/HLCM/3)
- Human resources-related proposals on safety and security (CEB/2010/HLCM/4/Rev.1)

A. Briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security

11. The Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security provided the Committee with an overview of the very serious general security situation over the past year during which 28 civilian deaths had occurred as a result of acts of violence and there had been multiple cases of abduction, some resulting in hostage situations lasting for several months. The drastic changes in the security challenges faced by the United Nations, while increasingly understood by the senior-most levels of management in the United Nations system, nevertheless warranted continued close attention. That was necessary in the light of directly targeted attacks against the United Nations system and the span and depth of the daily challenges that staff faced in both conflict and post-conflict situations and in some of the harshest, most poverty-stricken and crime-ridden areas in the world. Furthermore, the earthquake in Haiti highlighted the need for the United Nations to contend with safety issues which encompassed the need to address occupational health and safety.

12. The Committee was informed of the successful efforts that had been undertaken to ensure that the situations in which the United Nations operated might be better examined. Those efforts included the securing of budgetary resources, part of which would go towards enhancing analytical capability within the Department of Safety and Security. Further, together with its partners in the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS), a new security-level system had been developed, which was meant to replace completely the current security phase system. The Under-Secretary-General further stressed that joint efforts and the pooling of resources would be required to stand up to the many security challenges that the United Nations faced, and expressed deep gratitude for the tremendous support and collaborative efforts shown throughout the year by members of the Inter-agency Security Management Network (IASMN) and staff federations.

13. The Committee took note of the briefing by the Under-Secretary-General.

14. On the issue of integrated security clearance and tracking, which had been raised during the discussions, the Committee requested IASMN to review the

requirement that notification be made of all official travel to duty stations not in a security phase.

B. The new security-level system

15. The Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security provided the Committee with a detailed presentation about the new security-level system, which had already been endorsed by IASMN and the Steering Committee on Safety and Security. The new system represented a major step forward in addressing the shortcomings of the current security phase system: it offered a better way to rate threats, fostered collaboration at all levels to determine appropriate mitigating measures and promoted transparency and consultation with host Governments. The proposed date for full implementation of the new system was 1 January 2011. In recognizing that training was vital to successful implementation of the new system, the Department of Safety and Security had prioritized its training programme and made provision for financial resources, to be met within its existing biennial budget, in order to complete training in the new system by 31 October 2010.

16. The Under-Secretary-General notified the Committee that the new security-level system would be delinked from decisions regarding the relocation or evacuation of staff and eligible dependants, thus no longer automatically triggering security-related entitlements associated with those decisions. In response to concerns raised by Committee members on that change, it was pointed out that, under the new system as with the current phase system, decisions to relocate or evacuate would still rest with the designated official and security management team at the country level. Those decisions would be informed by the security risk management process, which encompassed both the security-level system and the security risk assessment, which would also determine the possible availability of mitigation measures.

17. The Committee:

(a) Adopted the new security-level system which would replace the existing security phase system throughout the United Nations Security Management System, and approved the proposed schedule of implementation, on the understanding that there would be a concurrent process to address the administrative issues that needed to be clarified;

(b) Requested the Department of Safety and Security to produce a detailed implementation schedule, including training, and to establish a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess the functioning of the new system;

(c) Requested the Human Resources Network to establish a task force, to include representatives from the Department of Safety and Security, to examine as a priority human resources issues related to operationalizing the new security-level system, specifically with regard to issues of relocation, evacuation, hazard pay and other security-related entitlements;

(d) Requested that all documentation relevant to United Nations security policy and that for agencies, funds, programmes and organizations be amended by the official implementation date, in order to reflect the new security-level system.

C. Guidelines for acceptable risk

18. The guidelines for acceptable risk were part of security risk management. Once finalized, the guidelines would include criteria for determining programme criticality and a supporting common framework to inform decision-making on that sensitive matter. IASMN noted that, while that tool was valuable, any final decision regarding programme criticality went beyond the remit of UNSMS.

19. The Committee endorsed the continued use of the guidelines for acceptable risk.

20. It also endorsed the establishment of a programme working group to be composed of members of the programme community, including the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), the Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), as well as security professionals. The proposed working group would accomplish the following tasks:

(a) Define the four levels of programme criticality within the guidelines for acceptable risk (extreme, critical, essential and all other);

(b) Develop a framework for determining programme criticality for decision-making by HLCP at its session in the third quarter of 2010.

21. The Committee tasked the Chairperson of the Steering Committee on Safety and Security with convening the first meeting of the proposed programme working group to enable it to determine its working methods, appoint its leadership and set the required timeline to meet the deadline in the third quarter of 2010.

22. The Committee also urged the executive heads of all United Nations organizations to provide their representatives and appropriate staff with guidance for determining programme criticality within their respective organizations, and to nominate security professionals to participate in working groups on programme criticality while the development of definitions and a common framework was being undertaken.

D. United Nations estate safety and security policy

23. The Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security informed the Committee about the ongoing work on the United Nations estate safety and security policy, which would apply to some 14,000 United Nations premises around the world.

24. The Committee took note of the development of the draft estate safety and security policy and the ongoing work on the database of all United Nations facilities. The Committee requested that consideration be given to replacing the word "estate" with "premises", and that a full report be prepared for its session in the third quarter of 2010. In that report, it requested also that the UNDG Task Team on Common Premises be consulted before the report was finalized.

E. Other issues from the last meeting of the Inter-agency Security Management Network

25. The Committee was apprised of the most recent IASMN meeting and of its decision to reinstate on its regular agenda consideration of budgetary matters. The Under-Secretary-General took the opportunity to inform the Committee of its meetings with the security management teams for both Kenya and Somalia, which had taken place during the recent IASMN meeting in Nairobi. At the request of both teams, a non-paper outlining their concerns would be annexed to the IASMN report and made available to members of the Committee.

F. Human Resources Network proposals on safety and security matters

26. The spokesperson for the Human Resources Network updated the Committee on the status of the proposals and analysis of the Network as they related to the recommendations of the Steering Committee on Staff Safety and Security.

27. Information brochures on security-related entitlements and benefits had been completed for all categories of staff and were distributed to all organizations in December 2009.

28. The Human Resources Network had developed an implementation plan and terms of reference for the rapid response teams, which had been endorsed by the Committee at its eighteenth session. Those items were being considered in conjunction with the proposal on a new emergency preparedness and support unit, the establishment of which was being proposed by the United Nations Secretariat for the consideration of the General Assembly.

29. Work was still continuing, under the responsibility of three working groups, with regard to Appendix D Compensation (led by the United Nations Secretariat); on the comparative review of compensation for service-incurred injury, illness, death and disability in the event of a malicious act (led by the World Food Programme); and on security measures for national staff (led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)). That was being done with a view to preparing a comprehensive “map” showing all current benefits, entitlements and insurance in the United Nations system related to service-incurred injury, illness, death and disability; malicious acts, as well as events outside the specific circumstances of malicious acts; the current gaps in coverage; and the proposals addressing those gaps. The map would cover all personnel categories: international staff; national and locally recruited staff; and international and locally recruited non-staff personnel.

30. The Committee urged all organizations to ensure that staff members received the information brochures on security-related entitlements and benefits.

31. It also requested that the three working groups of the Human Resources Network, in ongoing consultation with the Finance and Budget Network and other networks as appropriate, continue their work on staff safety and security, and submit a comprehensive plan with costing to the Committee for consideration at its session in the third quarter of 2010. To assist the Human Resources Network in expediting that work, a proposal would be developed by the CEB secretariat for a coordinator to work with the Human Resources Network for six months, whose position would

be financed through the fund for the Plan of Action on Harmonization of Business Practices.

V. Support for staff and their families in emergency situations

32. The Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Field Support joined the meeting by teleconference and shared experiences and lessons learned with regard to support for staff and their families in emergency situations, such as the recent earthquake in Haiti. She commented on the strong support that had been extended by the Department of Management, particularly with regard to finance, human resources and procurement, which had helped to facilitate the rapid response. Survivor and family assistance operations were set up at United Nations Headquarters; in Miami, United States of America; in Santo Domingo; and in Port-au-Prince. A family call centre was established within 5 hours of the event, and it was staffed 24 hours a day 7 days a week during the first week after the earthquake. Many temporary staff members had been sent to support those operations. Although lessons learned from Baghdad were very important, the coming together of the United Nations as one was a most heartening lesson and should remain the modus operandi when the crisis was over.

33. The Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Management indicated that numerous special measures had been taken, often being actions for which there was no precedent. Those measures were determined after extensive consultations on issues ranging from levels of authority for financial expenses and accounting codes to related details concerning medical evacuations and funeral arrangements. Some coordination was required to address inconsistencies in proposals developed by the Human Resources Network field group and by the country team in Haiti. Clarity on the roles and authority of those bodies was deemed necessary for the future. Family focal points were available to provide family members with support, and information and stress counselling proved to be critical requirements for staff both at United Nations Headquarters and locally, as well as for family members. A key lesson emerging from that tragic experience was the fact that many emergency policies should be in place to deal with emergency situations, ranging from human resources and capacity-building to procurement, logistics, travel, communications and financial areas.

34. The Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Management also indicated that the United Nations Secretariat currently had no arrangements in place to ensure systemic emergency preparedness and support for those staff (or their families) who perished, suffered injuries or were otherwise affected by such emergencies. An emergency response team would be needed to deal with those kinds of situation. On the basis of a detailed internal review of current United Nations capacity, as well as the lessons learned from Haiti and other major incidents over the past seven years, the Secretary-General was proposing to establish a dedicated emergency preparedness and support unit in the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management. That unit would work closely with Secretariat departments and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes which provided direct and immediate support on the ground and at United Nations Headquarters. If the General Assembly agreed with the establishment of such a new unit, the operational and governance arrangements for that unit would have to be

developed in full consistency with the rapid response team that had been approved by the High-level Committee on Management.

35. The Director of the Medical Services Division reported on the medical response to the emergency in Haiti, highlighting the fact that, within 48 hours of the earthquake, a medical team consisting of 3 senior volunteer doctors and a nurse had arrived in Port-au-Prince, plus an additional doctor in Santo Domingo. The United Nations Medical Emergency Response Team activated the concept that had been agreed by HLCM, even though it was not fully funded; the medical team was able to provide United Nations Headquarters with local support, as well as detailed information for policy and implementation decisions, despite not being fully equipped. The team members had to rely on their own devices to find beds, tents and telephones locally. In the future, a system for medical response in emergency situations should be in place and fully funded.

36. The Assistant Administrator of UNDP and Director of its Bureau of Management reported that UNDP had set up a Haiti crisis board immediately following the earthquake, focusing on supporting its staff and families and re-establishing the country office operations. The organization had provided immediate support through the SURGE deployment mechanism, which was aimed at enhancing the capacity of UNDP on the ground to respond quickly to recovery demands following a crisis. The Assistant Administrator also informed the Committee of the recent development of the fast-track policies and procedures to be used in countries in crisis. They had been activated for Haiti almost immediately after the earthquake and proved instrumental in ensuring prompt action.

37. With regard to lessons learned in providing Haiti with support, UNDP mentioned, among others, the need to review the definition of “survivor” and “eligible family member”; to consider correlation of the scope of support to the level of personal property damage in a crisis; and to define clear procedures for communications with staff and their families. Policies for increased support for non-staff personnel were also necessary, together with more focused attention on stress counselling in order to help to alleviate the consequences of a crisis situation.

38. The decisions taken at the meeting of the Policy Committee of the Secretary-General on 16 February 2010 concerning support for survivors and affected families were shared with the Committee, as well as a letter dated 18 February from the Secretary-General to the Chairperson of the High-level Committee on Management, conveying the following priorities for intensified and urgent consideration:

(a) Urgent measures should be taken to further support the families and dependants of national staff and other locally recruited employees whose death or disability was service related. That support should include the payment of an immediate lump sum (death grant) for dependants of locally recruited (“non-staff”) employees who had not been appointed under the staff regulations and rules of the United Nations. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the possibility of creating a provident fund for retirement and survivor benefits for “non-staff”. In the interim, a United Nations fund for humanitarian and peace operation national workers, which had been proposed by Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, should be established as soon as possible;

(b) The rapid response administration personnel teams and medical emergency responses teams, which had been endorsed by the High-level Committee on Management, should be made fully operational as soon as possible;

(c) The Committee should consider the extent to which policies and benefits applicable in cases of malicious acts should be extended to cover natural disasters and other emergencies. Additional insurance cover for such emergencies should be considered if necessary;

(d) The Committee should consider how the recently endorsed guidelines on employment of disabled persons could be utilized for the benefit of disabled survivors of service-related injuries. The relevant provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol should be taken into account in that context;

(e) Support for the education of the children of staff and employees whose death or disability was service related should be strengthened and made more sustainable. Different sources of current and potential support should be reviewed together in order to ensure that adequate overall support could be provided, preferably through completion of university education. Included should be the additional “malicious acts education benefit” that had been proposed to the Human Resources Network; the current grant of \$10,000 per family available under the United Nations Nobel Peace Prize Memorial Fund; and the benefits that would be available under the proposed United Nations fund for humanitarian and peace operation national workers. Education benefits for spouses should also be considered in that context.

39. The Committee requested both the United Nations Department of Field Support and the United Nations Department of Management, with the participation of all organizations and departments that might be interested in contributing their experience, to prepare a report on the “lessons learned about the United Nations system’s immediate response mechanisms in support of staff and their families” for consideration and discussion at the session of the High-level Committee on Management to be held in the third quarter of 2010.

VI. Administration of justice

Document

- Administration of justice (CEB/2010/HLCM/8)

40. The Executive Director of the Office of Administration of Justice introduced the new system for the administration of justice, providing background on its inception and presenting the guide to resolving disputes and its detailed processes. Several specialized agencies which had used the previous United Nations system for administration of justice were expressing interest in using the new one. Special bilateral agreements to that effect had already been concluded between the United Nations and the International Civil Aviation Organization, and between the International Maritime Organization and the International Seabed Authority.

41. The Executive Director indicated that the system had been operational since 1 July 2009; to date, the United Nations Dispute Tribunal had rendered over 100 judgments. The United Nations Appeals Tribunal, which would hold its first session

in Geneva in March and April 2010, would consider almost 30 appeals filed both by management and staff appellants.

42. The Executive Director highlighted some of the issues faced by the new system of administration of justice, and commented on evolving jurisprudence, noting in particular that following the administrative, financial and other relevant rules and procedures was the main “tool” to avoid disputes and resulting appeals. Some members of the Committee provided insights into cases that had been brought before the United Nations Dispute Tribunal, showing that termination of contracts and separation, and issues related to benefits and entitlements, as well as to promotion were the three main reasons for litigation. Overall, the organizations that worked with the new system were supportive, although the additional internal resources required for dealing with the new system (strengthening of human resources and legal offices) were significant. Organizations were advised to provide their lawyers with litigation training, so that they could function effectively in the new system.

43. It was noted that a new United Nations-specific form of jurisprudence was currently being created and that, as the number of cases ruled on increased in both tribunals, consistency among the rulings would become stronger and the initial variations in approaches related to the different locations of the tribunals would be smoothed.

44. The fact was underlined that neither tribunal could award punitive damages, although each of them might perhaps hold parties “in contempt”. The Committee was also informed that the United Nations Dispute Tribunal had recently imposed a nominal fine on a staff member for abuse of the system. As new jurisprudence was being created at the moment, with wide-ranging consequences, all organizations and the legal network were urged to work together to share lessons learned and ensure that the jurisprudence remained coherent and served the United Nations system as a whole.

45. The Registrar of the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization (ILO) explained that the tribunal had not changed since its establishment and continued to produce good results, applying the international principles of law, which were recognized by all jurisdictions. The Registrar indicated that organizations were implementing the decisions of the Administrative Tribunal and that consistent rulings were created. Organizations were urged to ensure that managers understood and implemented rules correctly; in that respect, the website of the ILO Administrative Tribunal could be searched for trial law, thus helping both staff and managers to become aware of the rules and how they were judged. The principle that there should be no cost to a staff member for going to the Administrative Tribunal was stressed in the discussion.

46. The Committee took note of the report on the administration of justice system and of the briefing on the ILO Administrative Tribunal. It supported the recommendation that interested organizations should consult on common approaches and best practices, and report on them to the Committee at its session, in the third quarter of 2010. It requested the CEB secretariat to convene the first meeting of a group of interested organizations as soon as possible.

VII. High-level Committee on Management Plan of Action for Harmonization of Business Practices

Document

- Plan of Action for Harmonization of Business Practices: terms of reference for priority projects (CEB/2010/HLCM/6 and annex)

47. The Vice-Chairperson of the Committee briefed the members on the latest developments on the Plan of Action for Harmonization of Business Practices in the United Nations System. The fund-raising campaign for that plan had, by the end of 2009, yielded contributions of \$8.8 million. The Steering Committee for Harmonization of Business Practices, at its meeting on 11 February 2010, approved fund allocations of \$3.2 million for six priority projects. Close monitoring, evaluation and frequent and transparent reporting to Member States represented critical components of the accountability framework built around the plan. Its sound functioning and its results, as projected in the terms of reference for the projects, would determine the attitude of donors towards funding of future harmonization projects.

48. The Vice-Chairperson informed the Committee that the Chairpersons of the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management had agreed to launch a high-level joint mission to Albania, Malawi, Mozambique and Viet Nam, to be co-led by the Chairperson of the UNDG Advisory Group and the Vice-Chairperson of the High-level Committee on Management, and include functional experts from all the HLCM Networks and UNDG Working Groups. The mission would look specifically at a number of critical areas where countries believed further efforts in harmonization were essential to remove impediments to the operational effectiveness of the United Nations system on the ground. It would focus specifically on the experience that was emerging from the “Delivering as one” pilot projects and on the solutions that were being developed locally, with a view to finding fast-track, system-wide solutions while identifying further country-level bottlenecks. That approach would ensure the alignment of country-level operations with the strategic directions and priorities pursued at the policy level. It would further ensure that the needs of country operations were one of the cornerstones for harmonization of business practices at the global level.

49. The Committee took note of developments in the fund-raising campaign for the Plan of Action and of the allocation of funds for priority projects, as decided by the Steering Committee for Harmonization of Business Practices and reflected in the document under consideration.

50. The Committee reaffirmed the accountability and governance framework built around those initiatives.

51. It also recommended expedited action by the lead agencies and the implementation teams for each project, under the guidance of the Steering Committee for Harmonization of Business Practices, for project implementation, strict observance of estimated time frames and frequent and transparent reporting to Member States and to the Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

52. The Committee requested that the HLCM Networks and UNDG Working Groups prioritize the process of development and the review of results-oriented

harmonization initiatives for consideration by the High-level Committee on Management for possible inclusion in the Plan of Action.

53. It welcomed the planned high-level joint mission of HLCM and UNDG as an important means to identify and address country-level bottlenecks in business practices, and requested that the findings of the mission be fed into the review by the Committee and its networks of new initiatives to be included in the Plan of Action.

VIII. Coordination with the United Nations Development Group

54. The Associate Director of the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office informed the Committee of the current UNDG activities and priorities. The UNDG Working Group on Country Office Business Operations and the Working Group on Joint Funding, Finance and Audit Issues had worked closely with the relevant HLCM Networks on harmonization of business practices at the country level, and were keeping each other informed of the initiatives in their respective areas. A number of quick “wins” were achieved in harmonizing business practices among agencies at the country level while working with the HLCM Information and Communications Technology Network and the HLCM Procurement Network, such as on common ICT infrastructure in Mozambique or the “One procurement team” in Tanzania.

55. Other areas in which UNDG was working to harmonize, which could be taken up by the HLCM networks for wider applicability, included such initiatives as harmonization of financial regulations and rules, harmonization in the classification of posts across agencies and a common budgetary framework for the countries Delivering as one.

56. With regard to the joint mission of HLCM and UNDG, the Associate Director added that the Office would try to gain more in-depth knowledge of bottlenecks in business practices through a dialogue with Governments, United Nations country teams and operations management teams. The Office would build on the simplification and harmonization of business practice initiatives that had already been driven by the Delivering as one pilot projects and by other countries through UNDG and HLCM and had already been made available for global use. The mission, which would report to the UNDG and HLCM Chairpersons, should help to prioritize and accelerate support for country offices.

57. The Committee took note of the update by the Associate Director of the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office on the work of UNDG.

58. It requested the CEB secretariat and Development Operations Coordination Office to continue their collaboration to increase the synergies among the work of the three pillars of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and to elaborate a plan, in consultation with organizations and through the development and launch of a survey questionnaire, to focus the work of the system on priority areas, eliminating overlaps and streamlining the number of subgroups, and to provide the Committee at its next session with a report covering the areas under its direct purview.

IX. High-level Committee on Management Networks

A. Human resources

Document

- Staff-management relations (CEB/2008/HLCM/HR/27)

59. Owing to time constraints, the spokesperson for the Human Resources Network was asked to present only issues for decision, without providing the regular briefing on the main subjects discussed by the network at its session in early February, which included: (a) observer organizations; (b) implementation of the exit interview questionnaire; (c) status of the Inter-agency Mobility Accord; (d) status of the human resources project under the harmonization of business practices; (e) dual career and staff mobility programme; (f) “United Nations cares”; (g) ICSC issues; and (h) study on the representation and functioning of staff associations by the Joint Inspection Unit.

60. The Human Resources Network briefing therefore focused solely on the issue of the funding of the FICSA General Secretary’s post for a third year. At its meeting in February, the Human Resources Network had agreed, as an exceptional measure, on sharing among FICSA member organizations the cost of that position for one year; the cost-sharing would include FICSA participation.

61. The Committee took note of the report of the Human Resources Network.

62. However, the Committee was not in agreement with the proposal for an ad hoc cost-sharing arrangement among FICSA member organizations for the one-year additional cost of funding the position of FICSA General Secretary, as it considered that the funding of positions in the staff federations was the responsibility of the federations if full funding could not be met by the releasing organization.

B. Finance and budget

Document

- Vendor eligibility project (CEB/2010/HLCM/9)

63. The Co-Chairperson of the Finance and Budget Network presented the latest information on the status of implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) by United Nations system organizations. Currently eight organizations had targeted IPSAS compliance to be effective in 2010, and 18 IPSAS training courses had been successfully completed and made available to organizations. Computer-based training course modules had also been furnished to the auditors and members of governing boards.

64. In 2010, the IPSAS project team would concentrate on reviewing the new IPSAS standards. One of the main IPSAS implementation issues of concern to the external auditors, namely progressive implementation, had been addressed extensively and accepted by the auditors with certain reservations.

65. In response to the call by the High-level Committee on Management at its last session to establish a small high-level group to discuss the future strategic direction of the cost-recovery harmonization initiative, the Finance and Budget Network

Co-Chairpersons indicated that the network had developed a three-level strategy to advance work in that area. The modalities of that work would be determined by the yet-to-be-established strategic group, which would be convened by the CEB secretariat with representatives at the highest level of the finance and budget offices of member organizations and with HLCM representation.

66. The Committee took note of the progress report submitted by the IPSAS Task Force, approved the recommended amendment to paragraph 3 of the United Nations System Accounting Standards, removing reference to the 2010 implementation deadline in order to reflect the extension of adoption by some organizations beyond 2010.

67. The Committee requested the IPSAS Task Force to come back to the Committee at its next session with information and proposed modalities for the continuation of inter-agency support of agencies in their transition to IPSAS.

68. It also took note of the report of the Finance and Budget Network.

69. It requested the network to submit to the Committee at its next session a report on the analysis and recommendations of the yet-to-be-established high-level strategic group on cost-recovery policies.

C. Procurement

Document

- Vendor eligibility project (CEB/2010/HLCM/9)

70. The Chairperson of the Procurement Network provided the Committee with a briefing on the status of the vendor eligibility project, implementation of which was on track. Its successful completion was critical to demonstrate the value of the HLCM Plan of Action on Harmonization of Business Practices, and the Committee's ability to deliver on its commitments to donors and Member States. The proposed procedure regarding vendor eligibility was due to be completed by June 2010. The main benefits of the project would derive from the development and communication of a common framework to deal with suspect vendors. That included information-sharing on suspect vendors, decision-making mechanisms of individual organizations and the recording and sharing of decisions taken by individual agencies.

71. Among the areas of activity selected by the network for its 2010 workplan, the following were identified as key priorities: dealing with unethical vendors and a related common policy framework; developing a compendium of procurement-related training modules; roll-out of harmonized procurement processes and practices; and completion of guidelines for sustainable procurement.

72. The Committee took note, with appreciation, of the recent work of the Procurement Network, particularly with respect to the initiatives developed for the HLCM Plan of Action for Harmonization of Business Practices.

73. It also took note of the progress report on the vendor eligibility project, and its estimated conclusion in June 2010 in time for approval by the High-level Committee on Management and the Chief Executives Board for Coordination of the resulting harmonized approach to suspect vendors.

D. Information and communications technology

Document

- Data communications study (CEB/2010/HLCM/10)

74. The information and communications technology Network Chairperson introduced the results of the recently concluded study on data communications across the United Nations system. In noting that data communications formed the backbone of many agencies, especially those that focused on development and responded to emergencies, the Chairperson suggested that the United Nations system must look for opportunities to achieve efficiencies and economies of scale when deploying those systems, especially as organizations placed increasing demands on those facilities.

75. The CEB Senior Advisor on Information Management Policy Coordination presented the results of the study, which revealed the potential for significant savings by utilizing increased sharing of capabilities in data communications, as well as other practices, and proposed a course of action for implementation.

76. The Committee took note, with appreciation, of the results of the data communications study; asked that the network explore how the system could leverage the services of the United Nations International Computing Centre for that project; and supported the action plan proposed by the Information and Communications Technology Network to do the following:

(a) Form small working groups to focus on four areas that together would address all of the recommended initiatives: (i) interoperability standards; (ii) United Nations core gateway; (iii) multiagency procurement; and (iv) shared city-based networks;

(b) Coordinate work on achieving coherence in data communications with activities undertaken within the context of the Delivering as one process at the country level by the UNDG Information and Communications Technology Task Team;

(c) The agencies involved should proceed with developing a project for inclusion in the HLCM Plan of Action on Harmonization of Business Practices.

X. Occupational health and safety policy in the United Nations system

Document

- Occupational health and safety policy in the United Nations system (CEB/2010/HLCM/11)

77. The spokesperson for the United Nations Medical Directors Working Group introduced a proposal on occupational health and safety policy in the United Nations system, which had been developed in response to the request of the Committee at its eighteenth session to “develop and prioritize specific proposals that would update and enhance the provision of health care in the United Nations system”. The proposal contained guidance on the nature of occupational health and safety policy

in modern organizations, based on risk management, and emphasized prevention rather than cure.

78. The Committee discussed the reporting relationship of the United Nations Medical Directors Working Group to the High-level Committee on Management. The possibilities that were suggested included reporting through the Human Resources Network, or considering the Medical Directors Working Group as an HLCM Network, or having topic-focused HLCM agendas that would bring together the work of the networks and working groups, so as to better respond to the increasing cross-functional nature of most of the subjects brought up for discussion. The matter would be reviewed as part of the joint effort by the CEB secretariat and the Development Operations Coordination Office to focus the work of the system on priority areas, eliminating overlaps and streamlining the number of subgroups.

79. The Committee endorsed the occupational health and safety policy proposed by the United Nations Medical Directors Working Group.

80. It urged all organizations to develop policies on occupational health and safety, utilizing the principles outlined in the proposal.

XI. Any other business

A. Retirement age

81. In the report on its eighteenth session, the High-level Committee on Management had considered the recommendation of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board at its fifty-sixth session, that “given the impact that increasing longevity will have on the financial situation of the Fund, its [Working Group on Plan Design] would need to consider the emerging trends in personnel policies further and possibly in conjunction with the normal retirement age provisions”, and that “such issues would require close consultations with ICSC and the HLCM”. In response to that recommendation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and ILO had jointly represented the Committee at the meeting of the UNJSPF Working Group on Plan Design on 5 November 2009.

82. The second meeting of the UNJSPF Working Group on Plan Design would take place in the first half of 2010, and the High-level Committee on Management would again be invited to participate as an observer.

83. The Committee thanked IFAD and ILO and noted that organizations should work towards the development of a common position on that important matter.

Annex I

List of participants

Chairperson: Josette Sheeran (World Food Programme)

Vice-Chairperson: Jan Beagle (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS)

Secretary: Remo Lalli (CEB secretariat)

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name, title and division</i>
United Nations	Ms. Angela Kane Under-Secretary-General for Management and Chairperson of the Information and Communications Technology Network
	Mr. Gregory Starr Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security
	Ms. Susana Malcorra Under-Secretary-General for Field Support (via videoconference)
	Mr. Jun Yamazaki Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Programme, Planning, Budgets and Accounts and Controller
	Mr. Jay Karia Deputy Controller and Co-Chairperson of the Finance and Budget Network
	Mr. Andrei D. Terekhov Executive Director, Office of Administration of Justice
	Mr. Brian Davey Director, Medical Services Division, and United Nations Medical Directors Working Group
	Mr. Joel Cohen Acting Executive Officer, Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and of Field Support
	Ms. Anne Marie Pinou Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security
International Labour Organization	Ms. Patricia O'Donovan Executive Director, Management and Administration
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Mr. Manoj Juneja Assistant Director-General, Corporate Services, Human Resources and Finance Department

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name, title and division</i>
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Ms. Yolande Valle Director, Bureau of Budget
World Health Organization	Mr. Mohamed Jama Assistant Director-General, General Management
	Mr. Peter Mertens Coordinator, Partnerships and United Nations Reform
	Ms. Nicole Krüger Management Officer
International Civil Aviation Organization	Ms. Fang Liu Director, Bureau of Administration and Services
World Bank	Mr. Pete Gallant Chief, Corporate Security and Business Continuity
International Monetary Fund	Mr. Frank Harnischfeger Director, Technology and General Services Department
World Meteorological Organization	Mr. Tomiji Mizutani Chief, Budget Office
International Telecommunication Union	Mr. Richard Barr Chief, Administration and Finance Department
International Maritime Organization	Mr. Andrew Winhow Director, Administrative Division
World Intellectual Property Organization	Mr. Ambi Sundaram Assistant Director-General, Administration and Management Sector
	Ms. Chitra Narayanaswamy Senior Counsellor, Office of the Director-General
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Ms. Jessie Rose Mabutas Acting Director, Human Resources, and Chief, Finance and Administration Department
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Ms. Hui Sui Managing Director
	Mr. Sajjad Ajmal Principal Adviser to the Director-General

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name, title and division</i>
United Nations World Trade Organization	Mr. José G. Blanch Director, Administration Division
International Atomic Energy Agency	Mr. David Waller Deputy Director-General, and Head of Management
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	Ms. Jan Beagle Deputy Executive Director, Management and External Relations, and Vice-Chairperson of the High-level Committee on Management Ms. Helena Eversole Director, Department of Resource Management
United Nations Development Programme	Ms. Akiko Yuge Assistant Administrator and Director of Bureau of Management Ms. Irina Stavenscaia Botezatu Planning Advisor, Bureau of Management Ms. Susan Struck Procurement Network
United Nations Children's Fund	Mr. Omar Abdi Deputy Executive Director Mr. Ayalew Abai Comptroller Ms. Cecilia Lotse Director, Governance, United Nations and Multilateral Affairs Ms. Shanelle Hall Director, Supply Division and Incoming Procurement Network Chairperson
World Food Programme	Ms. Josette Sheeran Executive Director, and Chairperson of the High-level Committee on Management Ms. Diana Serrano Director, Human Resources Division, and spokesperson for the Human Resources Network Mr. Robert Opp Senior Advisor, Office of the Executive Director
United Nations Population Fund	Mr. Subhash K. Gupta Director, Division for Management Services

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name, title and division</i>
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Ms. Laura Londén Director of Administrative Support
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Mr. T. Alexander Aleinikoff Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees
	Mr. Amin Awad Director, Division of Emergency Security and Supply
United Nations Human Settlements Programme	Mr. Antoine King Director, Programme Support Division
United Nations Office at Vienna/United Nations Organization	Ms. Mazlan Othman Deputy Director-General, United Nations Office at Vienna, and Officer-in-Charge, Division for Management, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
International Trade Centre	Ms. Eva K. Murray Director, Division of Programme Support
United Nations Office for Project Services	Mr. Vitaly Vanshelboim Deputy Executive Director
United Nations System Staff College	Mr. Carlos Lopes Assistant Secretary-General, Executive Director of United Nations Institute for Training and Research, and Director of United Nations System Staff College
	Mr. Jafar Javan Deputy Director, Training and Learning Programmes
	Mr. Paolo Ceratto Deputy Director, Administration and Management
United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office	Mr. Ashok Nigam Associate Director
Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations	Ms. Valerie de Kermel General Secretary
	Mr. Cosimo Melpignano Representative for Europe

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name, title and division</i>
Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System	Mr. Stefano Berterame President of the Staff Council, United Nations Staff Union in Vienna
International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal	Ms. Catherine Comtet Registrar, International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal
Chief Executives Board for Coordination Secretary	Mr. Thomas Stelzer Assistant Secretary-General, Policy Coordination and Inter-agency Affairs, United Nations
Chief Executives Board for Coordination secretariat	Mr. Adnan Amin Director Mr. Remo Lalli Secretary, High-level Committee on Management Ms. Petra ten Hoop-Bender Human Resources Programme Coordinator, Staff Mobility, Work/Life Balance and Staff Wellbeing Mr. Ken Herman Senior Advisor on Information Management Policy Coordination Mr. Armands Cakss Inter-agency Advisor on Finance and Budget

Annex II

List of documents

<i>Title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>
Revised provisional agenda, High-level Committee on Management, at its nineteenth session	CEB/2010/HLCM/1/Rev.1
Revised programme of work	CEB/2010/HLCM/1/Add.1/Rev.1
United Nations Security Management System project group report on security level system and guidelines for acceptable risk	CEB/2010/HLCM/2
United Nations policy and guidelines on estate safety and security	CEB/2010/HLCM/3
Human resources-related proposals on safety and security	CEB/2010/HLCM/4/Rev.1
Report of the meeting of Inter-agency Security Management Network, 1-5 February 2010	CEB/2010/HLCM/5
Administration of justice	CEB/2010/HLCM/8
Plan of Action for Harmonization of Business Practices: terms of reference for priority projects	CEB/2010/HLCM/6 and Annex
Staff management relations	CEB/2008/HLCM/HR/27
International Public Sector Accounting Standards progress report	CEB/2010/HLCM/7
Vendor eligibility project	CEB/2010/HLCM/9
Data communications study	CEB/2010/HLCM/10
Occupational health and safety policy in the United Nations system	CEB/2010/HLCM/11

Annex III

Statement by the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations

It is a great honour for me to address you on behalf of the FICSA Executive Committee for the first time in my capacity as President. Admittedly, I had hoped to be able to address you in person; however, the conflicting dates of the High-level Committee on Management and the seventieth session of the International Civil Service Commission in Santiago have prevented me from doing so.

FICSA has thus had no choice but to split its representation in order to fulfil its mandate before both bodies. Consequently, Valerie de Kermel, our General Secretary, will have to rush off to catch her flight tomorrow in order to join me in Santiago on Wednesday. I will refrain at this juncture from commenting on the issue of coordinating inter-agency meetings. I trust, however, that you will support our call for improvements in this respect.

My colleagues have been entrusted with the task of sharing with you the Federation's views and concerns under item 2 of your heavy agenda: dialogue with staff representatives. However, I felt that it was my duty to convey to you our constituents' views on one item of particular concern. In fact, I would term it an issue of vital importance to the very functioning of our Federation. I refer to the funding of the release of the current FICSA General Secretary, Ms. Valerie de Kermel, until the statutory expiration of her mandate in February 2011.

I do not need to enter into the details of the sequence of events leading up to this unprecedented situation. Nor need I speak of the embarrassment of a Federation's secretariat being run by a principal officer serving on involuntary leave without pay.

The *ins* and *outs* of the matter have been considered in many forums, including the recently held nineteenth session of the Human Resources Network in Geneva. Views have been expressed, orally and in writing, and a number of open and closed sessions have been held on the issue. Formal and informal communications have been transmitted, including a resolution adopted by the 63rd FICSA Council on the first day of its meeting last month. It was addressed to Mr. Ban Ki-moon, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

I am firmly convinced that, had communication between all parties worked better, and had principles been adhered to, we would not be here today entering a plea for swift action and advocating a balanced solution to the problem.

FICSA is fully aware of cost considerations: the financial sustainability of our participation in the common system consultative machinery is high on the agenda of the Federation's ad hoc Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

However, the principles at stake here go far beyond the mere appropriation of funds. They strike at the very heart of staff-management relations.

The right of staff to choose freely and independently their best representatives is in jeopardy. Moreover, the right of the organizations to interact with informed and competent staff representatives is at risk.

In fact, FICSA believes that, in the course of considering this issue, too much emphasis is put on the cost component of the equation. Little or no regard has been paid to the “benefit” component: the quality of staff representation.

I have no wish to embarrass Valerie de Kermel, but it is no exaggeration when I say that the likes of her competence, efficiency and dedication are not easily found. As incoming President of FICSA, I have been feeling ill at ease — to say the least — working with a General Secretary, who, through no fault of her own, except to have been elected by an overwhelming majority, (a) has no salary; (b) enjoys no medical and insurance coverage; and (c) can no longer pay her pension contributions. A *trio infernale* — and quite intolerable.

As you can imagine, the most recent session of the FICSA Council was marked by a sense of dismay. The atmosphere was tense and the debate intense. Soft- and hard-liners discussed at length. They came up with a multistage strategy that the new Executive Committee has been mandated to implement.

The first step is to enter into dialogue with you with the aim of finding a mutually acceptable, rapid solution to the immediate problem. Everybody should contribute to that aim and FICSA stands ready to bear its share of the costs as an exceptional measure.

Needless to say, the Federation is also ready to work with you on longer-term arrangements which, if agreed, could put the issue of the FICSA officers’ release to rest forever. Our highest priority is to ensure that the Federation can work at full capacity, with its multifaceted operations being coordinated efficiently and effectively by a fully operational Executive Committee: a priority that is very much in the interests of all those with whom we negotiate.

Our impression on leaving Geneva two weeks ago was that the Human Resources Network was reaching consensus on a solution. We are confident that in your wisdom, you will concur with it.

Please allow me, on behalf of the Federation and its Executive Committee, to wish you all every success in completing your work.

Letter from the President of the Federation of International Civil Servants’ Associations delivered by Mr. Cosimo Melpignano

FICSA welcomes the opportunity to address the nineteenth session of the High-level Committee on Management and to present its views on issues of concern to administrators and staff alike. This year, we would like to present our comments on staff security, which figures prominently on your agenda and is one of our top priorities, and more briefly on most of the other items you will be addressing during this two-day session.

First of all, we would like to express the Federation’s appreciation for a number of positive initiatives aimed towards improving conditions of service in the field that were introduced by the administrations. These include improvements to rest-and-recuperation leave, special time off, a new approach to the service-oriented analysis methodology, harmonization of entitlements, the introduction of a child support

grant and a transitional education benefit for children who lose a parent through a malicious act.

FICSA appreciates the attention being given to the families of victims and the very concerted efforts to improve security measures for all categories of staff and the proposals to improve the mobility and hardship scheme.

FICSA is also appreciative of efforts to strengthen counselling for staff, hire ombudsmen and mediators, assist dual career couples, provide the best care to HIV-affected staff, recognize personal status for the purpose of dependency benefits, increase the retirement age and develop an occupational health and safety policy for all of the organizations.

FICSA realizes that most of these initiatives require the Member States' approval of funding, and in view of their importance, the Federation commits itself to working together with the representatives of the administrations to lobby for full funding.

FICSA would like to strongly support the new security level system, which is an improvement over the security phase system because it allows for capturing more nuances in the security situation. FICSA has noted the concerns expressed over delinking the security level system from the automatic triggering of security-related entitlements and the delegation of decision-making to the security management team and the designated official. In view of those concerns, training will be paramount to the success of the new system and hopefully will ensure the needed transparency and impartiality in the determination of security levels and the decisions regarding relocation and evacuation of staff and eligible dependants. FICSA looks forward to being able to review the training and information material, and trusts that adequate funding will be made available for this important element of the new system.

FICSA also would support the request for further work to be carried out on how the relocation and evacuation entitlements fit within the new security level system. There would appear to be some confusion over hazard pay because the new security level system includes new definitions of hazard which do not correlate directly with the way in which the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) defines hazard. In that regard, it would perhaps be useful to keep the issue of hazard pay separate for the time being, and to look at it more closely once the new system is fully understood and functioning. Alternatively, FICSA would support changing the name of hazard pay, perhaps to "danger pay", as mentioned by the ICSC secretariat.

FICSA agrees with the schedule for implementation, supports continuing to use the guidelines for acceptable risk, the creation of a working group to define the four levels of programme criticality and the development of a framework.

The improvement of security measures for national staff is a long-standing concern. Over the past decade, threats against the safety and security of United Nations personnel have escalated at an unprecedented pace. With staff forced to operate in increasingly dangerous environments and in complex emergencies, the mortality and distress rates of field and local staff have increased dramatically.

In order to arrive at solutions to security issues and responses to threats, it is important to understand the nature of these threats: accident, criminality, banditry and targeting. Increasingly, staff, particularly local staff, are targeted because they work for a United Nations organization. Local staff make up the largest number of victims of targeted attacks. It is the Federation's strongly held view that all staff

should benefit from the same security measures, because all are equal as human beings. We trust that those responsible for security will embrace this thinking and take the necessary steps to ensure the security of all staff equally.

We would now like to turn to the subject of support for staff and families in emergency situations. Since at the time this address was prepared the paper was not yet available to us, we are unable to comment on the lessons learned in Haiti. We would however like to express our positive view of the new unit responsible for providing assistance to the families of staff members who lost their lives in the course of duty.

Turning now to the administration of justice, FICSA would like to thank the authors of the booklet for providing information about the new justice system. The Federation will be closely monitoring the new system as several of our members use the new United Nations Appeals Tribunal as their appeals body. We note that a major concern of the staff is “equality of arms” and would urge that staff members have access to legal advice and advisers under the new system.

On the subject of occupational health and safety, FICSA would like to note that the framework for human resources management adopted 10 years ago identified staff well-being — including health and safety standards — as a key element of the framework, as well as defining it as a non-core issue. In the ensuing 10 years, very little attention has been given to the development of occupational health and safety issues either at the local or inter-agency levels. FICSA therefore welcomes this long-overdue initiative and trusts that the administrations will work quickly towards a harmonized set of policies on staff well-being.

The World Health Organization policy seems very comprehensive and could serve as a model, with the inclusion of staff/stress counsellors.

With regard to the Plan of Action for Harmonization of Business Practices, FICSA would give its full support to this project which is aimed at harmonizing contracts, rules, job descriptions, classification and performance and promotion systems in the field duty stations, and would support beginning the project with the “Delivering as one” pilot countries. We trust that the work would then continue throughout all country offices shortly thereafter to address the anomalies experienced by staff working in the field, particularly local staff. FICSA is particularly concerned about non-staff, or the contingency workforce, and therefore is pleased that the project will assess how the contingent workforce fits into the organizational structure.

The issue of national professional officers was discussed by the FICSA membership during its annual Council meeting held in January 2010. While our members had strong views on the role and scope for using this category of staff, FICSA notes that consensus was not reached at the recent Human Resources Network meeting. A proposal was made to postpone decisions until the summer session of ICSC. FICSA supports the proposed postponement because the subject requires an informed discussion and decision-making; therefore, the process should not be rushed.

Appendix D to the staff rules covers staff members for work-related death, injury or illness attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of the United Nations. In aiming to harmonize provisions across the system, a review has addressed the scope and level of benefits, the administrative procedures, eligibility, financing mechanisms and payment modalities in comparison with what is being provided outside the United Nations. An external expert on insurance issues was

recruited in order to address these matters. FICSA fully supports the updating and harmonization of the provisions governing work-related death, injury or illness.

FICSA would like to end this presentation with a word about housekeeping. As we are all aware, the number of inter-agency meetings has vastly increased over the past few years. While the Federation willingly contributes to all of the inter-agency consultations, it is becoming difficult to schedule our time and finance our participation: we understand that some administrations may also be feeling the crunch.

In addition, we note that increasingly the deadlines for availability of the background papers for meetings are not being met. This means that we are faced with studying a mountain of background material at the last minute. It also means that there is little time for us to consult with our membership.

Unfortunately, FICSA does not have a ready solution to address our overly charged calendars. Nonetheless, we would welcome a discussion of the situation with a view to improving working methods, venues and scheduling.

Annex IV

Statement by the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System

On behalf of the 17 members of the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA), representing over 38,000 staff across the common system, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address all of you, as part of the standing agenda item on facilitating dialogue with the staff federations.

Our Federation's membership spans the Secretariat, economic commissions, funds, programmes and specialized agencies.

We represent staff both at Headquarters and across a wide range of field duty stations, the majority of whom are active, dues-paying members of our unions and associations. As such, we are in a position to provide inputs on matters affecting staff from a wide variety of viewpoints. My hope is that the issues that I will raise here will serve to foster a genuine dialogue between us.

My statement will address first the modalities of dialogue with staff representatives. I will then discuss the critical issues of security and safety of staff and occupational health and safety. In addition, I would like to briefly share the views of our Federation on the contractual framework, and the new system for administration of justice.

Dialogue with staff representatives

The Joint Inspection Unit is carrying out a survey on staff-management relations, and we believe that this is a long-overdue issue. CCISUA believes that the status of staff-management relations in the United Nations system needs to be seriously discussed and reformed. To this end, CCISUA is preparing a position paper on the matter to assist the Joint Inspection Unit in its work.

When you look at the historical development of industrial relations in the national public service, there are many parallels with the international civil service. Years ago, a balance was struck between the State as employer providing job security (in many cases a "job for life" — or in other words, a *career*) while adopting what could be called a "paternalistic" model of staff-management relations in which the public authorities were responsible for taking final decisions on such matters as wages, working conditions and the like.

In many cases, over the years there has been a gradual shift in this situation, where national civil servants may have less security, but civil servants and their unions have seen a subsequent increase in their ability to influence policymaking. While it should be recognized that permanent appointments continue in most national civil services, including that of the comparator, there has been documented growth in collective bargaining in the national public service.

Within the United Nations, while we can clearly see a reduction in job security, the shift from consultation towards negotiation has not taken place. In recent years we have seen changes in human resources policies and in conditions of service, some of

which have been adopted with private sector models in mind. However, these changes were not matched by the changes in staff-management relations.

Any efforts to improve staff-management relations should lead to a rationalization of both the structure and functioning of labour relations in the international civil service. It should build a system in which all parties — staff, administrations and Member States — can have confidence.

We sincerely hope that the Joint Inspection Unit work will be able to provide concrete proposals on how to improve the dialogue between staff and management at all levels, including at the level of this Committee.

Security and safety of staff

Security and safety of staff has been a primary concern of CCISUA, which includes among its membership many field-based organizations, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme, which traditionally bear the brunt of security-related incidents. CCISUA has been an active member in the various inter-agency mechanisms on safety and security. Our participation has, among other things, reassured staff that their interests and concerns in relation to safety and security were represented.

We welcome the Human Resources Network status report (CEB/2010/HLCM/4/Rev.1). However, we continue to recommend that all offices, including those outside the capitals and those housing extrabudgetary technical cooperation projects, should be compliant with the minimum operating security standards, and that regional situations should be taken into account in determining programme presence. Risk assessment should be stringent and thorough, and the United Nations should make the tough decision to remove staff from duty stations where the lack of security effectively means that there is no value added in our presence.

We have called upon the Secretary-General to take a stronger stance with Governments on staff protection. In particular, a recent episode regarding UNICEF staff serving in Addis Ababa has raised concerns about the protection of international and national staff in the performance of their duties. We appreciate the efforts made by the Secretary-General, but this is not the first case, and staff feel and are extremely vulnerable when Governments ignore their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations.

While we are appreciative of the work undertaken thus far in relation to improving the security situation of national staff, we believe that much remains to be done if we are to transform one of the most important findings of the Brahimi report into a reality for those who are truly in the line of fire. For local staff, CCISUA continues to recommend that the organization help them to become secure in their homes, and relocate them in times of emergency. The time for discriminatory treatment between local and international staff in the benefits and entitlements provided in difficult duty stations must come to an end. For all staff, more stress counselling should be available.

Occupational health and safety policy

CCISUA welcomes the fact that occupational safety and health are being discussed at the High-level Committee on Management session. We also note that the draft has been submitted for comment to both the Inter-agency Security Management Network, where these comments were presented by our Federation, and during a closed session of the Human Resources Network, where CCISUA had sent a set of written comments. These comments are also available here, for anyone interested.

In the view of our Federation, linking security and the occupational safety and health of staff is a logical way forward. Occupational safety and health are inextricably linked with security. Whatever the risk — from terrorism, poor ergonomics, poor working relations, fire, commuting or tripping on the stairs — the effects on staff safety and health and well-being are the same, and solutions can be sought in a common framework. This is especially important at the local level, where many improvements for compliance with United Nations security standards often result also in improvements in the workplace, and vice versa — any improvements in occupational safety and health conditions as a result of workplace risk assessments will necessarily take account of security and emergency conditions.

CCISUA also welcomes the recognition in the paper that an organization-wide lack of occupational safety and health policy is seen as a fundamental deficiency and that all United Nations organizations are being encouraged to develop such policies as a matter of priority.

Concerning the draft policy paper, the approach is very medically oriented, with a focus on keeping employees healthy rather than ensuring a safe and healthy working environment which would prevent them from becoming unhealthy in the first place.

The overarching aim should be the provision of a safe and healthy workplace. CCISUA has provided detailed comments on the draft document and they have been made available to the CEB secretariat and the Human Resources Network.

Contractual framework

Almost all members of CCISUA are directly affected by the new contractual framework of the United Nations. We believe that simplifying and unifying the contractual framework are steps in the right direction.

CCISUA members recognize the importance of human resources management reforms as a means of ensuring the effective delivery of the mandate of the United Nations, as demanded by our constituents.

It is for these reasons that our membership has continued to participate in good faith dialogue through the Staff-Management Coordination Committee mechanism, and we believe that our participation delivers results for the staff, through the establishment of a system which balances the needs of the organization and the Member States with those of the staff.

We started to discuss this issue in 2002 and since then we agreed on giving up permanent contracts in exchange for continuing contracts, on the understanding that the continuing contracts were going to benefit a larger number of staff who would not have been entitled to permanent contracts.

We negotiated in good faith and engaged in finding a compromise for the good of the staff and of the organization (we believe that one contractual framework will provide the organization with motivated staff).

Over the last eight years we have engaged in a dialogue that has been difficult, and we have conceded on important issues, the most important one being permanent contracts. Sometimes, these concessions have been met with concern by our staff, but we defended the concessions because we had our eyes on the prize: continuing contracts.

Staff unions and associations participating in the Staff-Management Coordination Committee agreed during the last 10 years to some basic principles:

- Continuing contracts would replace permanent contracts, frozen since 1995
- Staff on any type of post who have served five years would be eligible for consideration for continuing contracts
- No ceiling was placed on the issue of continuing contracts

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions raised new sets of issues that forced the Administration to withdraw the proposal. Staff representatives met with management to discuss how to address the concerns of the Member States. Both sides tried to craft a more acceptable proposal, attempting to address the concerns expressed both by the General Assembly and by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/64/518). However, no consensus was reached. The staff side, though disappointed, could not concede on the principle of equal treatment for all staff, which had been the backbone of the talks for over 10 years.

Staff representatives continue to believe that the continuing appointments would greatly assist the United Nations in the reform of human resources, for it to grow and to meet the ever-emerging challenges.

We reiterate that continuing appointments, while subject to performance and the continued need for the services of the staff member, would not be controlled by the source of funding for the staff member's post at the time of conversion.

We believed and continue to believe that this approach would facilitate human resources reform, including the mobility of staff who are not inclined to be mobile and change functions of uncertain duration and funding.

The International Civil Service Commission, the Secretary-General and the General Assembly have to this point all used language to the effect that the "separately administered funds and programmes" will have "flexibility" about whether or not they award continuing contracts.

We believe that all organizations subject to the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations should adopt the new contractual framework.

If we are trying to harmonize under the "One United Nations", we should not be creating a system where some staff are "more equal than others".

New system for administration of justice

The new system for administration of justice has been functioning for the last seven months, and it is already demonstrating that it is capable of addressing some of the problems that characterized the previous system. Judgements are being delivered relatively quickly, and this is a considerable improvement over that of the previous situation. However, while we recognize the positive elements of the new system, we need to highlight the problems that still remain:

- CCISUA expresses concerns about the resources available for staff representation and about the absence of equality of arms
- The suspension of action has not been granted consistently across the tribunals
- There are some apparent inconsistencies between judgements and court procedures in different locations
- Concerns remain about due process and legal counsel for staff in disciplinary actions and investigations

I apologize for taking some time but, given the limited presence allowed for the staff representatives, we must convey our views on all relevant issues which you will be addressing over the next two days under this agenda item. We hope that our statements can be followed by a productive dialogue between you, the senior managers of the organizations represented here and the representatives of the staff.
