



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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Conclusions of the High-level Committee on Management at its twentieth session

(Washington, D.C., 27 and 28 September 2010)

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I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Management held its twentieth session at the headquarters of the International Monetary Fund, in Washington, D.C., on 27 and 28 September 2010. The meeting was conducted by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) (Chair) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Deputy Executive Director (Vice-Chair).

II. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

2. The agenda as adopted by the Committee is reflected in the table of contents.
3. The list of participants is provided in annex I.
4. The checklist of documents is provided in annex II. All documents related to the session are available on the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) website at: <http://www.unsceb.org/ceb/mtg/hlcm/201009>.
5. In her welcoming remarks, the Chair expressed her deep appreciation to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for its very generous and efficient hospitality, and informed the Committee that, during the lunch break, it would receive a briefing by the Special Adviser to the Managing Director on the Fund's renewed engagement in the United Nations system.
6. The Chair offered her views from the recently concluded General Assembly Summit on the Millennium Development Goals, whose outcome was an outstanding sign of consensus and the power of commitment from the public and private sectors on solving ancient problems, such as malnutrition and hunger and childhood education.
7. In the words of the Chair, the role of the Committee was therefore about empowering United Nations staff and agencies to be more effective in improving peoples' lives, to ensure that Member States were getting the best value for money when they made investments in the United Nations.
8. The Chair also underlined how important it was to make a distinction between harmonization and standardization. In line with the conclusions of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, the goal was to research best practices and ensure that organizations develop a coherent platform of standards. While upholding the same values, principles and approaches, the actual implementation might vary depending on the nature of organizations' mandates and business models, as well as on their field challenges.

III. Dialogue with the federations of staff associations

9. The Committee welcomed the representatives of 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 newly elected President of CCISUA informed the Committee that she was also representing the United Nations International Civil Servants Federation (UNISERV). The full statements made by the federations are provided in annexes III and IV.

10. The President of CCISUA reiterated the desire of the staff federations to enhance the interaction with the High-level Committee on Management beyond the short dialogue at the beginning of the session, further stating that everything that was decided by the Committee would have an impact on staff and their input would be of great value.

11. In their joint statement, CCISUA and UNISERV elaborated on some key issues:

(a) Regarding staff safety and security, CCISUA and UNISERV firmly supported the organizations' efforts to address the issues identified in the report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security, but noted that the recommendations on the safety of national staff still needed to be implemented. The federations expressed concern regarding the lack of clarity in relation to the new security level system and the evacuation and relocation of staff;

(b) On contractual arrangements, underlining that staff place great importance to the impending discussions by the General Assembly on the issue of granting continuing contracts, CCISUA and UNISERV urged the Secretary-General and administrations to push with vigour for the General Assembly to approve the award of continuing contracts. Should the Assembly not approve continuing contracts in 2010, the federations recommended that the organizations award up to five-year fixed-term contracts to staff, as provision for these are already in the Staff Rules;

(c) On the harmonization of conditions of service in the field, CCISUA and UNISERV confirmed the unanimous position of the three staff federations in supporting a second household allowance for United Nations Secretariat staff serving in non-family duty stations, as well as their support to harmonization of allowances across the United Nations system, but not to equality by reduction. The federations believe the matter should be subject to a more thorough review and that the organizations using the special operations approach should continue to do so, until that review had taken place;

(d) On strengthening of the staff representation function in the organizations, CCISUA and UNISERV explained that for historical reasons only FICSA obtains full-time release of the President and Vice-President positions. FICSA is also the only one with the right to address the Fifth Committee on issues related to human resources, while CCISUA and UNISERV must petition each year. CCISUA and UNISERV therefore suggested that it was time that they received the same treatment as FICSA.

12. The President of FICSA also expressed the Federation's strong interest and availability to establish a true dialogue with the Committee. The Federation expressed its concern regarding the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) decision on the harmonization of the conditions of service of staff serving in non-family duty stations and the potential impact on the operations of specialized agencies and funds and programmes. The Federation also expressed its concern regarding the postponement of a concrete discussion on the mandatory age of separation. Finally, FICSA expressed its support for the Human Resources Network proposal on personal status/domestic partners.

13. The Committee thanked the federations for their statements and their usual spirit of collaboration, and invited them back for the discussions on the safety and security of staff.

14. Several organizations supported the idea of having more dialogue with the staff representatives, and proposed that the Committee reconsider its level of engagement with the federations during the sessions, while preserving the prerogative of the Committee as a management body to discuss issues among its members only.

15. The CEB secretariat informed that some steps had already been explored to enhance the engagement of the staff federations in an improved dialogue: (a) by providing their statements ahead of time before the meeting; and (b) by suggesting a limited number of key items ahead of the meeting, around which Committee members were asked to prepare a discussion.

16. The Committee agreed to engage the staff federations in an effort towards improved dialogue, and requested the CEB secretariat to undertake discussions with them on the possible modalities towards such an objective, including the possibility of preparing an agenda along which to conduct the dialogue, based on suggestions from the High-level Committee on Management Networks, Committee members and the staff federations themselves.

IV. Overview and prioritization of the activities of the High-level Committee on Management, and coordination with the United Nations Development Group

17. At its meeting in February 2010, the Committee expressed concern at the number of activities being undertaken by the four technical networks, and the risk of gaps and overlaps, potentially resulting in a lack of focus. The Committee therefore requested the CEB secretariat to undertake a survey among Committee members to prioritize the activities under the purview of each network.

18. The results of the survey were included in an updated overview of High-level Committee on Management activities (CEB/2010/HLCM/25),¹ inclusive of a section on United Nations Development Group activities so as to provide a complete picture of the work carried out within the CEB framework in the area of management and administration.

19. The results of the survey showed relative coherence of the Committee's priorities with those currently identified as such by the individual networks, through their internal mechanisms. On that basis, resource implications for individual organizations would remain unchanged, as linked to their participation in the various networks and working groups.

¹ The Task Team on Common Premises is to be continued under the leadership of the United Nations Development Coordination Office, and not the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

20. The Committee:

(a) Took note of the proposed prioritization of activities in the areas of finance and budget, human resources, information and communications technology and procurement, as reflected in document CEB/2010/HLCM/25;

(b) Urged its networks to develop and readjust their programmes of work accordingly, with a clear focus on the priorities identified and agreed;

(c) Underlined the need for the results of the survey to be seen in conjunction with the implementation plan for the recommendations of the High-level Committee on Management-United Nations Development Group joint mission, as approved at their joint session of 27 September and reflected in document CEB/2010/HLCM-UNDG/1/Add.1. In that context, further prioritization of activities might be necessary;

(d) Reaffirmed the commitment by member organizations to take on the responsibility of leading and supporting activities within each network, through working groups organized in clusters of interested organizations;

(e) Requested the CEB secretariat to develop a prioritized High-level Committee on Management programme of work, on the basis of the results of the survey and of the implementation plan for the recommendations of the above-mentioned joint mission, for consideration by the Committee at its next session.

V. Security and safety of staff

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

21. The Committee received the regular briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security on the current situation of security and safety for United Nations system staff and on the nature and relevance of emerging threats.

22. The briefing provided numerous statistics on the number of attacks against United Nations and humanitarian workers, which have significantly increased over the last 10 years. Illustrating the worse attacks against civilian personnel during 2009 and 2010, a comparison was offered between United Nations casualties of violence and national crime rates, which indicated a homicide rate for United Nations civilian personnel disproportionately higher than the average rate, especially in high-threat locations.

23. Despite an overall increase in civilian casualties in high-threat locations in 2009, the lower rate of casualties reported for 2010 (to date), demonstrated that when there are investments in security, especially in highest threat countries, despite the sometimes high costs, such investments can produce results.

24. Although an analysis of significant security incidents in 2009 indicated that United Nations national personnel as a comparative percentage were not quite as affected, in hard numbers and on a daily basis, the Under-Secretary-General confirmed that many more national than international staff continued to be impacted by significant security incidents. It was therefore vital to provide resources to ensure that national staff received the requisite levels of security training.

25. Reference was made to the fact that there were notable improvements in the manner in which the Department of Safety and Security was able to gather information relating to security incident statistics from multiple sources. This allowed for more accurate reporting and comparative analyses. However, it still remained a challenge to obtain reliable facts and figures.

26. The Committee was informed of the efforts undertaken by the Department of Safety and Security to secure necessary donor funds to continue to support the “Saving lives together” initiative — a pilot programme in which the United Nations shares threat information with non-governmental organizations around the world.

27. In concluding his opening presentation, the Under-Secretary-General highlighted the need for the United Nations to achieve the goal of finding ways to stay and continue to operate, especially in high-threat locations. In that respect, he cautioned against the United Nations becoming risk-adverse and stated that security should not drive decisions on how many personnel should be in a given location. It was important to determine programme criticality first, followed by a review of the modalities in place to support programme needs, including a review as to whether security considerations could be accommodated. Capping numbers of personnel on the ground should not be an arbitrary determination driven solely by security concerns.

28. The Committee took note of the briefing by the Under-Secretary-General and expressed its deep appreciation for his dedication and efforts towards supporting acceptable approaches to continue delivering on the mandates of United Nations organizations, along the CEB-stated principle of “how to stay”, and based on a fundamental analysis of programme criticality.

B. Security level system

29. In preparation for the implementation of the new security level system as from 1 January 2011, a task force of the Human Resources Network and of the Department of Safety and Security, with the participation of ICSC, was established to examine the human resources implications related to the operationalization of the new system.

30. The Human Resources Network spokesperson briefed the Committee on the status of that work, which addressed the following areas: (a) security evacuation/relocation; (b) definition of non-family duty stations; (c) hazard pay; and (d) updating the brochures on security-related entitlements.

31. The conclusions of this work were expected at the end of October 2010, so that any required communication and training to organizations, field offices and staff members could take place in time for the system’s launch date of 1 January 2011.

32. Concurrently with that effort and in response to a request by the Committee at its nineteenth session, the Department of Safety and Security produced two reports (CEB/2010/HLCM/18 and Add.1) on the changes in the decision-making process with respect to the security level system, with the roles and responsibilities of all actors involved. The two documents emphasize that the decision-making structure as currently in place under the security phase system would remain unchanged when the system would be fully implemented.

33. The Under-Secretary-General further informed the Committee that considerable training activities on the new security level system had been conducted around the world, for Governments, Member States, staff and managers, and that a list of frequently asked questions was currently being developed by the Department of Safety and Security to ensure an even greater understanding of the new system. He reiterated that the security level system was essentially a threat rating system which would provide for an accurate way of determining threats. While one purpose of the system was to empower designated officials and security management teams to better describe the threat and in turn conduct better security risks assessments and devise necessary countermeasures, as well as determine the acceptable level of risk, the Department of Safety and Security would continue to act as the oversight body. It was emphasized that the determination of the security level system and the security risk assessment needed to be performed at the field level, as the best security information was available on the ground. By the end of 2010, it was expected that every single country or area would have a security level assigned to it.

34. The Committee:

(a) Took note of the progress report and of the issues identified by the Human Resources Network Task Force and looked forward to receiving the final recommendations of the Task Force, to be reviewed and endorsed by the Human Resources Network, by the end of October 2010;

(b) Took note of the briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security and endorsed the documents on security management decision-making and the security level system and on relocation and evacuation decisions after the introduction of the security level system into the security risk management process (CEB/2010/HLCM/18 and Add.1).

C. Programme criticality

35. A high-level working group was formed in June 2010 following the request by the Committee at its nineteenth session to develop a framework for determining programme criticality within the guidelines for acceptable risk. The working group includes representatives of the CEB member organizations with large field operations, namely, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), WFP, UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as well as the Department of Safety and Security, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The Director of the Development Coordination Office and the Vice-Chair of the High-level Committee on Management also participate in the working group.

36. The Chair of the working group reported to the Committee on the status of their activities, underlining some key revisions made in the United Nations security management system in response to the report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide, that were critical for improving programme delivery.

37. The new security risk management model places the “programme assessment” part first in the process. That approach puts programme goals in the forefront and adds extra emphasis on the fact that the security risk management is meant to enable programme delivery. With “programme assessment” coming at the beginning of the process and focusing on what we want to do, “programme criticality” assessment comes at the end of the security risk management process and focuses on what can be done in the light of the risks faced.

38. A second improvement to the security management system is the development of the guidelines for acceptable risk. The security management system now acknowledges that all risks cannot be totally eliminated, so the United Nations system must be willing to accept whatever risk remains after risk-mitigation strategies are applied (the remaining risk is called “residual risk”). The guidelines for acceptable risk go one step further and describe how the United Nations can accept higher levels of residual risk. In that way, the risks the United Nations takes are “balanced” with the programme importance (called “programme criticality”). Another important aspect of the acceptable risk model is that if organizations need to take more risk to implement a very important programme, a higher level of decision-making is needed.

39. The objective of the Working Group on Programme Criticality is therefore to develop a missing element of the acceptable risk model, that is, clear definitions to support the guidelines for acceptable risk as well as a clear, agreed-upon framework to discuss or decide on programme criticality.

40. The Working Group set a very ambitious timeline and, taking into consideration the technical nature of its review, it also established a technical working group comprising members from UNDP, UNHCR, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, WFP, WHO, the Department of Safety and Security and UNICEF² to review the draft definitions and report back to the Working Group on Programme Criticality.

41. At its last meeting, on 17 September, the Working Group on Programme Criticality discussed the findings of the technical working group and agreed on the following:

- (a) Acceptable risk is based on residual risk;
- (b) The concept of programme criticality is one component of the acceptable risk model. To that end, the “programme criticality framework” should be developed to fit logically into the acceptable risk model;
- (c) Understanding that the terms “extreme”, “critical”, “essential” and “all” have been used to describe “programme criticality” levels, and that the current definitions are vague and may not match common language used within the United Nations and donor community, there is a need for clarification of the terms and type of activities that could take place (which would be situation dependent as requirements vary from one area to another);

² UNFPA was accepted as an additional member of the technical working group during the discussion.

(d) The concept of a “level” system based on the acceptable risk model is the most appropriate and it is recommended that the current terminology be replaced with a level system (level “Unacceptable” plus levels 1 to 4. Criteria for the determination of the levels are still being finalized);

(e) The establishment of an “Executive” body (i.e., an “Executive Group on Programmes”) is recommended to assist rapid decision-making along the same lines as the Executive Group on Security;

(f) The draft concept must be “tested” as part of the process. Although the list has yet to be formalized, countries that have been identified for pilot-testing may include:

- Somalia
- Yemen (its inclusion is pending owing to a number of high-level delegations travelling to the region in November and December 2010)
- Pakistan (to be included no earlier than January 2011)
- The pilot testing would include those organizations and secretariat departments with operations in the above-named countries, namely, WFP, UNHCR, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Political Affairs, WHO, UNDP and UNICEF

42. The expected end result is a “programme criticality framework” that is user-friendly and logically integrated into the acceptable risk model. The framework should result in a process that ensures the programmes and personnel that remain in country are working on the highest priority functions and programmes in accordance with the strategic objectives of the United Nations system.

43. The Committee thanked the Chair of the Working Group on Programme Criticality and all organizations/departments that were contributing to it with extreme dedication and took note with appreciation of the considerable progress made by the Working Group, and looked forward to considering its conclusions at its spring 2011 session, before submission for approval by CEB.

D. Other issues from the Inter-Agency Security Management Network meeting

44. The Committee reviewed a number of other issues from the June 2010 meeting of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, leading to the following decisions.

45. The Committee:

(a) Took note with appreciation of the ongoing development by the Department of Safety and Security of a United Nations use of force policy, which had already been vetted by the Office of Legal Affairs and was currently under review by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR);

(b) Noted that policies and standardized training programmes on “close protection” were being developed;

(c) Took note of the update provided on the policy on the safety and security of United Nations premises and looked forward to a full report on that issue at its next regular session, with due consideration to the issue of building standards for the construction of United Nations buildings;

(d) Recognized that the establishment of the security staff screening and vetting policy was a major issue impacting on a cross-section of disciplines, for example, human resources, legal, political and, as such, welcomed the proposal by the Inter-Agency Security Management Network that all relevant United Nations system parties be engaged in formulating such policy. To that end, the High-level Committee on Management proposed the establishment of a working group under its auspices to move this issue forward. Consultations among organizations to form this group would be led by the CEB secretariat;

(e) Looked forward to a speedy conclusion of the work of the Finance and Budget Network Working Group on Safety and Security Costs, taking into consideration the objectives of transparency in the budgeting process and in the usage of the resources subject to cost-sharing, the alignment of such a budgeting process with those of member organizations, the sharing of information among organizations on their expenditure on safety and security, the agreement on a fair methodology to apportion the jointly financed costs, and a recognition of the political difficulty inherent in attempting to cover such jointly financed security costs through the regular budget of the United Nations;

(f) Took note of the establishment by the Inter-Agency Security Management Network of a working group to examine the issue of private security companies and private military security companies, and of the obligation of the Department of Safety and Security to provide the lead input into the United Nations Secretariat's Policy Committee on this matter;

(g) Endorsed the recommendation of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network that the integrated security clearance and tracking system be renamed the travel request information process (TRIP). It further endorsed the objective of requiring that all official travel be registered in TRIP, on the basis of full integration between TRIP and each organization's travel system, by the end of 2011.

VI. Benefits, entitlements and insurance related to service-incurred injury, illness, death and disability

46. An analysis of the treatment of United Nations personnel in the event of service-incurred injury, illness, death and disability represented the conclusive step of the three-year effort by the High-level Committee on Management Steering Committee on Safety and Security, led by the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, to review and revise the United Nations security management system in response to the recommendations of the report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security.

47. In response to the request by the Committee at its spring 2010 session, the CEB secretariat prepared a comprehensive "map" showing all current benefits, entitlements and insurance in the United Nations system related to service-incurred injury, illness, death and disability, including in the event of malicious acts. The

map covers all personnel categories: international staff; national and locally recruited staff; and international and locally recruited non-staff personnel.

48. A consultant funded from the plan of action for the harmonization of business practices was also hired to identify the current gaps in coverage and make recommendations on how to address them. The Human Resources Network spokesperson introduced the recommendations included in the comprehensive report prepared by the consultant (CEB/2010/HLCM/21 and Add.1), and provided an assessment with respect to the current situation as outlined in the map.

49. Committee members expressed appreciation for the comprehensive work undertaken, underlining how decisions on this subject would have far-reaching implications. Specifically, an in-depth analysis of the issue of “non-staff”, with respect to definitions, statistics, principles and policies regarding organizations’ responsibilities and liabilities, as well as detailed financial implications of any proposed scenarios, was considered necessary before proceeding further on the matter;

50. The Committee:

(a) Reaffirmed its strong commitment to the safety and security of all personnel working under the flag of the United Nations;

(b) Acknowledged that, in the past three years, the Committee and CEB had considered and adopted a number of new mechanisms, procedures and tools which, all together, represented a major step forward towards the redesign and strengthening of a United Nations security management system that responds to the changed, increased challenges of United Nations system operations;

(c) Recognized with great appreciation the fundamental role in this work of the High-level Committee on Management Steering Committee on Safety and Security, of its Chair and of all the stakeholders engaged in such process, in particular the Department of Safety and Security;

(d) Decided that the Steering Committee on Safety and Security would cease to continue. In the future, the Steering Committee could be reconvened on a strictly ad hoc basis, if circumstances required;

(e) Expressed appreciation to the Human Resources Network for the considerable amount of work carried out and requested the Network to undertake an in-depth analysis of the subject of “non-staff” personnel, with respect to definitions, statistics, principles and policies regarding organizations’ responsibilities and liabilities, in consultation with the Legal Network, and to subsequently develop proposals with alternative scenarios and detailed financial implications, including options for cost-sharing between the organization and the employee, in consultation with the Finance and Budget Network;

(f) Endorsed the submission for approval by the General Assembly of the proposed measures for improvement of the scheme contained in appendix D to the United Nations Staff Rules, as reflected below, and subject to final refinements following consultations among the organizations affected by the measures:³

³ The recommendations for changes to appendix D which require staff-management consultation were discussed at the June 2010 meeting of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee and agreed upon. All the recommendations are to be reviewed and approved by the General

- To increase the spouse benefit from 40 per cent to 50 per cent of a staff member's pensionable remuneration and to increase the maximum benefit in the case of dependent children to 75 per cent of the staff member's pensionable remuneration (**recommendation 4 (a)**)
- To update the permanent disability lump-sum benefits to align with the individual staff member's pensionable remuneration with maximum P-4 step VI and minimum General Service-2 (**recommendation 4 (b)**)
- The malicious act insurance policy should continue to provide separate coverage from appendix D (**recommendation 4 (c)**)
- Appendix D should be applicable only to United Nations organizations' staff members governed by the United Nations Staff Rules (**recommendation 4 (d)**)
- Appendix D rules should include a more specific definition of what circumstances and injuries are covered or excluded (**recommendation 4 (e)**)
- The revised compensation framework should provide for enhanced communication and training of benefits and procedures to staff and managers (**recommendation 4 (f)**)
- The United Nations should explore commercial insurance mechanisms (stop loss insurances) to mitigate the risk of a catastrophic loss (**recommendation 4 (g)**)
- The revised appendix D should provide for the conversion of periodic payments under a certain limit into a lump sum. It should also include provisions for expediting the handling of claims for catastrophic events, including advance payments (**recommendation 4 (h)**)

(g) Agreed to move forward with the following recommendations which did not entail cost implications:

- **Recommendation 2.** That the existing education grant provided to eligible staff members be extended until the end of the current school year enrolment for dependent children upon the death of the staff member. This would harmonize practices in all United Nations organizations
- **Recommendation 6 (a).** That, in cases of delay in processing payments under appendix D to the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, organizations provide interim advance compensation payments to affected staff and their families such as a three-months' salary advance to be recovered from the insurance compensation
- **Recommendation 6 (b).** That organizations establish a coordinated focal contact within their organization to provide staff and their families affected by malicious acts, natural disasters and other emergencies with relevant information, advice and compensation and to assist them in filing and tracking their compensation claims.

Assembly since these changes constitute modifications to the United Nations Staff Rules. Also consultations are required with the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies governed under the United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations.

VII. Administration of justice

51. One year after the launch of the new system of administration of justice, the High-level Committee on Management invited the Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs to brief the Committee on the report of the Secretary-General on administration of justice that was under finalization for submission to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

52. In May 2010, the Committee had convened a meeting, chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Management, to discuss the experience to date in the implementation of the new system of administration of justice, to bring to the attention of colleagues issues and challenges encountered so far and to devise common approaches to address them.

53. The Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs introduced the content of the report of the Secretary-General (A/65/373 and Corr.1), which responded to a request by the General Assembly, in resolution 63/253, to conduct a review of the new system, as well as to another request (resolution 64/223) to provide data and information on the functioning of the new system and related matters. While the report contains six sections and four annexes, the briefing focused on the three core sections of the report (sections II, III and IV). Section II provides an overview of the structure of the new system of administration of justice, including a summary of the first year of operations, and section III responds to individual queries of the General Assembly.

54. Section IV of the report provides the views of the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer on significant issues that may have financial implications and an impact on the interests of the Organization. This section surveys the emerging jurisprudence of the Dispute Tribunal and the Appeals Tribunal.

55. Under the heading of general issues, the report raises three main matters: the relevance of the Administrative Tribunal jurisprudence for the new tribunals; the scope of the Secretary-General's discretion in matters of administration; and concerns regarding the harmonization of proceedings before the Dispute Tribunal.

56. With respect to the Dispute Tribunal in particular, the report raises a variety of issues for consideration by the General Assembly, including issues relating to the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, the utility of introducing a mechanism to expeditiously address non-meritorious claims, the use of alternative means, such as videoconferencing, for giving testimony, the establishment of a mechanism for maintaining the confidentiality of certain documents used in the proceedings, and the remedies awarded by the Tribunal. With respect to the Appeals Tribunal, the report suggests the introduction of a mechanism to dismiss appeals and an amendment to the Tribunal's statute to extend the deadline for filing appeals.

57. The Under-Secretary-General for Management, who had also contributed to the drafting of the Secretary-General's report, indicated that the Department of Management had begun developing resources to disseminate lessons learned within the first year of operation of the new system of administration of justice. The first volume of a guide for managers examines systemic issues discerned from an analysis of the cases, with a focus on the Dispute Tribunal's jurisprudence on the non-renewal of fixed-term appointments and the termination of permanent appointments owing to the abolishment of posts. Additional guides will be issued

three to four times a year, and each volume will focus on one or more subjects arising from the jurisprudence. These guides not only provide a detailed interpretation of the Organization's policies, but are also intended to illustrate how these policies have been applied in specific cases. The second volume will cover staff selection processes and procedures, and was expected to be ready by the end of October 2010.

58. Two main lessons could be derived from the Dispute Tribunal jurisprudence: first, the importance of compliance with the Organization's rules and procedures, since in the majority of cases where the manager was found to have violated the rights of staff members, the Tribunal had determined that the manager had failed to follow internal rules and procedures; secondly, the necessity to document well all decisions relating to staff members' terms and conditions of appointment at the time decisions that may be contested are made.

59. In concluding her remarks, the Under-Secretary-General provided some lessons learned on practices of informal conflict resolution, noting that many cases going before the formal system could be resolved informally if managers were more engaged in conflict resolution on a timely basis and sought help from the Ombudsman's office as a first step.

60. During the discussion, UNDP noted that their increased investment in awareness-building among staff and managers about acceptable conduct and proactive handling of issues before formal appeals had resulted in a reduced number of requests for management evaluations. In addition, UNDP indicated that it had developed online legal and ethics training courses mandatory for all staff and that such courses were available to United Nations organizations on a cost-recovery basis.

61. The Committee took note of the briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and by the Under-Secretary-General for Management, and looked forward to the continuation of the useful forum for sharing of information and coordination of management approaches on this subject.

VIII. Decisions and recommendations and issues under review by the International Civil Service Commission

62. This thematic session was devoted to providing the Committee with an in-depth overview of the most critical issues that had recently been the object of decisions and recommendations by ICSC, as well as of important issues under current review. The aim was to highlight issues that have considerable actual or potential impact on the conditions of service of United Nations system staff, to increase their understanding and awareness among High-level Committee members, with a view to raising their profile within organizations during or in advance of their discussion in the Human Resources Network, in the Commission and in the respective governing bodies.

63. The overview proposed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and by the Human Resources Network covered the following subjects: job classification system; harmonization of conditions of service in non-family duty stations; education grant: review of the level and of the

methodology; inter-agency mobility; and mobility and hardship — review of the scheme.

64. In the ensuing discussion, several organizations expressed their concern regarding the impact of the ICSC decision on the harmonization of conditions of service in non-family duty stations, and the negative effect it might have on the abilities of agencies to recruit and retain staff in those difficult duty stations. In this respect, it was underlined that, although there were merits to harmonization of approaches, these should be always evaluated as means towards the objectives that organizations' mandates required them to pursue.

65. Appreciation was also expressed to the Commission for developing a framework and a methodology, whose application would result, if approved by the General Assembly, in important benefits for a considerably large number of United Nations staff.

66. On this subject, the Vice-Chair of the Commission conveyed that there was great sympathy for staff serving in these difficult duty stations and that the discussions had not been easy. However, the objective of the Commission was to present a proposal that would be favourably considered by the General Assembly. The Vice-Chair also indicated that the first step would be to harmonize the designation of duty stations, and that the proposals on rest and recuperation would also provide additional benefits. Regarding the review of the education grant methodology, the Vice-Chair assured that the Human Resources Network would be consulted and involved in some capacity.

67. The Committee:

(a) While expressing appreciation to ICSC for developing a framework and a methodology to determine conditions of service in non-family duty stations, noted the concerns of a number of agencies, as also expressed by the staff associations, regarding negative impact of the ICSC decision on the harmonization of such conditions of service on frontline humanitarian operations and on staff;

(b) Noting that one of the barriers to inter-agency mobility was the lack of implementation by a number of organizations of the "Inter-Agency Mobility Accord" approved by the High-level Committee on Management and CEB in 2005, urged the Legal Network to provide a final and consolidated proposal, agreed by all legal offices of member organizations, for revisions to the Accord. The proposal should be finalized in time for submission and review by the Committee at its spring 2011 session;

(c) Welcomed the new job classification system for the General Service category as a positive step towards harmonization;

(d) Urged ICSC to include organizations in the review of the methodology of the education grant as they have extensive experience in using the existing methodology. The Committee also noted that financial considerations should not be driving the review of the education grant and other entitlements;

(e) Requested the Human Resources Network for an overview of all issues under consideration by ICSC, with implications and next steps, in order to determine when the Committee needed to be engaged.

IX. High-level Committee on Management networks

A. Procurement

68. The Committee received an update by the Director of the UNDP Procurement Support Office on the recent activities of the High-level Committee on Management Procurement Network, particularly on the status of the vendor eligibility project and on other initiatives funded through the plan of action for the harmonization of business practices.

69. A common framework for vendor eligibility, to be applied separately by each United Nations system agency, has been finalized under the lead of UNDP and was endorsed by the Procurement Network at its meeting held from 22 to 24 September 2010. This is the first initiative funded through the plan of action for the harmonization of business practices; its aim is to produce procedures, guidelines and tools on how to deal with unethical vendors in a systematic and agreed manner, while respecting the final decisions of individual agencies and organizations, and how to share debarment decisions with due diligence requirements to facilitate cross-debarment across agencies. Upon the Committee's approval, the framework would become the reference model for adoption across the United Nations system.

70. At its fall 2010 session, which was attended by a record 40 agencies, the Procurement Network deliberated and moved forward on several topics. The project on harmonization of procurement practices at the headquarters and country levels, which is part of the above-mentioned plan of action, was progressing well.

71. While some efforts on greening procurement had been put on hold pending deliberations by the General Assembly on the subject, the Network was ensuring that other pillars of sustainable procurement received the needed attention. Appreciation was expressed for the support offered by ILO to lend their professional expertise in this area.

72. Business seminars continued to be undertaken by the Working Group on Supplier Access, with funding from donor Governments and, for seminars held in developing countries, from the United Nations Secretariat and other agencies. As that approach, while positive, was not providing the required degree of outreach to developing countries and as it was not considered sustainable, the Procurement Network requested funding for the market outreach and training programme with the International Chamber of Commerce-World Chambers of Commerce. This project was considered for funding by the High-level Committee on Management Steering Committee for the Harmonization of Business Processes, which recommended that it should be revised for further review.

73. The Network had started discussions on modalities and approaches to improve collaboration in the procurement of such common goods as vehicles, information technology equipment and insurance. The Network was exploring options for carrying collaborative purchase activities at the corporate level.

74. The Committee:

(a) Took note with appreciation of the recent work of the Procurement Network, particularly with respect to the initiatives developed under the High-level Committee on Management plan of action on the harmonization of business

practices, and asked to accelerate progress in the harmonization of procurement practices;

(b) Took note with appreciation of the considerable progress made in the development of a model policy framework for determining vendor eligibility;

(c) Endorsed in principle the approach and structure of the proposed model policy framework as endorsed by the Procurement Network at its meeting from 22 to 24 September 2010, subject to final refinements and adjustments to be suggested by the Legal Network following a consultative process to be completed in time for submission of the final document for approval by the Committee at its spring 2011 session, at the latest;

(d) Requested the Network to develop actionable proposals for consideration by the Committee at its spring 2011 session on joint procurement of common goods.

B. Finance and budget

75. The Committee's Vice-Chair welcomed, in a videoconference from Geneva, the WHO Controller, new Co-Chair of the Finance and Budget Network and co-lead of the Working Group on Common Treasury Services.

76. The Network Co-Chair was joined for his briefing on the common treasury services project by the Treasurer of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and co-lead of the project, in video link from Rome. This project, undertaken under the plan of action for the harmonization of business practices, is at the stage of finalizing the procurement process for conducting a six-month feasibility study to identify and prioritize common service opportunities, evaluate the costs and benefits of those services and identify major divergences and legal framework options for the delivery of common services.

77. A web-based treasury knowledge-sharing platform has already been developed and implemented, with the active participation of 23 United Nations system organizations. It is a valuable tool that helps to resolve specific problems, for example, cash management, or payments issues following the earthquake in Haiti, currency regulations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and issues on bank credit ratings.

78. The Committee then received a detailed briefing by the Deputy Controller and other Network Co-Chair on the progress of the International Public Accounting Standards (IPSAS) Task Force and on the current main areas of activities of the Finance and Budget Network.

79. Eight organizations are planning to adopt IPSAS in 2010 and they are currently in the most critical implementation phase. System-wide support for the implementation of IPSAS has continued in the areas of accounting policies and guidance, coordination and communication activities.

80. The Steering Committee of the Task Force has initiated an external review on modalities for the continuation of system-wide support for IPSAS beyond 2011. Complete results of the external review should be available for the next meeting of the High-level Committee and will produce responses and recommendations concerning: the revised strategic direction and workplan for 2010-2011; modalities

for system-wide support beyond 2011; the role and activities of the Task Force and the IPSAS project team; and future resource requirements.

81. The system-wide team, which remains significantly understaffed, continued to monitor IPSAS Board activities. A framework to guide bilateral discussions with external auditors, based on the experience of WFP with the United Kingdom National Audit Office, has been developed, as well as an approach to manage emerging accounting policy diversity.

82. The recent activities of the Finance and Budget Network included the launch of the implementation phase of a system-wide financial statistics database and reporting system, a project undertaken under the plan of action for the harmonization of business practices; the preliminary conclusions of the work led by WFP on jointly financed safety and security costs (see sect. V below on the safety and security of staff); a proposal for harmonized expense codes for inter-agency financial reporting; and revised Working Guidelines for the United Nations Operational Rate of Exchange.

83. The Committee:

(a) Took note of the progress report on IPSAS, acknowledged advancement of the external review of the system-wide support project and looked forward to considering its recommendations at its spring 2011 session;

(b) Took note of the update on the common treasury services project and looked forward to the completion of a detailed feasibility study, inclusive of all the necessary analysis for an accurate evaluation of the recommendations that the study would produce. In that respect, the Committee reaffirmed its strong commitment to consider such recommendations as soon as ready, with a view to moving to the implementation stage of the project;

(c) Committed the active participation of member organizations to the provision of the necessary support and information to the selected consultancy firm in the course of the feasibility study for the common treasury services project;

(d) Endorsed the Finance and Budget Network's decision to approve harmonized inter-agency reporting expense categories to take effect as at 1 January 2012, and encouraged the Network to look into the possibility of also achieving greater harmonization in donor reporting;

(e) Endorsed the decision of the Finance and Budget Network to approve the modified Working Guidelines for the United Nations Operational Rate of Exchange, taking effect as at 1 October 2010.

C. Information and communications technology

84. The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Network Chair introduced the report of the CEB secretariat on the common directory, noting that the concept of a "white pages" directory of United Nations staff had been under consideration for many years, but that the technical and political environment had now matured enough to achieve this facility. Before reviewing the details of the current status of the directory, the Network Chair reiterated that the value of the directory increased with agency participation, and therefore hoped that agencies that had not already joined the directory would do so shortly.

85. The CEB secretariat Senior Adviser on Information Management Policy Coordination then presented an overview of the directory, reviewing its functionality, current participation, the challenges it faces and potential future directions. After demonstrating the value of using a “virtual” approach, which allows each agency to maintain its own data, the presentation noted that 15 agencies currently participate in the directory, which reached approximately 70 per cent of all United Nations staff. The presentation concluded that agencies needed to ensure that they provide all the data required (e-mail and telephone contact) and indicated possible future directions for the directory, including adding additional data items, closer integration with other communications systems and developing a more efficient mechanism for authentication to information services.

86. The Chair also briefed the Committee on other priority activities of the Network, specifically information security and country-level ICT coherence. She noted that the Network had successfully created, for the first time, a system-wide community of information security officers, which had been active in exchanging ideas and practices as well as continuing to work in the areas of awareness, incident response and policies and practices. The Chair concluded by noting that the Network also considered the progress made at the country level for coherence of ICT activities, and the importance of standardizing ICT components.

87. Agencies expressed support for the initiatives of the ICT Network, and many agencies not currently part of the common directory indicated a willingness to join. During the discussion, agencies expressed interest in further exploring issues surrounding the use of “social network” services. The ICT Network Chair indicated that this was as much an issue for communications and legal services within agencies as it was for ICT.

88. The Committee:

(a) Took note with appreciation of the report on the status of the common directory project, reiterated the value of a system-wide contact service, and called upon all members to make participation in the directory a priority;

(b) Took note of the continuing work of the ICT Network, particularly in the area of information security;

(c) Called upon the ICT Network to work closely with the Procurement Network to develop proposals for common procurement in the ICT area;

(d) Requested that at the next meeting of the High-level Committee a discussion be organized on social networking tools, including the legal, technical and public relations aspects of their use, and relevant agencies’ experiences.

D. Human resources

89. The Committee received a briefing by the consultant contracted by the Human Resources Network to undertake the review of contractual arrangements, Staff Regulations and Rules, policies and practices. This work, which is part of the plan of action for the harmonization of business practices, is near completion and a final report is expected for October 2010.

90. The review had focused on contractual arrangements, recruitment and promotion (including the issue of internal and external candidates), job

classification, and performance appraisal. The joint United Nations Development Group-High-level Committee on Management mission had provided a more concrete appreciation of issues at the field level, as well as of their ramifications and connections to larger political and technical issues, notably in the area of budget and finance.

91. The Human Resources Network spokesperson also reported on other subjects discussed at its July 2010 session and, particularly, on the status and budget of the “UN Cares” programme, which had been recently awarded the prestigious “UN 21 Award” by the Secretary-General; the work permit strategy of the United Nations Dual Career and Staff Mobility Programme; the implementation of the policy statement on persons with disabilities in the United Nations workplace; and the proposal on personal status/domestic partners.

92. The Committee:

(a) Thanked the Human Resources Network for the interim report on the review of contractual arrangements, Staff Regulations and Rules, policies and practices, and expressed its support and commitment to the work undertaken. It further requested the Network to thoroughly review the recommendations to be proposed in the final report, as well as all their implications, before submission to the Committee for decision and agreement on an implementation plan;

(b) Urged the consultant and the Human Resources Network to give due consideration to the aspect of the simplification and modernization of regulations and rules, policies and practices, when formulating recommendations for the Committee;

(c) Took note of the briefing from the Human Resources Network, and strongly urged all those organizations that had not yet provided their contribution to the Committee-approved budgets of the “UN Cares” and Dual Career and Staff Mobility programmes to do so;

(d) Fully supported the implementation of policies on persons with disabilities by all organizations, and requested the Human Resources Network to look at ways to measure results, also looking at best practices from the private sector;

(e) Endorsed the principle of a “common approach” to spouse/partner work permit negotiations, and the launch of pilots of the common approach in Italy and Malaysia under the terms of a draft joint negotiating position;

(f) Took note of the Human Resources Network proposal on the issue of personal status and domestic partners, and endorsed the Network’s recommendation that the organizations that are willing and ready to proceed further with this issue may move ahead in accordance with their own governance procedures.

X. Support to staff and their families in emergency situations — lessons learned in Haiti

93. The Under-Secretary-General for Management presented a briefing on the study undertaken by the Department of Management on lessons learned from the

Haiti crisis response. The objective of the study was to strengthen existing policies and administrative mechanisms and build capacity for more effective crisis response and victim support. The Department was currently working on the implementation of the plan of action.

94. The Under-Secretary-General highlighted six issues related to the support to staff and their families in emergency situations. These included:

(a) **Capacity-building.** A small Emergency Preparedness and Support Team was established in May 2010 to provide and coordinate essential support to staff survivors and the families of those who perished or are injured as a result of malicious acts, natural disasters and other emergencies;

(b) **Accounting for staff.** Two challenges of business continuity planning are the lack of a system to account for staff and the need to strengthen the system to ensure access to vital records. Business continuity management needs to be embedded in planning and in the organization's culture;

(c) **Medical response.** The concept of the United Nations Medical Response Team was successfully activated during the crisis within 48 hours, but longer-term funding for training and deployment remains a challenge;

(d) **Family focal points.** These were assigned to each family of international staff that perished in the earthquake. Group focal points were identified for national staff and military and civil police personnel. Experience has shown, however, that this demanding task should be taken on by trained staff;

(e) **Peer support programme.** This concept has recently been developed to provide a suitable standby capacity of trained volunteers to render basic support;

(f) **United Nations Memorial and Recognition Fund.** On 2 August 2010, a Secretary-General's bulletin was issued on the United Nations Memorial and Recognition Fund (ST/SGB/2010/8), updating the terms of reference of the former United Nations Nobel Peace Prize Fund and broadening its scope and eligibility criteria. Guidelines are under preparation for the application and disbursement procedures for the Fund.

95. The Committee:

(a) Took note of the briefing with appreciation;

(b) Requested that the United Nations new Emergency Support Team and the Human Resources Network Rapid Response Team, once established, should leverage each others' capacities and avoid a duplication of efforts.

XI. Mandatory age of separation

96. In 2009, ICSC considered a document prepared by the Human Resources Network concerning the possibility of changing the mandatory age of separation. Upon review of the document, the Commission requested its secretariat to prepare a comprehensive report on the possibility of changing the mandatory age of separation, taking into account the human resources policies and all relevant pension aspects.

97. The ICSC secretariat subsequently requested the High-level Committee to develop a position paper providing the views and recommendations of organizations.

On the basis of the information received, the secretariat would prepare a comprehensive report and would make recommendations to the Commission for its decision.

98. The Human Resources Network had also agreed with the Commission to examine innovative and flexible modalities in applying the mandatory age of separation and report to ICSC with further proposals.

99. The Committee:

(a) Agreed to form a working group that would review, also in consultation with the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, all aspects of the issue, including innovative and flexible modalities in applying the mandatory age of separation, as they will be developed by the Human Resources Network, and submit the results of its work to the next session of the Committee;

(b) Requested the CEB secretariat to undertake consultations with member organizations on the composition of the working group and to establish it as soon as possible. In that respect, the Committee noted with appreciation the availability of WFP to provide leadership and support to this work.

XII. Other business

100. The next session of the Committee would be organized in coordination with the spring 2011 session of CEB, currently scheduled for early April 2011. The possibility of hosting the meeting in a programme country would be explored.

Annex I

List of participants

Chair:	Josette Sheeran (World Food Programme)
Vice-Chair:	Jan Beagle (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS)
High-level Committee on Management Secretary:	Remo Lalli (Chief Executives Board for Coordination secretariat)

Organization

United Nations	Angela Kane Under-Secretary-General, Department of Management
	Gregory Starr Under-Secretary-General, Department of Safety and Security
	Catherine Pollard Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Human Resources Management
	Stephen Mathias Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
	Jay Karia Deputy Controller, and Co-Chair of the Finance and Budget Network
	Antigoni Axenidou Deputy Director and Officer-in-Charge of the General Legal Division
	Brian Davey Director, Medical Services Division, and Medical Directors Working Group Spokesperson
	Ruth de Miranda Chief, Human Resources Policy Service and Human Resources Network Spokesperson
	Anne Marie Pinou Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security and Secretary of IASMN
	Joel Cohen Executive Officer for Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support
ILO	Patricia O'Donovan Executive Director, Management and Administration

Organization

FAO	Manoj Juneja Assistant Director-General, Corporate Services, Human Resources and Finance Department
UNESCO	Getachew Engida Deputy Director-General Helen Assefa Senior Executive Officer
WHO	Elilarasu Renganathan Director, Planning Resource Coordination and Performance Monitoring Nick Jeffreys Comptroller and Co-Chair of the Finance and Budget Network (by videoconference) Nicole Krüger Management Officer
World Bank	Robert van Pulley Director, General Services Department Robert Simpson Security Operations Officer Therese Ballard Manager, Procurement Unit Kin Gee Senior Insurance Officer
IMF	Min Zhu Special Adviser to the Managing Director Warren Young Chief Security Officer Ann Yang Assistant Director, Technology and General Services Department Anne van Wylick Assistant Director and Head of Language Services Michael Handelman Division Chief, Infrastructure Services Division Pamela Tripp-Melby Division Chief, Information Services Division

Organization

UPU	Pascal-Thierry Clivaz Director, Finance and Strategy
WMO	Joachim Müller Director, Resource Management Department
ITU	Richard Barr Chief, Administration and Finance Department
IMO	Andrew Winbow Director, Administrative Division
WIPO	Chitra Narayanaswamy Director ad interim, Resource Planning, Programme, Performance and Management Division
IFAD	Cheryl Morden Director, North America Office
	Munehiko Joya Director and Treasurer, Treasury Division (by videoconference)
UNIDO	Paul H. Makin Director of the Operational Support Services Branch and Deputy to the Managing Director of the Programme Support and General Management Division
	Shaukat Fareed Special Adviser to the Director-General on system-wide coherence
World Tourism Organization	José G. Blanch Director, Administration Division
IAEA	David Waller Deputy Director-General and Head of Management
UNAIDS	Jan Beagle Deputy Executive Director, Management and External Relations and HLCCM Vice-Chair
	Helena Eversole Director, Organizational Development Department
UNDP	Akiko Yuge Assistant Administrator and Director of Bureau of Management
	Irina Stavenscaia Botezatu Planning Adviser, Bureau of Management

Organization

UNICEF	Hilde Johnson Deputy Executive Director
	Omar Abdi Deputy Executive Director
	Terry Davis Principal Security Adviser, Office of Emergency Programmes
	Christopher Davids Senior Adviser on United Nations Coherence
WFP	Josette Sheeran Executive Director and High-level Committee on Management Chair
	Gina Casar Deputy Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer, Resource Management Accountability
	Diana Serrano Director, Human Resources Division and Human Resources Network Spokesperson
	Robert Opp Director, Business Innovation and Support
UNFPA	Mari Simonen Deputy Executive Director, and Chair of United Nations Development Group Advisory Group
	Subhash K. Gupta Director, Division for Management Services
	Sean Hand Director, Division of Human Resources and Human Resources Network Spokesperson
	Ronny Lindstrom Adviser, United Nations Reform
	Odyek Agona United Nations Reform Specialist
UNRWA	Laura Londén Director of Administrative Support
UNHCR	T. Alexander Aleinikoff Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees
UN-Habitat	Antoine King Director, Programme Support Division

Organization

UNOV/UNODC	Dennis Thatchaichawalit Director, Division for Management
UNEP	Paul Akiwumi Chief, Executive Office, Chef-de-Cabinet
ITC	Eva K. Murray Director, Division of Programme Support
United Nations Office for Project Services	Vitaly Vanshelboim Deputy Executive Director
United Nations System Staff College	Jafar Javan Deputy Director and Head of Programmes
UNCTAD	Angelo Galindo Special Assistant to the Secretary-General
United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office	Ashok Nigam Associate Director
ICSC	Wolfgang Stoeckl Vice-Chairman
FICSA	Mauro Pace President
	Veronique Allain Member of Executive Committee
CCISUA	Rita Wallace President
World Trade Organization	Mira Bacelj Human Resources Division
CTBTO Preparatory Commission	John S. Sequeira Director, Division of Administration
CEB	Thomas Stelzer Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, United Nations

Organization

CEB secretariat**Adnan Amin**

Director

Remo Lalli

Secretary, High-level Committee on Management

Marta Leichner-BoyceSenior Inter-Agency Adviser on Human Resources
Management**Ken Herman**Senior Adviser on Information Management Policy
Coordination**Dyane Dufresne-Klaus**

Consultant

Georgette MillerConsultant

Annex II

Checklist of documents

<i>Title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>
Revised provisional agenda — Twentieth session of the High-level Committee on Management	CEB/2010/HLCM/16/Rev.1
Provisional programme of work	CEB/2010/HLCM/16/Add.1
Overview and prioritization of High-level Committee on Management activities	CEB/2010/HLCM/25
Human resources entitlements and procedures with the new security level system	CEB/2010/HLCM/17
Security management decision-making and the security level system	CEB/2010/HLCM/18
Relocation and evacuation decisions after the introduction of the security level system into the security risk management process	CEB/2010/HLCM/18/Add.1
Terms of reference and programme of work of Programme Criticality Working Group	CEB/2010/HLCM/19
Report of the 22-25 June 2010 meeting of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network	CEB/2010/HLCM/20
Draft United Nations premises safety and security policy	CEB/2010/HLCM/27
Benefits, entitlements and insurance related to service-incurred injury, illness, death and disability	CEB/2010/HLCM/21
Comprehensive mapping of benefits and entitlements	CEB/2010/HLCM/21/Add.1
Administration of justice: minutes of the May 2010 meeting	CEB/2010/HLCM/23
Overview of decisions/recommendations and issues under review by the International Civil Service Commission	CEB/2010/HLCM/24
International Public Sector Accounting Standards progress report	CEB/2010/HLCM/26
Status report on common treasury services	CEB/2010/HLCM/29
Information and communications technology: common directory	CEB/2010/HLCM/28

<i>Title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>
Review of contractual arrangements, Staff Regulations and Rules, policies and practices: interim report	CEB/2010/HLCM/22
Mandatory age of separation: report of the fifty-seventh session of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund	Extract from the report
Mandatory age of separation: memo from the Executive Secretary of the International Civil Service Commission to the Secretary of the High-level Committee on Management	Letter from ICSC to HLCM
Report of the high-level United Nations Development Group-High-level Committee on Management mission	CEB/2010/HLCM-UNDG/1
Implementation plan	CEB/2010/HLCM-UNDG/1/Add.1

Annex III

Joint statement by the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System and the United Nations International Civil Servants Federation

(Delivered by Rita Ann Wallace, President of CCISUA)

Madame Chair, ladies and gentlemen, I am speaking on behalf of CCISUA and UNISERV.

Both Federations appreciate the opportunity to address you, but as we have said in the past, we deplore the fact that our interaction with you is limited to a “dialogue” of half an hour or so at the beginning of your meeting. Again, we reiterate that we are not the enemy of our management, and we believe that good staff-management relations would enhance the working environment of the United Nations and lead to a truly reformed Organization. Everything that you will discuss over the next three days will be of vital interest to staff; we have been involved in the discussion stages in Human Resources Network and in the various other forums; and everything that you decide will have an impact on us. It is not unreasonable for us to expect to be able to provide our input as you make your decisions.

We have a lot we would like to say on various items on the agenda, but would like to concentrate on security, contracts, conditions of service in the field, and staff management relations.

Security

As you know, we are participants of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, and therefore have been involved in the evolution of the new security framework. Indeed we have been firmly in support of the Organization’s effort to address the issues which were identified in the Brahimi report as it echoed the concerns we have been voicing for years at every opportunity we have been given, both as Federations and at the level of our individual member staff unions and associations. Among these are:

- The problem of offices which do not conform to the United Nations Minimum Operational Security Standards, or MOSS, as we tragically saw in the United Nations premises in Haiti, and three years ago in Algiers.
- The unequal treatment of national staff, and the lack of protection for them in the question of evacuation, rest and recuperation breaks, medical insurance, minimum operating residential security standards, and similar provisions.
- The need for increased professionalization of security personnel globally, both those in the management of security decisions, as well as those who are actually guarding United Nations staff and premises.
- The need for extra protection and United Nations vigilance in countries where staff are targeted for working for the United Nations. Member States must accept their responsibility for investigating and bringing to justice those who commit acts of violence against the United Nations or its staff and the United Nations must hold them accountable.

- The need to seriously examine the usefulness of placing staff in countries or areas in which the security environment makes effective United Nations work impossible; or in which the Government cannot or will not take seriously its responsibility for the security of United Nations staff.
- The additional risks to staff when Governments do not respect the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly those related to the privileges and immunities of the international civil service.

As we move to the new security level system we look forward to clarity on how the new security framework will affect staff in terms of evacuation, danger pay, etc. A key element in ensuring a good outcome will be adequate and effective communication. There is no doubt that as staff have been used to a particular way of handling security related matters, they should be adequately prepared for the changes. This is especially true for those who may be losing a long-standing hazard pay, and particularly lower level national staff for whom this has acted as a part of their remuneration system.

We are naturally very concerned about the issue of evacuation and relocation. At the moment, there is a certain lack of clarity surrounding what kind of situation would trigger a decision to evacuate or relocate staff, and who ultimately makes that decision. We are told that the chain of command will remain the same, but it seems likely that confusion will result from the changes of security phases to security levels, and therefore staff may be put at risk. We would like the responsibilities and accountabilities very clearly delineated among the security decision makers. While we acknowledge that there is no cookie cutter solution to complex security issues, and that each duty station should be assessed individually, we do not want the new flexibility to lead to situations in which staff are left to “stay” in a location which puts them and the Organization’ s mission in jeopardy.

In addition, we are being told that we are moving to a “post-Brahimi” United Nations, but it must be noted that the security of national staff is still an issue which has not moved satisfactorily since 2005. As the Inter-Agency Security Management Network report you will be discussing puts it:

“It was noted that specific measures to be taken in respect of those recommendations relating to national staff were yet to be included in the updated matrix. Although extensive work had been done by the HR Network on producing information brochures on security-related entitlements and benefits, it was noted that these had not yet been distributed to staff at large, in part due to the fact that the brochures still remained to be made ‘organization-specific’ and in part because changes in the UNSMS, such as the new SLS would need to be reflected in the brochures. While the latter could be done by DSS, the IASMN members were encouraged to ensure that their respective HR managers make the brochures organization-specific and distribute them to staff at large.”

Some work has been done, but not enough, and not perceptibly, as far as staff in the field are concerned. For example, they have been asking for the organization’ s help so they can secure their homes. No consensus seems to have yet been reached that this support can or should be offered. We would go so far as to say that to date all indications are that once again our organizations have shown that the matters which affect national staff are of little importance to them. All-out

efforts are needed, but we have been subjected to a process which could be summed up as “wait a bit and then wait a bit more”. The Brahimi recommendations should have been the perfect moment. Yet we are moving “post-Brahimi” without fixing the issues affecting two thirds of our staff.

Contractual arrangements

Madame Chair, ladies and gentlemen, it should go without saying that the staff in our various organizations are quite seized by the implications of the pending Fifth Committee discussions on continuing contracts. Since the Secretary-General froze the award of permanent contracts in the mid-1990s, most staff have been serving on a series of maximum of two-year contracts, and many even less. The continuing contract would confer some measure of job security to staff, who would be spared the anxiety associated with a contract renewal every 12 months to two years, and would at the same time give some limited indemnity if the contract were terminated. Staff otherwise have, according to the Provisional Staff Rules, “no expectancy, legal or otherwise” of either a termination indemnity, or of conversion to any other type of contract.

Member States asked the Secretary-General to provide the Fifth Committee with the following:

(a) Rigorous and transparent procedures for granting continuing appointments to staff, including the criteria for eligibility, the relationship with disciplinary measures and the central management of conversions;

(b) The role of the performance appraisal system and options for strengthening it to ensure that staff members considered for continuing appointments have demonstrated the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, taking into account any deliberations of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) on this issue;

(c) The financial and management implications of converting appointments from fixed-term to continuing, and the possible establishment of a ceiling on the number of conversions;

(d) Analysis of the implications of the proposed continuing appointments for the system of geographical ranges;

(e) Rigorous and transparent procedures to review the performance of staff and the continuing need for functions when determining the granting and termination of an appointment of a staff member, as well as clear and firm lines of accountability, to fully ensure that the granting and termination of continuing contracts is undertaken in a fair and transparent manner, with full regard to due process and the rights of staff;

(f) Options for ensuring that successful candidates from national competitive examinations and language staff are not disadvantaged by proposed changes;

(g) Analysis of the implications for Junior Professional Officers;

(h) The potential ramifications of the proposed amendment to staff regulation 9.1.1.

Staff and the representatives of the Secretary-General have discussed these issues extensively over the last year in the context of the Staff-Management

Coordination Committee and, in Beirut this summer, we came to an agreement which we trust will answer the Fifth Committee's requirements. However, we believe that the Secretary-General and the organizations represented here must push with vigour for the General Assembly to approve the award of continuing contracts. We believe the effort on the part of our organizations has been half-hearted at best, and reflects an ambivalence among our management about whether staff should have this kind of contract.

This ambivalence, or perhaps reluctance, shows also in the way the organizations have awarded contracts which are already in their power to award. Currently the Provisional Staff Rules allow for fixed-term contracts of up to five years. Few, if any, of our organizations exercise this privilege. Staff continue to be on precarious contracts, a situation which affects our organizations' ability to recruit and retain the best staff. We have seen ideal candidates refuse posts in the United Nations because of the short contracts. At the same time, internal staff are being asked to be geographically mobile. The Inter-Agency Security Management Network report noted the reluctance of staff to move from headquarters. We contend that this has a lot to do with not knowing where you will be when your contract runs out, so staff feel it is better to stay with the known evil than take a chance on the unknown good. Mobility would be greatly enhanced, and with no need to wait for the General Assembly, simply by using the provisions already in the Staff Rules.

We expect from our management that if the General Assembly does not approve the award of continuing contracts this fall, the organizations represented here will act in their best interests, and in the best interests of staff, and award up to five-year fixed-term contracts to staff. Certainly those staff who would have fulfilled the requirement of five years of service with good performance and good conduct should be given contracts which would allow them to work for a reasonable amount of time without fear and anxiety about whether their contract will be renewed. This seems to us a very simple solution to what may very well remain an intractable problem for some time to come, should our masters in the General Assembly ignore their obligations under international labour laws. We are counting on you to take this one small step which will have a giant impact on staff well-being. Of course, we also expect your wholehearted support in your discussions with the distinguished delegates of the Fifth Committee with regard to the continuing contract.

Harmonization of conditions of service in the field

There is no one in this meeting who is unaware of the intense discussions in the past several months about the second household allowance for staff serving in non-family duty stations. There is unanimity among the three Staff Federations in that we all absolutely support a second household allowance for United Nations Secretariat staff serving in non-family duty stations. All staff serving in non-family duty stations must maintain another household elsewhere. It is unconscionable not to give them the means to do so. In principle, we also support the conclusion by ICSC that there should not be gaps in compensation between staff serving in different entities, and therefore we do support the harmonization of allowances across the United Nations, so that all staff can be fairly and comparably treated. This will minimize competition among organizations, or at least limit it to staff perceptions of the organizations' relative effectiveness in managing their

personnel, and in carrying out their respective missions. What we do not support is equality by reduction.

Although we emerged from the ICSC session in June with a position that pleased the members of the Commission, staff still find this lacking. CCISUA and UNISERV believe the current review has been rushed, and that not enough time has been spent in the process of determining the best option under which to harmonize, taking into consideration the needs of all the organizations and staff involved. This is a review that should not be taken lightly, or done in a perfunctory manner. The Commission session devolved into a de facto working group, but this is not enough. There should be a thorough review taking into account all the aspects of the question, in particular the probable effect of any harmonized second household allowance amount on the programmes being carried out by the agencies, funds and programmes, as well as the effect on the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations.

Until such a thorough review has taken place, we support that the Secretariat staff serving in non-family duty stations receive the lump sum allowance which works for the Secretariat and will allow staff some measure of relief. At the same time, we believe the organizations using the special operations approach should continue to have the flexibility to use this approach, until the more thorough review has taken place. This should include the ability to keep the option of an Administrative Place of Assignment, and appropriate rest and recuperation measures, which have been key in achieving mobility in those organizations which have employed them. We believe the ultimate aim should be to have all staff serving in non-family duty stations use the special operations approach, which the Commission recommended to the General Assembly in A/61/30/Add.1, paragraph 50:

“The Commission decided to recommend the application of the current special operations approach model common system-wide at non-family duty stations with regard to the payment of post adjustment, mobility and hardship, hazard pay and special operations living allowance. That model harmonizes all practices, is the most cost-effective and best meets the needs of the organizations of the common system.”

Strengthening of staff representation function in the organization

Ladies and gentlemen, it is no secret that in some of the organizations represented here, relations between the staff and management are not ideal. We have already noted in our opening paragraphs one way in which we believe you could help to start changing the situation, i.e., opening up this meeting and others to staff representatives. Beyond this, however, there is a lot that can and should be done.

In the early years of staff representation in the United Nations and related organizations, there was one federation: FICSA. It took FICSA from 1952 to 1967 to finally get agreement that they could fully participate in Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions meetings. Other concessions to staff proceeded in an equally creeping pace over the years. But in all cases and over the decades, the Organization has seriously lagged behind staff. The 1950s have been over for some time, the staff numbers have grown exponentially and now in 2010 we have three recognized Federations. However, by and large the provisions relating to staff representation overall still remain applicable only to FICSA. The FICSA president and vice-president have full-time release; CCISUA, established since 1982, does not

have the same privilege, neither does UNISERV, established since 2007. FICSA has the right to address the Fifth Committee on issues related to human resources; CCISUA and UNISERV do not, and must petition each year. Together the three Federations represent the entire United Nations system, roughly divided into a third of staff each. We have membership among funds and programmes, organizations, specialized agencies, and the United Nations Secretariat, including peacekeeping operations and regional economic commissions.

It is time for the organizations represented here to recognize the value that good and effective staff representation brings, and to enable this by sponsoring the full-time release of two officers each from both CCISUA and UNISERV for the enormous task of representing two thirds of the staff of the United Nations system. We hope it does not take another 60 years.

In addition, the Secretary-General still has not promulgated a revised policy governing staff management consultations and negotiations. This has been in discussion for many years, without resolution. The mills of the United Nations seem to grind as slowly as the Lord's, but surely there should be some conclusion. We hope the upcoming Joint Inspection Unit report on staff representation in the United Nations will help to convince our organizations that this is a function worthy of investment of time, financial resources, and policy support.

Other issues

- On the High-level Committee on Management agenda is the matter of increasing the mandatory age of separation and the normal age of retirement. We know the decision is not yet, but we would reiterate that whatever decision is taken should be in full consultation with staff, and should be without prejudice to the acquired rights of existing staff to retire with full benefits at 60 or 62, whichever is appropriate.
- On the administration of justice in the United Nations, we would like to highlight that support to the Office of Staff Legal Assistance from the General Assembly lags seriously behind what was recommended by the Redesign Panel. The Office still does not have adequate posts and funding for counsellors to staff, and the "equality of arms" envisioned by the Panel is far, far from realization.
- We welcome the progress already made on IPSAS and related information technology reforms and look forward to continued collaboration with management in making them successful.

Finally, we would like thank you again for giving us the opportunity to address you and we continue our commitment to working closely with High-level Committee on Management, the Human Resources Network and the various working groups and organs of CEB in order to improve the workplace of the United Nations.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

Annex IV

Statement by the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations

The preparation for this session of the High-level Committee on Management has been particularly challenging for FICSA.

An intense exchange of views among the members of the Federation took place before committing our limited resources to this mission. Then, and most importantly, we discussed what the nature and the format of our intervention should be.

We agreed that, in order to make the best use of the very limited time at our disposal under the agenda item "Dialogue with Staff Federations", we would limit our intervention to no more than three or four key issues, raising for each of them a few, clear questions, in an attempt to establish a constructive dialogue with you.

Dialogue is a key word in staff/management relations: its Greek origin — "*dia*" meaning "through" and "*logos*" meaning "discussion" — implies a two-way communication process aimed to achieving a shared understanding through discussion between parties.

Despite our limited resources, our presence here today is proof of FICSA's interest and availability for dialogue. We also find it encouraging that the commitment of the High-level Committee on Management to dialogue is spelled out in its terms of references (ACC/2000/20, para. 36, point 5): "HLCM is responsible for maintaining an ongoing dialogue with staff representatives on concerns of a system-wide nature".

However, our recent experience has shown that we failed to establish a true dialogue with you; at the latest session, for example, our interventions became a sort of monologue falling into the silence of the room.

Why is this happening?

Is it a sign of some lack of interest in the role of, or the message conveyed by, staff representatives? Or, are we just using the wrong communication strategy?

Does the Committee still believe that an ongoing dialogue with staff representatives is essential to the proper functioning and coordination of the United Nations common system?

Consistent with point 4.8 of Human Resources Strategy approved last year (CEB/2009/HLCM/HR/46/Rev.1), FICSA maintains an ongoing dialogue with the Network, and the CEB secretariat and its spokespersons; however, even in those cases where the dialogue results in reaching an agreement, the risk of it being discarded with no apparent explanation is always there.

A point in case is the recommendation for a cost-sharing arrangement for the release of the FICSA General Secretary, which was unexpectedly rejected by the nineteenth session of the Committee last February in Turin, despite the consensus reached in the Human Resources Network among the FICSA member organizations.

The Human Resources Network proposal satisfied all the criteria to address the situation, both in the short and the long term, since: (i) it would have resolved the

immediate problem in accordance with past practice and deliberations by the responsible organs, thus alleviating the burden on both the releasing organization and the Federation; (ii) it would have contributed to improved staff/management relations, reopening the dialogue on the identification of a sustainable, long-term arrangement for the release of FICSA officers in future; and (iii) it would have been financially affordable by all stakeholders.

To date, the core reasons for your conclusions remain unexplained. Yet, we can't ignore the issue, as the problem will not fade away until a sustainable solution for the years to come is found. We need to understand your reasons and how you think this problem should be solved.

This leads to our second set of questions: Why did the High-level Committee on Management reject the proposal made by the subsidiary body it delegated for an "ongoing dialogue with staff"? And why did this apparently happen in the absence of any significant debate?

Your paper CEB/2010/HLCM/25, "Report on the prioritization of HLCM activities", chapter II-B, Human resources, includes items of fundamental importance to staff and therefore to the effective functioning of the system: contractual arrangements, staff safety and security, performance management, mobility and hardship, work/life balance, just to name a few.

The agenda is challenging and requires that a truly inclusive staff/management relation mechanism be in place. Enabling the effectiveness of this type of mechanism is of paramount importance.

As we are touching on conditions of employment, we would like to provide our views on the issue that all but monopolized the discussions at the most recent session of ICSC: the harmonization of the conditions of service of staff serving in non-family duty stations.

Harmonization in conditions of employment is certainly a desirable goal but it requires adequate time and informed decisions. In this specific case a totally new approach, representing "a dramatic change for organizations which had adopted the special operations approach" — just to quote the Commission's annual report [para. 239] — was decided upon in a few days, in absence of a systematic evaluation of its potential impact on the operations of the specialized agencies, funds and programmes.

We are not unaware of the climate generated by the global financial crisis; we understand that cost considerations are unavoidable and that in all organizations (except the United Nations Secretariat) the change would result in savings. The question is: at what cost? We are gravely concerned that, if approved in its entirety, the ICSC recommendation will eventually diminish the overall effectiveness of United Nations system programmes, most notably in those locations where the action of the United Nations is most urgently needed.

Is our concern shared by the Committee? How do you plan to justify the changes to the affected staff in your respective organizations?

In FICSA's opinion, the decision on the phased discontinuation of the special operations approach in the specialized agencies, funds and programmes should be deferred until the potential implications of the new approach recommended by ICSC are evaluated and alternatives are duly explored.

What are the views of the Committee in this respect?

Before concluding, we would like to mention a few other issues which are of particular concern:

(i) The mandatory age of separation: it would seem that the vast array of different opinions has resulted in an indefinite postponement of a concrete discussion. For example, ICSC recently issued the work programme which defers the discussion to the summer session in 2012. Does the Committee intend to ask for more timely action, also considering the implications of the increased life expectancies on the actuarial situation of the United Nations Pension Fund?

(ii) UN Cares: this programme is a rare example of effectiveness and coordination. However, some organizations either declared that they are unable to contribute or are still lagging behind the funding schedule. Is the Committee going to urge these organizations to comply with their obligations?

(iii) Proposal on personal status and domestic partners. FICSA supports the Human Resources Network proposal and believes that it is time for the United Nations to move ahead and expand the current basis for recognition of personal status. What is the High-level Committee stand on this matter?

Finally, the review of the salary survey methodologies for locally recruited staff: ICSC planned to adopt the revised methodologies in spring next year. On the basis of the preliminary reports by the ICSC Working Group, the review should result in fundamental changes in the interorganizational arrangements for the conduct of the surveys as well as the role of the parties, all matters falling under the responsibility of CEB. Considering that less than six months are available to finalize the work, coordination of action is of essence.

Concerning coordination and harmonization, the paper entitled "Mission report on addressing country-level bottlenecks in business practices" (CEB/2010/HLCM-UNDG/1, para. 64) states:

"Since UN reform and Delivering as One represent major changes to the way the UN system does business, it is important to ensure that staff-management mechanisms, in the form of local Staff Associations, are in place and are allowed a voice in the UNCT. This can facilitate the change process through open communication and dialogue in a collaborative and consultative way."

Again, the word "dialogue" comes as the key element of communication: we hope that today we will succeed in making a concrete step forward and we look forward to hearing the replies to our questions.

Thank you for your attention.
