



**CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING
OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES NETWORK
(UN Headquarters, New York, 7-9 July 2004)**

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ANNEXES**I. Agenda****II. List of Participants**

I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME
(CEB/2004/HLCM/17 and CEB/2004/HR/8/CRP.1)

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

II. ISSUES UNDER CONSIDERATION BY ICSC

A. REVIEW OF THE PAY AND BENEFITS SYSTEM:

(a) Mobility/Hardship allowance, hazard pay and strategic bonuses
(ICSC/59/R.2 and ICSC/59/CRP.6))

2. The Network:

- Reiterated the position of the Network, that the UN system required a competitive pay system and that compensation should be viewed as a strategic management tool in the key areas of staff recruitment, retention and relocation; the purpose of the mobility and hardship allowance was increasingly relevant in light of changing demographics, the deteriorating security and public health situations in many countries and when organizations were requiring greater mobility. Rotation and mobility, core behaviors of UN staff, should be rewarded as part of the basic pay package; this review should not be simply a cost containment exercise.
- Agreed that the current system should be maintained as it allowed organizations to use pay to meet organizational mandates; any change to the system should be premised on a comprehensive review of the Noblemaire Principle and should not result in the erosion of allowances paid to staff.
- Expressed appreciation for the information provided by the ICSC secretariat contained in document CRP.6 on conditions of non-diplomatic expatriate staff in the comparator civil service, the European Union, the World Bank and the Canadian and German civil services.
- Requested organizations to examine carefully their personnel statistics sent to the CEB secretariat as they formed the basis for the statistical background of the reviews of all such allowances; errors, in particular in the coding of such data, would lead to erroneous conclusions and ultimately poor recommendations being made to the Commission on the need for, and levels of, common system benefits and entitlements.
- Agreed, with regard to the specific proposals contained in paragraph 64 of the document, the following:
 - (a) That the link between the hardship element of the mobility and hardship allowance to the base/floor salary scale be maintained to facilitate greater transparency in understanding and ease in administration; it was appropriate that such allowances should be linked to increases in staff salary scales, and the figure shown in the document of the cost of this approach (some USD 48 million) should be compared to the overall UN pay bill.
 - (b) That the current single/dependant rates for the calculation of the hardship allowance be retained.
 - (c) That there be no abolition of the differentiation of hardship amounts on the basis of grade; the payment of a flat rate, irrespective of grade, would be inequitable as staff at the lower grades (e.g. P3) would receive far more of an incentive than those at a higher grade (e.g. D1) receiving the same amount.
 - (d) That the hardship scheme continues to be separated from hazard pay as they serve different purposes.
 - (e) For the movement of staff into hard-to-fill duty stations the payment of strategic bonuses should be used as a targeted intervention along with, and not “in place of”, a generalized

mobility scheme. Caution should be expressed that the introduction of such bonuses could open the door to nationality-based pay; the development of strategic bonuses was therefore premature pending the results of the pilot on broadbanding.

- (f) That the mobility and non-removal elements should not be removed from the matrix or combined to establish one-time payments of two levels of 30% and 35% of the base/floor at P4, step VI, for any reassignment to a field duty station; the introduction of such a change undermined the entire thrust and objective of the scheme to encourage mobility and could provoke the insidious effect of staff seeking to move every year so as to receive the payment.
- (g) That the rental subsidy scheme, as an intrinsic part of the post adjustment scheme, should remain as such.
- (h) That the remaining aspects of the hardship scheme be retained as currently established.
- Agreed that the Commission should be encouraged to look at the overall terms and conditions offered by the comparator to its staff at difficult duty stations including the provision of fully furnished housing (including utilities), dedicated security services and other benefits which motivate staff to go to such duty stations more than a one-off financial incentive scheme. This review needed to be seen in the context of the bigger picture and it was necessary to consider its social, and not just financial, implications.
- Further agreed that any changes to the allowance should only involve enhancements such as the extension of the number of assignments beyond 5.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission decided to:

- (a) Separate the mobility element from the hardship element;
- (b) Delink both the mobility and hardship allowances from the base/floor salary scale;
- (c) Defer the implementation of the decisions contained in (a) and (b) above until a new system has been put into place;
- (d) Establish a working group comprising members of the Commission, its secretariat, organizations and staff to develop various options for compensating staff for service in hardship duty stations and for encouraging mobility, to estimate the cost of those options, and to submit its recommendations to the Commission at its sixtieth session.

(b) Education grant: review of the methodology for determining the level of the grant (ICSC/59/R.3)

3. The Network:

- Reiterated its support for the basic premise of the grant and underlined its importance and role as an expatriate entitlement based on reimbursement of actual expenditure; that staff should bear some of the cost of educating their children and that parents should have an unrestricted right to choose the education to be provided to their children.
- Recalled that, since 1946, it had been determined that staff members required to serve outside their home country should receive an education grant in respect of each dependent child in full-time attendance at a school, university or similar educational institution.

- Further recalled that internationally recruited staff members are subject to reassignment, at the discretion of the executive head, under the staff rules and regulations of the various organizations; that the need for such assignments had increased dramatically over the years with the expansion of the United Nations system's field network, more so in those organizations with a field-oriented operation, as a result of their programme requirements. It had thus become a way of life for many staff members (and their children), and for the large majority of UN system staff, expatriation was a permanent condition during their United Nations careers.
- Recognized that school patterns and choices of staff members had become more varied. Moreover, marriage between persons of different nationalities, cultures and races had become a common feature of today's world; international civil servants, both by virtue of working in an international setting and as a result of reassignment/rotation tend, more than average, to marry someone of a different nationality. This factor of "mixed nationality" undoubtedly had a profound effect on the choice of schooling/country of settlement of the children of staff members. If a child settled in the country of the staff member's spouse (or of an ex-spouse who is the parent of the child), the spirit of re-assimilation had surely been met.
- Agreed that expatriation in this context was an on-going reality which generally remained unaffected by the length of stay at any particular location and may even be aggravated with longer stays. Therefore, the education grant must continue to enable expatriated staff members to exercise their parental choice of choosing the most appropriate education to suit their particular circumstances and to allow them to live up to their obligation so as to be at the disposal of the organization for postings anywhere in the world.
- Recognized that whilst the education grant was a key strategic entitlement for a global expatriate workforce, organizations and staff had long felt that the education grant was in need of a substantive overhaul in terms of process, but not of content. Any change to the methodology for determining the level of the grant must ensure that the value of the entitlement and the link to actual cost was maintained, and that it was in no way eroded.
- Agreed that the proposal to adopt a lump-sum approach should be based on amounts actually paid (a feature that was one of the greatest strengths of the current methodology). It would maintain the best features of the current approach while achieving considerable administrative simplicity, thus, certain administrative savings and productivity gains; the Network was strongly convinced that the lump-sum approach was the only viable and sustainable option, and could not support merely resorting to various streamlining efforts of the current, receipt-based, system.
- Supported the proposal, whereby, staff members would henceforth be required to submit only a certificate of attendance to justify the payment of the lump sum. This lump sum would be based on the actual cost of education at the school in question, subject to an overall global ceiling. The sum should take into consideration the tuition fees, other allowable costs, and any mandatory charges that are a prerequisite for admission to the school. The processing of the grant in this manner would involve one single transaction by the organization, the payment of the lump sum.
- Agreed that the lump sum should be made up of three elements (tuition, other allowable costs, boarding) established based on the actual cost at individual educational institutions. If a child were enrolled in a school then 75% of the cost of attendance at that school would become the ceiling for that particular case. To ensure that costs are contained, a global cap would be established which may not be exceeded, except as decided by the Chairman of the ICSC as part of a special measure. The global cap should be equivalent to that of the highest ceiling in the currently existing currency zones, i.e. that of the United Kingdom. The introduction of this new ceiling would not have any additional financial implications since the payment of lump sums would continue to be based on actual costs.
- Further agreed that to maintain the direct relationship between the lump sum and the actual costs incurred, model one put forward in the document, should be used in determining the lump sums,

whereby institution-specific, tuition-driven lump sum payments are established and where institution-specific data would also be used to determine the amounts added for boarding and other mandatory fees. The institution-specific lump sums would be determined based on surveys of schools attended by children of UN staff members in much the same manner as DSA surveys are conducted. Such surveys would be conducted and managed by the ICSC Secretariat.

- Recognized that the introduction of the lump sum approach obviates the need for different currency zones, and thus makes the system more transparent and simpler to administer; it also obviates the need for the 5 per cent rule and the rule on minimum number of claims, both of which have introduced serious inequities in the current system. In the unlikely event that the Commission decides not to opt for the lump sums, the Network supported the lumping together of currency zones.
- Supported the proposal that the Chairman of the ICSC be given the delegated authority to introduce Special Measures in all locations worldwide.
- Further supported the proposal to redefine allowable costs to include all mandatory school expenses, irrespective of a change of methodology to lump sums.
- Agreed with the principle that boarding costs should be reimbursable beyond daily commuting distance from the duty station, irrespective of national borders, as well as the abolition of the 5 per cent rule and the rule on minimum number of claim.
- Thanked the ICSC secretariat for its advice and assistance to the working group which met during the HR Network and developed the new proposed methodology.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission requested its secretariat to continue the development of the lump-sum approach for the education grant and to present at its sixtieth session an updated and detailed report that would include:

- (a) Procedures for establishing ceilings (maximum allowable expenses) by zone;
- (b) Cost control measures for triggering adjustments;
- (c) Certification requirements;
- (d) Provisions for the selection of representative schools for establishing the ceiling and lump sum payments;
- (e) Criteria for zoning based on empirical data showing a relationship between the zone and the cost of education.

(c) Implementation of the pilot study on broadbanding/reward for contribution (ICSC/59/R.4)

4. The Network:

- Thanked the ICSC Secretariat for its continued efforts to prepare for the commencement of the pilot study as of 1 July 2004.
- Noted with appreciation the progress made by the four participating organizations in pursuing the necessary developmental work required for their participation in the pilot study.
- Reiterated its concern about securing an adequate level of support to be provided to participating organizations. In this regard, the Network, while expressing confidence in the currently envisaged

interim project manager, noted with some concern that it had not been possible as yet to put in place a dedicated full-time project manager.

- Looked forward to its continuing partnership with the ICSC Secretariat in the implementation phase of the pilot study.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission decided that:

- (a) UNESCO' s International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, Italy, could participate in the pilot study as a volunteer organization, subject to a review of the human resources subsystems in place and an analysis of the readiness of the Institute to proceed with the study by 1 January 2005. The Commission further decided to delegate to its Chairman the decision on the readiness of the Institute and its participation in the study. The ICSC secretariat was requested to provide an update on this matter concerning the possible inclusion of the Centre in the pilot study at the Commission's sixtieth session;
- (b) It would reaffirm that staff in the Professional and higher categories would represent the basis for the pilot study, including other Professional staff subject to the same job evaluation standard, that is, as promulgated on 1 January 2004;
- (c) It would agree that the volunteer organizations could include staff in the General Service and related categories in the study on the basis of model 3.

(d) Progress report on the implementation of the new Master Standard for the job evaluation system relating to the Professional and higher categories (ICSC/59/R.5)

5. The Network:

- Took note with appreciation of the work carried out to date by the ICSC Secretariat and organizations in implementing the new approach to job evaluation, particularly with regard to the organization of training and briefing of staff.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission took note of the work carried out to date by the secretariat in implementing the new approach to job evaluation. It expressed its satisfaction that there was positive feedback from organizations indicating that the standard was easy to use.

(e) Contractual arrangements (ICSC/59/R.6)

6. The Network:

- Recalled that on several occasions in past years, it had drawn attention to what could be described as a tension between the core and non-core aspects of contractual arrangements as expressed in the Framework for Human Resources Management. In the Framework, contractual arrangements were deemed to be core "to the extent that the compensation package is common across all organizations". At the same time, the Framework's principles confirmed that "contractual

arrangements should be flexible so as to respond to organizational needs”. On those occasions, the Network had also and repeatedly stressed that “contractual arrangements must meet the organizations’ diverse business needs and the nature of work being performed” and that the contractual arrangements “were governed by changing financial realities and the legislation of the [respective] organizations’ governing bodies”. (CEB/2003/HLCM/20 page 6, paragraph 5 refers).

- Further recalled that at its session in July 2003, the Network had “expressed appreciation for the time and collaborative effort of the ICSC Secretariat which had led to the delineation of a general framework and of useful guidance to organizations in maintaining their roles as socially responsible employers” and that it had considered “the framework and recommendations flowing there from” as “recommendations – not prescriptions”. Therefore, at the time, the Network had endorsed the recommendations of the Framework, contained in document ICSC/57/R.3, which should serve as non-prescriptive guidelines that would allow organizations the flexibility to adapt them to their own programmatic, operational and financial requirements.

7. Bearing in mind the described background, and recalling the previous good collaboration with the ICSC Secretariat on the issue of contractual arrangements, the HR Network, at its session in July 2004:

- Expressed its disappointment and concern that the Framework proposed in document ICSC/59/R.6, rather than offering guiding principles to the organizations of the common system, was now of a highly prescriptive nature that did not reflect the agreements reached in 2003 and was seen as limiting rather than encouraging, the flexibility and ability of organizations to respond to the requirements of their respective financial and managerial organizational realities in an effective and efficient manner;
- Emphasized that implementation of the proposed arrangements would imply changes to existing staff rules which are approved by each organizations’ respective governing body;
- Noted with regret that there had been no opportunity for consultation and collaboration between the ICSC Secretariat and the Network on the currently proposed Framework. While recognizing that time constraints on the part of the ICSC Secretariat might have been responsible for this lack of consultation, the Network was unanimous in its view that further deliberations on this topic could not usefully proceed without the benefit of a full consultative and collaborative process.

8. The Network considered the following issues to be of particular relevance in the context of the above concerns:

- Link of appointment type with funding source. The document proposed that continuing appointments should normally be extended “to established or core staff who are performing functions funded from the organization’s regular budget” and that “staff whose positions are funded from temporary or extrabudgetary funds should not be included in this category”. The Network considered this proposal inconsistent with the needs and realities of the common system organizations, particularly for those who were funded exclusively from voluntary contributions. The Network strongly underscored the need to preserve organizational flexibility regardless of the funding source of posts.
- Link of appointment type with duration and tenure. While the Network had previously agreed to the three appointment categories as general guidelines, the arrangements proposed in document ICSC/59/R.6 were seen as prescriptive and as curtailing organizational flexibility.
- Termination of continuing appointments. The Network expressed its strong concern over the proposal that “termination procedures ... may be initiated ... on the basis of ... major programme changes which render the staff member’s competencies irrelevant in the organization”. The

Network emphasized that a change in skill and competency requirements could not be considered as the only grounds for termination of contracts; in addition there are many other reasons not mentioned in the document for which organizations may consider termination of contracts (e.g. medical grounds, disciplinary action, etc.).

- In light of the above concerns, and given the lack of prior collaboration and consultation on the matter, the Network requested the ICSC Secretariat to recommend to the Commission that the document be withdrawn from the agenda of its 59th session, and that ICSC pursue further consultations with organizations to revert to a framework that serves as flexible, non-prescriptive principles and guidelines to be adapted by organizations according to their operational realities.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission noted that the question of contractual arrangements had been on its work programme for several years and that significant progress had been made in categorizing contracts across organizations. It decided to:

- (a) Report to the General Assembly that there was now a model within which to apply some definition to the varying contractual arrangements across the United Nations common system;
- (b) Request its secretariat to refine the model in collaboration with organizations and staff and to provide a revised version as well as information on the distribution of all staff in the organizations by contractual category to the Commission at its sixtieth session;
- (c) Provide a final report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the question of contractual arrangements.

B. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF THE PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORIES:

(a) Evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin (ICSC/59/R.7)

9. The Network:

- Noted that the margins still showed significant differences between individual levels;
- Expressed concern that the continuing low margins for the senior levels had an adverse impact on the organizations' efforts to strengthen their managerial capacities at those levels;
- Agreed that a differentiated increase would be appropriate in order to adjust the current significant differences between levels.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission decided to take note of the margin forecast of 110.3 between the net remuneration of the United Nations staff in grades P-1 to D-2 in New York and that of the United States federal civil service in Washington, D.C., for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2004.

(b) Base/floor salary scale (ICSC/59/R.8)

10. The Network:

- Noted the recommendation of the ICSC Secretariat to increase the common system base/floor salary scale, on a no-loss/no-gain basis, by 1.88 per cent effective 1 March 2005.
- While noting the above recommendation, requested that the effective date for the increase be moved to 1 January 2005, which was fully justifiable in view of the fact that the comparator's scale was revised on 1 January 2004. Thus, adjustment of the common system scale should not be unduly delayed further.
- Noted that the financial implications of the proposed increase would be approximately US\$2 million per year, of which approximately 1.4 million would be related to the mobility and hardship allowance scheme.
- While noting that it could be "technically feasible" to decrease the base scale to address the issue of resulting real salary increases at duty stations with very low or zero post adjustment, the Network underscored its strong concern about the possible legal implications of such decrease. Moreover, the Network considered that such an approach would be a further erosion of the Noblemaire Principle, and would further impede organizations' ability to recruit and retain staff from countries with base salaries higher than those of the common system.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the current base/floor salary scale for the Professional and higher categories be increased by 1.88 per cent through standard consolidation procedures, on a no-loss/no-gain basis, with effect from 1 January 2005.

The Commission requested its secretariat to submit to it at its sixty-second session a further report, including all legal and financial implications, on the possibility of lowering the level of the base/floor salary scale, with the remaining portion of salary provided through the post adjustment.

(c) Draft agenda for the twenty-seventh session of the Advisory Committee on Post adjustment Questions (ICSC/59/R.9)

11. The Network:

- Noted the agenda and expressed appreciation that the use of external data for the rental index was included in response to the concerns expressed by the Network.
- Further noted that the introduction of the Euro zone could lead to increases to the post adjustments for those countries.
- Welcomed the participation of the World Tourism Organization in the scheme.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission approved the provisional agenda for the twenty-seventh session of the Committee.

(d) Review of the level of the education grant (ICSC/59/R.10 and CEB/2004/HLCM/20)

12. The Network:

- Expressed its appreciation for the work that had gone into the analysis of a record number of education grant claims and the preparation of proposals that were robust and well justified.
- Requested the CEB Secretariat to emphasize in the conclusions section of the document the fact that the proposals had been made in accordance with ICSC methodology, which the ICSC had approved and the General Assembly had endorsed.
- Agreed that the results of the review should be communicated back to staff in the organizations that had worked on the preparation of the claims' data, thus, reinforcing the usefulness of such work to the UN system as a whole.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission reviewed the proposals of the HR Network for the seventeen currency areas and decided to recommend to the General Assembly:

- An increase in maximum admissible expenses (MAE) for fifteen areas.
 - For eight of these fifteen areas, the proposals of the ICSC were below (Austria, Belgium, Japan, Sweden) or significantly below (France, Ireland, Netherlands, Spain) the levels proposed by the HR Network.
 - With respect to the 'difficult situation faced by some UNESCO staff in Paris', the Commission was 'sympathetic'. It believed however that 'although some remedial action should be taken, the 82.2 per cent increase [...] could not be justified'.
 - For seven currency areas (Denmark, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, UK, US and outside US), the ICSC agreed with the increases proposed by the HR Network.
 - Both the HR Network and the ICSC agreed to recommend that the maximum amount of admissible expenses and the maximum grant should remain at the current levels for Finland and Norway.
 - Details of the proposed increases and old and new MAE levels are shown in table 1 below.

In addition, the ICSC decided to recommend to the General Assembly that

- The flat rates for boarding to be taken into account within the maximum admissible educational expenses and the additional amounts for reimbursement of boarding costs over and above the maximum grant payable to staff members at designated duty stations should be revised as shown in table 2 of the respective annex;
- The amount of the special education grant for each disabled child should be equal to 100 per cent of the revised amounts of the maximum allowable expenses for the regular grant;
- Special measures should be maintained for China, Indonesia, Romania and the Russian Federation, which would allow organizations to reimburse 75 per cent of actual expenses up to and not exceeding the level of the maximum admissible expenses in force for the United States dollar area inside the United States of America;
- All of the above measures should be applicable as from the school year in progress on 1 January 2005.

The Commission also decided to reiterate its recommendation to the General Assembly that the Assembly may wish to request the organizations to bring the matter of the payment of the education grant to staff members living in their own countries to the attention of their governing bodies with a view to harmonizing the staff rules and regulations along the line of those of the United Nations.

2004 Education Grant Level Review: Original and Revised Proposals				
Currency Area	Previous MAE	% Increase proposed by HR Network	% Increase recommended by ICSC*	New proposed MAE
Austria	€ 13,618	12.4	11.6	€ 15,198
Belgium	€ 12,898	14.9	12.0	€ 14,446
Denmark	DKK 77,400	15.0	15.0	DKK 89,010
Finland	€ 0	0.0	0.0	€ 0
France	€ 9,330	82.2	10.0	€ 10,263
Germany	€ 15,736	20.7	20.7	€ 18,993
Ireland	€ 9,997	35.0	10.0	€ 10,997
Italy	€ 13,518	13.3	13.3	€ 15,316
Japan	JPY 2,301,120	2.6	1.0	JPY 2,324,131
Netherlands	€ 13,085	45.2	18.0	€ 15,440
Norway	NOK 0	0.0	0.0	NOK 0
Spain	€ 10,586	41.7	30.0	€ 13,762
Sweden	SEK 91,575	16.5	10.0	SEK 100,733
Switzerland	SFr 25,347	6.0	6.0	SFr 26,868
United Kingdom	£ 15,900	15.0	15.0	£ 18,285
United States	\$ 25,743	12.0	12.0	\$ 28,832
US\$ outside US	\$ 14,818	16.0	16.00	\$ 17,189

* Differences between HR Network and ICSC recommendations are highlighted in bold.

(e) **Review of the Noblemaire Principle, including total compensation comparisons**
(ICSC/59/R.11 and ICSC/59/CRP.6)

13. The Network:

- Thanked the ICSC Secretariat for well-researched documents that are both comprehensive and thoughtful and which recognized the concerns voiced by Executive Heads and the Network at previous sessions of the Commission.
- Reiterated its position that problems with the system in the past were rooted in the non-application (rather than maintenance) of the Noblemaire Principle and that this, in turn, had seriously undermined the competitiveness of the common system.
- Would welcome the further development of the options set out in paragraph 26 of the paper, whilst acknowledging that: option (a), recommending the maintenance of the current (non) application of the Noblemaire Principle, was wholly unacceptable; the Network would, therefore, advocate a combination of options (b) and (e), namely the use of other international and regional inter-governmental organizations and the highest non-diplomatic expatriate civil service as a comparator to common system competitiveness; in this regard, recommendation 11 of the Panel on the strengthening of the international civil service supported this approach.

- Recognized that option (f) on the modification of the margin range to fully reflect the current comparator's expatriation benefits as an initial correction mechanism was not a solution to the underlying problem of the lack of competitiveness in the pay and benefits of the common system with other international and regional organizations.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission decided to report to the General Assembly that in applying the Noblemaire principle its current practice of using the highest-paid national civil service, combined with a reference check with international organizations, was sound. The Commission had on its work programme for 2005-2006 a study to determine the highest-paid civil service, including a total comparison between the United Nations and the United States federal civil service.

(f) Establishment of grade equivalencies between the United States federal civil service and the United Nations system (ICSC/59/R.11/Add.1)

14. The Network:

- Took note of the information contained in the document as the grade equivalency study which will commence in the fall of 2004 and was a necessary underpinning of margin calculations.
- Welcomed the streamlined methodology and the improved use of technology that the ICSC secretariat intended to apply in the study.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission noted the approach proposed for the conduct of the grade equivalency study between the United Nations common system and the comparator, including the simplification of procedures through the new automated job evaluation system, and decided that work should proceed as follows:

- (a) A grade equivalency study should be conducted for the revised structure of the comparator's Senior Executive Service (SES) as soon as possible using two comparison methods, one which assigned a mid-point or average salary to all members of SES positions and the other which would link the common system grades with the comparator's SES performance based salary;
- (b) The results of the study should be reported to the Commission at its session in the second quarter of 2005;
- (c) A grade equivalency study should be conducted for all other comparator pay systems in 2005, taking into account the experience gained from the approaches outlined in (a) above, and the results reported to the Commission at its session in the first quarter of 2006.

**C. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF THE GENERAL SERVICE AND OTHER
LOCALLY RECRUITED CATEGORIES:**

(a) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in Madrid (ICSC/59/R.12)

15. The Network:

- Noted that the concerned organization (World Tourism Organization) would intervene in the Commission on this item.

(b) Considerations related to reviewing the Job Classification Standards for the General Service and related categories (ICSC/59/R.13)

16. The Network:

- Noted the contents of the document and reiterated that the strategic goal of the review should be one job classification, standard for the General Service and related categories and one method for measuring the value of work.
- Stressed that a major prerequisite for the review, to be included in its terms of reference, should be the implementation of the lessons learned from the implementation of the review of the new job classification standard for the Professional and higher categories; this had been a lengthy and painful process that was still far from complete.
- Expressed appreciation for the extensive consultations, being undertaken with all partners, which were crucial for the successful completion of the reform effort.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission reached consensus that, while broad reform similar to that applied to the Professional category was necessary, as a first step a more cautious approach should be adopted that included a comparative review of the merits and demerits of all existing General Service standards. In this regard, the Commission

- (a) Agreed to continue discussions with headquarters duty stations on the status of their standards and to continue collaboration with all partners through the sharing of information and documentation. It was noted that a consultant had begun a comparative study and that the report would be completed in August 2004;
- (b) Reiterated that there should be no compromise of the Flemming and Noblemaire principles;
- (c) Requested that its secretariat report to it in 2005 on further progress.

D. COMMON SCALE OF STAFF ASSESSMENT (ICSC/59/R.14)

17. The Network:

- Noted that it was recommended that the current scale of 1 January 1997 would continue to be applied and that it would be reviewed at the time of the comprehensive review of pensionable remuneration, which would soon commence.

- Looked forward to dialogue on this matter between the ICSC Secretariat, organizations and staff representatives.
- Requested the ICSC Secretariat to provide information on the review of pensionable remuneration that could be used to brief representatives to the UN Joint Staff Pension Board.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission decided to report to the General Assembly that the current common scale of staff assessment should continue to apply and should again be reviewed at the time of the next comprehensive review of pensionable remuneration, which was scheduled for 2005-2006.

E. MISSION SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE (ICSC/59/R.15)

18. The Network:

- Agreed that the document did not accurately reflect the different purposes of the DSA and MSA allowances; the latter being used for missions lasting over long periods of time, usually in non-family duty stations and often requiring staff to stay in specified accommodation, usually for security purposes. Also, that MSA levels, unlike DSA, are often set on a regional basis because of frequent movement of staff throughout a region, particularly peacekeeping personnel.
- Noted that the disparity between DSA and MSA rates, where it exists, may be attributed to the fact that the accommodation, food and incidentals portions of MSA cover different elements from DSA.
- Recalled, with regard to the proposal of establishing a linkage between MSA and DSA rates, this had been considered at the inception of MSA but was deemed to be inappropriate given the differing purposes and requirements of the two allowances.
- Recalled that it was the prerogative of the Secretary General to set MSA levels in accordance with operational needs.
- Further recalled that the MSA was derived from studies of actual costs carried out by the UN Secretariat, in collaboration with other UN organizations.
- Agreed that the Network could not support the recommendations in the document.

Decision of ICSC

The Commission requested the organizations, in consultation with its secretariat, to provide to it at its sixtieth session a comprehensive report on their practices relating to the entitlements of staff serving at non-family duty stations and on their efforts to harmonize those practices. This report should, inter alia, include detailed data on remuneration packages of staff at non-family locations in each organization, including itemized lists of all entitlements received, actual data on current levels of those entitlements, and information on how they were set and adjusted, and should be complemented by specific examples showing how the total remuneration package of staff was calculated. The report should also contain proposals on harmonizing those entitlements provided by different organizations with a view to developing system-wide arrangements in order to establish a single common entitlement, thereby avoiding competition among different common system organizations at the same locality. The Commission further recommended that the organizations provide their views on the relation between MSA and DSA rates.

F. REPORT OF THE PANEL ON THE STRENGTHENING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE (ICSC/59/R.16)

19. The Network:

- Welcomed the long-awaited report of the Panel and took note of the fact that the report would be shared with Executive Heads of all organizations of the common system.
- Noted that, in spite of the mandate of the Panel, as determined by the General Assembly, that the review should take place within the context of the Statute of the ICSC, the recommendations contained in the report were likely to have a positive impact on the functioning of the Commission and the strengthening of the international civil service if these were rigorously applied, in particular as regards those relating to (a) the functioning of the Commission that are framed within the context of its Statute and (b) those relating to the strengthening of the management of the international civil service.

Note on ICSC Decision

The Report of the Panel was considered by ICSC at a closed session and no report was issued. Comments by ICSC were circulated to the HR Network members on 13 September 2004.

III. MATTERS RELATED TO THE WORK OF HLCM AND OTHER NETWORKS

(a) Report on piloting of lump sum relocation payments (UNDP) (CEB/2004/HLCM/18)

20. The Network:

- Noted with appreciation the presentation from UNDP on the piloting of a lump-sum relocation grant that had been introduced in 2001 the main objectives of which were to: (a) utilize the existing entitlement structure more purposefully/practically; (b) discourage unnecessary shipments; (c) provide staff members with the financial means and range of options to enable them to more effectively manage their lives in the context of geographical mobility; and (d) facilitate reassignments by providing staff members with the choice as to how best to re-establish their household.
- Further noted that the UNDP scheme had been almost cost neutral; that more than 95% of staff had opted for the relocation grant (the main exceptions being those staff member with large families, or where the shipment costs were higher than the level of the grant, which principally occurred in land-locked countries); and that staff satisfaction, including those staff administering the grant and those in receipt of it had been very high.
- Thanked UNDP and the other organizations involved in piloting the grant (UNICEF, UNOPS and UNHCR) for their substantial efforts in this area.
- Agreed to report to HLCM that the pilot was successful and to recommend that the scheme be extended to all UN organizations within the context of the need for organizations to be more mobile and to promote a common approach, which would facilitate inter-agency mobility.
- Requested the CEB Secretariat to work in consultation with UNDP and the other piloting agencies to prepare a document for the 2004 fall session of HLCM.
- Agreed that the issue of the element of full removal be considered as possible future work by the Network.

(b) Base line survey on inter-agency mobility (CEB/2004/HLCM/19)

21. The Network:

- Thanked the CEB secretariat for its work on the draft questionnaire and agreed that, pending some minor amendments to the text, the questionnaire should be circulated for completion by UN HR Directors so as to enable a document on the responses to be prepared by the secretariat for submission to the fall 2004 session of HLCM.
- Agreed that a future review, to be held in two years time, should include a staff opinion element to investigate whether the CEB policies on mobility were getting through to individual staff members.

(c) Update on the creation of a joint FB/HR working group on long-term care

22. The Network:

- Supported the proposal to create a joint FB/HR working group and agreed that the Network representation on the group should include senior level HR experts and that, ideally, there should be one HR representative from an organization that is insured by a private company and one that is self-insured.

(d) Update on the establishment of a Senior Management Service

23. The Network:

- Noted the decision of the CEB to establish the Senior Management Service (SMS) at its 1st regular session on 2003.
- Also noted with appreciation the progress made to date by the Working Group on the establishment of the SMS, and by the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC), in particular:
 - The creation of a common competency language through the organizational competency map, which allowed for the mapping of individual organizational competencies, the relationship between them and how they measured against the six SMS competencies. This was seen as a useful tool for supporting inter-agency mobility;
 - The establishment of criteria for the development of a Leadership Development Programme which would underpin the SMS. The Working Group had approved the terms of reference for a Request for Proposal, prepared by the UNSSC, to be sent out to selected institutions experienced in the design and delivery of executive development programmes in a multicultural environment.
- Thanked the chair of the Working Group and the UNSSC team for the progress made and emphasized the need to maintain the momentum in moving towards the full implementation of the SMS. Specifically, the Network agreed that the Working Group:
 - Continue its work, under the current chair and with the participation of all interested organizations, on the further development of the Service. This would include the development of the SMS Leadership Programme, as well as of the other features envisaged for the Service;
 - Also serve as Evaluation Committee for the review of the bids received in response to the Request for Proposal issued by the UNSSC.

(e) **Status report on the recognition of personal status**

24. The Network:

- Thanked the UN Secretariat for its update on this matter.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

(a) **Jointly-funded salary survey activities** (CEB/2004/HLCM/22)

25. The Network:

- Agreed on the proposed level of the jointly-funded salary survey activities of USD 1,194,200 for 2005 and the cost-sharing of the budget, as set out in Table 6 of the document.
- Noted that the World Tourism Organization would now be included in the cost-sharing arrangements.
- Further agreed on the creation of an open-ended working group to look at all aspects of the salary survey process, its budget and cost-sharing mechanism, with a view to reaching inter-agency agreement.
- Requested the CEB Secretariat to convene the working group as soon as possible with a view to concluding its work by February 2005, thus ensuring that its conclusions on cost sharing may be ready in time to be incorporated into individual organizations' budget planning cycles for the next biennium, and to enable the designated agencies to undertake planning for salary survey activities.
- Agreed that discussions in the working group be sequenced in such a way that the business model for the survey process be considered and agreed prior to any associated decisions by individual organizations on the issue of outsourcing.

(b) **Report of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN)**
(CEB/2004/HLCM/23)

26. The Network:

- Expressed its appreciation to UNSECOORD and the IASMN for its extensive work in the area of security for UN staff.
- Noted that the full report of IASMN would be submitted to HLCM for its review and approval.
- Took note of the recommendations specifically addressed to the HR Network encouraging the participation of HR specialists in the working group on the security of women.
- Emphasized the mandatory elements of the UN security strategy and the need for compliance of such elements, in particular that: Executive Heads act as role models for the participation in and promulgation of security training; travel authorizations not be granted without the staff member's completion of the relevant security training; and security training be incorporated into each organization's staff appraisal process.
- Agreed that all organizations should incorporate a security component into their training programs, particularly those for orientation of new staff and management training.
- Further agreed on the need for a more intensive security communication mechanism and strategy, including; cultural and gender sensitivity, use of a more balanced approach i.e. that

recommendations are country specific, and that all materials be produced in at least the major UN languages to ensure that the message reaches the maximum number of staff.

- Recognized that there was an urgent need to put policies in place to deal with significant security incidents, which build upon lessons learned from previous experiences (e.g. in handling the aftermath of the Baghdad bombing).
- Agreed that operational linkages between UNSECOORD and HR and counseling managers in individual organizations should be reinforced.
- Noted the important need for member states to earmark an adequate proportion of budgets for the safety and security of staff.

(c) **Progress report from the Working Group on HIV AIDS in the workplace (UNAIDS)**
(CEB/2004/HLCM/24)

27. The Network:

- Welcomed a presentation from UNAIDS on the progress of the work of the HR Network Working Group on HIV AIDS in the workplace. The report highlighted the following:
 - A number of tangible products were now available such as a workplace logo, a revised booklet on HIV/AIDS, a learning strategy, website, Post Exposure Prophylaxes (PEP) kits distributed across the world, ACTION report, including guidelines for access to care and support, awareness cards, the first cut of the training video, and draft monitoring indicators.
 - The future workplan of the Working Group included the implementation of a number of activities, including the dissemination of information, workshops for facilitators, production of a CD-ROM, training packages for specialists, HR and line managers; completion of a training video and finalization of the monitoring indicators.
 - The underlying challenge of ensuring adequate insurance coverage which was linked to the contractual status of staff; some organizations had made significant progress in this area, but the need for an across-the-board approach should be raised with HLCM.
 - That there was consensus on the usefulness and power of a video as a means of conveying the message of a caring workplace and stimulating discussion around issues of stigma and discrimination; a zero tolerance policy should be implemented.
 - Recognition that while policy and tools were both available, the challenge was one of leadership and accountability to ensure implementation; HR was a key partner in the response, however, others such as Executive Heads, programme managers and staff associations needed also to see this as a larger issue linked to the mission of organizations by serving as a role model to the world.
- Expressed appreciation for the work of UNAIDS and all members of the Working Group on this issue and took note of the progress that had been achieved.
- Recognized the need to work together at the inter-agency level, both at headquarters and in the field, which was emphasized by the need to tailor initiatives to cultural, gender and local realities, including language.
- Reiterated the relevance and importance of the issue for the entire UN workforce, both at headquarters or field locations.
- Recognized the effectiveness of inter-agency cooperation and work on this issue especially given resource constraints.
- Noted that while progress made at the global level was applauded, it was also recognized that individual organizations had much work to do in carrying forward initiatives.

- Recognized the important role that HR had to play, in the sharing of information, the development of communication strategies and the need to make Executive Heads and line managers accountable.
- Called on all organizations to sensitize managers to this issue through leadership and management development programs.

(d) Collaboration with UNDG

(i) IAMP Internal Vacancy System Website

28. The Network:

- Welcomed the presentation by UNICEF of the new IAMP website within the larger context of staff mobility; the site had been active since March 2004 and was the only UN inter-agency site exclusively for the sharing of internal vacancies, with the participation of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, UNAIDS and UNOPS.
- Appreciated the efforts of UNDG and noted the invitation to other organizations to become members of the initiative; which cost approximately USD 900 per organization.
- Agreed that duplication of efforts should be avoided and other associated systems (e.g. the UN Extranet and PAMS), and requested the secretariats of the CEB and the UNDG to cooperate so as to avoid any such duplication.

(ii) Spouse employment initiatives

29. The Network:

- Thanked WFP for the presentation of the new UNDG website on spouse employment initiatives, which would be live from the fall of 2004 and which would include information on individual countries and duty stations, life in the UN, specific information for expatriate spouses, links to other UNDG member sites and a search facility. Costs to participating organizations were kept low as spouses did much of the content management work. Linkages to other UN sites and the UN Extranet could be considered as the site developed.
- Noted the invitation for organizations that had not already done so to join the initiative, recognizing that the more members, the more successful the initiative would become.
- Agreed that the PAMS system should be phased out.
- Considered that, with regard to the issue of spouse employment, organizations should pursue a policy of selective intervention and that this may be served by organizations acting collectively such as by using the UNDG model of a compact in a given country or duty station.
- Recognized that while this issue affected staff at all levels of seniority, the workforce was ageing and an increasing number of entry-level staff had dual-career families, thus exacerbating the problem; creative and flexible solutions were required such as improving the employment opportunities for spouses on projects and partnerships with the private sector.

(iii) Staff harassment

30. The Network:

- Expressed its appreciation to UNDG, and participating organizations, for their work in producing a harassment training and certification program which would serve to reinforce the

zero tolerance policy and aid the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority in the workplace; the aim of the training was to support the change management process within organizations and educate UN staff on individual organizations' policies, including an understanding of conducts that constitute harassment, sexual harassment or abuse of authority and the various options available for addressing harassment.

- Asked that organizations who wished to join the initiative inform UNDP accordingly by the end of July 2004, at which time the finalized cost-shared budget would be prepared based on the staff numbers of participating organizations and the curriculum for the training would be agreed.
- Requested the CEB secretariat to prepare a list of organizations' best practices in the area of harassment and information of harassment projects underway in organizations and to this end all organizations were requested to send to the CEB secretariat copies of their policies, procedures, guidelines, training initiatives, etc. as soon as possible.
- Agreed to revert to the issue at a future Network meeting to assess progress made on the UNDG initiative and to determine whether developments necessitated a revision of the CEB policy on sexual harassment that was agreed in 1995.

(e) **Proposal for financial support to FICSA** (CEB/2004/HLCM/8/CRP.2)

31. The Network:

- Emphasized the importance of staff management relations and the role of the staff federations as interlocutors between management and staff.
- Took note of the paper in response to the concerns raised by Network members regarding the request for additional direct financial support from FICSA: organizations already gave financial support to their own staff associations and the two staff federations (FICSA and CCISUA).
- Expressed the belief that increased direct funding could dilute the autonomy and independence of the staff federations.
- Agreed that the Network should consider options for in-kind support and, therefore requested FICSA also to consider mechanisms to mobilize its own experts and financial support from its members through the payment of dues.
- Recognizing that it would be inappropriate to make separate recommendations to HLCM for each staff federation, and having received an indication from CCISUA that it was considering a similar request for funding, requested the CEB Secretariat to clarify the situation with CCISUA regarding their position on financial support.¹
- Agreed that the Network was not in a position at this time to make a positive recommendation to HLCM regarding FICSA's request for financial support, but that the Network would continue to keep the matter on its agenda for consideration at a future meeting, once it was established whether or not CCISUA wished to submit a similar proposal.

¹ In August 2004, CCISUA informed the CEB Secretariat that they would not be seeking financial support.

(f) Other business:

(i) Selection of spokespersons

32. The Network:

- Agreed that the spokespersons for the Network should be Jan Beagle (UN), Julio Camarena (UNIDO), Alejandro Henning (WHO) and Mary Jane Peters (Secretary, HLCM):

(ii) Update on the Revision of the UN's 200 Series Staff Rules

33. The Network:

- Received a briefing from UNCTAD that a questionnaire had been sent to all organizations regarding the possible modification of the 200 Series Staff Rules of the UN which were also used by the funds and programs.
- Requested Network members who used the rules to submit their views directly to UNCTAD.

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ANNEX I

Agenda

- I. Adoption of Agenda and Work Programme** CEB/2004/HLCM/17
CEB/2004/HR/8/CRP.1
- II. Issues under consideration by ICSC:**
- A. Review of the pay and benefits system**
- (a) Mobility/Hardship allowance, hazard pay and strategic bonuses ICSC/59/R.2
 - (b) Education grant: review of the methodology for determining the level of the grant ICSC/59/R.3
 - (c) Implementation of the pilot study on broadbanding/reward for contribution ICSC/59/R.4
 - (d) Progress report on the implementation of the new Master Standard for the job evaluation system relating to the Professional and higher categories ICSC/59/R.5
 - (e) Contractual arrangements ICSC/59/R.6
- B. Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories:**
- (a) Evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin ICSC/59/R.7
 - (b) Base/floor salary scale ICSC/59/R.8
 - (c) Draft agenda for the twenty-seventh session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions ICSC/59/R.9
 - (d) Review of the level of the education grant ICSC/59/R.10 and CEB/2004/HLCM/20
 - (e) Review of the Noblemaire Principle, including total compensation comparisons: ICSC/59/R.11
 - (f) Establishment of grade equivalencies between the United States federal civil service and the United Nations system ICSC/59/R.11/Add.1
- C. Conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited categories:**
- (a) Survey of the best prevailing conditions of employment in Madrid ICSC/59/R.12
 - (b) Considerations related to reviewing the Job Classification Standards for the General Service and related categories ICSC/59/R.13
- D. Common Scale of staff assessment** ICSC/59/R.14
- E. Mission subsistence allowance** ICSC/59/R.15
- F. Report of the panel on the strengthening of the international civil service** ICSC/59/R.16

III. Matters related to the work of HLCM and other Networks

- (a) Report on piloting of lump sum relocation payments (UNDP)
- (b) Base line survey on inter-agency mobility
- (c) Update on the creation of a joint FB/HR working group on long-term care
- (d) Update on the establishment of a Senior Management Service
- (e) Status report on the recognition of personal status

CEB/2004/HLCM/18
CEB/2004/HLCM/19

IV. Other Business

- (a) Jointly funded salary survey activities
- (b) Report of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network
- (c) Progress report from the Working Group on HIV AIDS in the workplace (UNAIDS)
- (d) Collaboration with UNDG:
 - (i) IAMP Internal Vacancy System Website
 - (ii) Spouse employment initiatives
 - (iii) Staff harassment
- (e) Proposal for financial support to FICSA
- (f) Other business:
 - (i) Selection of spokespersons
 - (ii) Update on revision of UN's 200 series staff rules

ANNEX II**List of Participants****Provisional List of Participants**

Org.	Name and title
UN	Jan Beagle, Director, Division for Organizational Development
	Regina Pawlik, Deputy Chief, Conditions of Service Section
ILO	Gek-Boo Ng, Director, HR Development Department
	Sue Hudson, Senior HR Officer
FAO	Louis Gagnon, Chief, HR Policy and Administration Law, HR Division
	Serge Nakouzi, Human Resources Officer
ICAO	Shahid Ahmad, Chief of Services and Acting Chief of Human Resources
UNESCO	Dyane Dufresne-Klaus, Director, Bureau of HRM
WHO	Alejandro Henning, Managing Director, HR Services and Policy Dev't
ITU	Michel Rolland, HR Development Division
IMO	Leif Gunnstedt, Deputy Director/Head HR Services
WIPO	Sven Arneberg, Deputy Director, HRM Division
UNIDO	Julio Camarena, Director, Human Resources Management Branch
IAEA	Unni Vennemoe, Director, Division of Personnel
WTO	Carmen Molina, Chief of Human Resources
UNCTAD	Duncan Barclay, Chief, Human Resources Management Section
UNDP	Brian Gleeson, Director, Office of Human Resources
	Richard Dictus, Deputy Director, Office of Human Resources
	Martha Helena Lopez, Chief, Policy, Office of Human Resources
UNICEF	Mieko Tarui, Deputy Director, Division of Human Resources
	Mercedes Gervilla, Chief, Policy and Administrative Law Section
UNHCR	Sheldon Pitterman, Deputy Director, Division of Human Resources
	Marta Lechner-Boyce, Policy & Administration Officer
UNOPS	Michèle Page, Chief, Division for HR Management
WFP	Diana Serrano, Director, Human Resources Division
	Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores, Chief, Policy Monitoring Branch
	Joseph Scalise, Project Manager (Broadbanding Pay for Performance)
UNAIDS	Johanne Girard, Manager, Human Resources Management

Observers	
ICSC	Kingston Rhodes, Executive Secretary
	Manfred Ordelt, Chief, Salaries and Allowances Division
	Vladislav Nisichenko, Chief, Cost-of-Living Division
FICSA	Robert Weisell, President
	Anne Marie Pinou, Research and Liaison Officer
CCISUA	Shuibao Lui, Executive Secretary, UNOG Staff Council
CTBTO	Yeshiareg Mekonnen, Chief, Personnel Section, Division of Admin.
UNSECOORD	Jerry Ganz
UNSSC	Geneviève Feraud, Deputy Director, Programmes

CEB Secretariat
Mary Jane Peters, Secretary, HLCM
Kristiane Golze, Inter-Agency Advisor on HR Matters
Helen Frary, Assistant to Secretary, HLCM