



UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

CEB

**Chief Executives Board
for Coordination**

CEB/2007/HR/14
18 September 2007

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING
OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES NETWORK**

14th Session

(UN, Geneva, 4-6 July 2007)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraph/s</u>
I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME	1 – 3
II. ISSUES FOR HR NETWORK:	
A. Oral updates from Working Groups	
(a) Education Grant.....	4
(b) Long-term care	5 – 7
(c) Appendix D	8 – 10
(d) Salary Survey	11 – 12
B. Briefing and update:	
(a) Safety and Security update by the Department of Safety and Security of Staff	13 – 14
(b) Update from the Medical Doctors Network on its meeting in April 2007	15
(c) Update from the IT Network on their last meeting	16 – 17
(d) Briefing from the FB Network	18
C. Issues for discussion:	
(a) The system-wide implications for HR management of the recommendations included in the report of the High Level Panel contained in A/61/583) (discussion on business process exercise and action plans)	19 – 25
(b) UN Contracts –issues of concern	26 – 28
(c) Senior Management Network.....	29
(d) Leadership Development Programme	30 – 39
(e) UN Cares Implementation Plan 2008-2009	40 – 44
(f) Dual career and spouse employment programme	45 – 49
(g) Methodology for Salary Survey	50
(h) Staff Management Relations	51 – 54
(i) Mobility and Hardship scheme, adjustments	55 – 58
(j) Census data as of 31 Dec 2006 for the field security cost-sharing.....	59
(k) Cost-sharing arrangements for several projects	60 – 61
(l) Work/life balance	62 – 64
(m) “Diploma mills”	65 – 68
(n) Pending issues from the March HR Network session	69 – 79

III. ISSUES UNDER CONSIDERATION BY ICSC:

A. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the common system.....	71 – 73
B. Review of the pay and benefits system:	
(a) Modernizing and simplifying allowances:	
(i) All leave entitlements.....	74
(ii) Language incentives.....	75
(b) Monitoring of the pilot study of broad banding/pay-for-performance.....	76
(c) Education grant: review of the methodology for determining the grant	77
C. Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories:	
(a) Evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin	78
(b) Base/floor salary scale.....	79
(c) Proposed agenda for the thirtieth session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions	80
D. Conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited staff:	
(a) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in London	81
(b) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment at Geneva	82
E. Progress report on development of a Senior Management Network.....	83
F. Implementation of decisions and recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission by organizations.....	84 – 85
G. Administrative and budgetary matters: proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008/2009.....	86
IV. OTHER BUSINESS	
A. Standing Committee on Field Duty Stations.....	87
B. Private session	88

ANNEXES

I. List of Participants	
III. List of pending issues from March 2007 HR Network session	
II. Minutes of the Meeting of the HR Network Standing Committee on Field Duty Stations	
- Appendix I: Inter-Agency Framework for Rest and Recuperation	
- Appendix II: Inter-Agency Framework Work Flow for SOA and R&R	

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME *(CEB/2007/HR/1/Rev.1)*

1. The Human Resources Network held its 14th session in Geneva on 4-6 July 2007 at the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG). The meeting was co-chaired by the Network's spokespersons, Ms. Dyane Dufresne-Klaus, Director, Bureau of Human Resources Management, UNESCO, and by Ms. Marta Helena Lopez, Chief, Human Resources Policy Service, Office of the Human Resources Management, United Nations.

2. For the closed session, the spokesperson proposed to have a briefing and update from those organizations that are going through restructuring and change initiatives that have a direct impact on Human Resources.

3. The agenda as adopted is reflected in the table of contents. The list of participating organizations and their representatives is provided in Annex I.

II. ISSUES FOR HR NETWORK

A. Oral updates from Working Groups

(a) Education Grant (no documentation)

4. This item will be discussed under the ICSC issues.

(b) Long-term care (no documentation)

5. The Network was briefed by the representative from ILO on behalf of the working group. A Van Breda seminar on Ageing and Health Insurance benefits was held in June 2007. As members of the HR Network Working Group were present at the seminar, they took the opportunity to meet and discuss the issues, including the reticences on the part of a number of organizations relative to any proposal that could result in an increase of after-service liability.

6. A discussion paper is being prepared by ILO, which will take into account the social realities and current reality within the UN system regarding funding. The paper will also address eligibility, control benefit levels, common scheme and other aspects.

➤ Actions

7. The Network took note of the update on Long Term Care and agreed to hold a video conference after the paper is completed in September.

(c) Appendix D (no documentation)

8. The Network was briefed by the representative from UNDP, who reported that UNDP wished to relinquish leadership of the Appendix D Working Group and asked for another agency

to volunteer to be coordinator of the group. The membership of the Working Group should be reviewed to include agencies using Appendix D.

9. The UNDP representative stressed that it is a complicated issue that required outside expertise. Therefore, members of the working group held informal discussions with a potential qualified consultant who would be available to assist with the review of Appendix D as of 2008.

➤ **Actions**

10. The HR Network agreed this is a complicated issue that required outside expertise. The question of funding will need to be addressed before a consultant can be hired.

(d) Salary Survey (CEB/2007/HR/13)

11. The Network was briefed by the representative from the UN. Plans for 2009 surveys are being developed by the United Nations and they are in the process of finalizing the budget for the next biennium, 2008-2009. A report of costs will be provided.

➤ **Actions**

12. The Network agreed to hold a video conference in the forth quarter of 2007 once the budget is ready.

B. Briefing and update:

(a) Safety and Security update by the Department of Safety and Security of Staff (DSS)

13. The Network was briefed by the Deputy to the Under-Secretary General, Department of Safety and Security (DSS) by video conference. In particular, she drew attention to the following:

- The increasing use of interns in locations where there are risks. Interns do not have Laissez-Passer, or any official status. There should be an explicit policy to avoid sending interns to Phase III and above locations.
- DSS is implementing a new training initiative, SSAFE, for high risk locations where a higher level of locally provided training is needed. It is a three-day course, developed by UNSSC, on country-specific security guidance, involving practical exercises. Courses were delivered in Somalia and Sudan.
- An intensive counsellor training and counsellor programme was set up with French and US institutions, leading to the delivery of a joint French/US diploma. A total of 25 counsellors were trained and certified for DPKO. DSS has also identified a network of counsellors.
- DSS highlighted the tension among current agency stress counsellors on issues of doctrine and the need for a review of stress counselling methods. DSS called for the HR Directors' assistance in this regards.

- As there is a growing pressure for staff to be deployed in Iraq, DSS drew the attention of the HR Network to the need for an approach *vis à vis* the “brain trauma”, a war related trauma frequent in Iraq (resulting from bomb explosions, etc.) and which costs US\$1 million dollars per year to treat an individual affected by this trauma. On this issue, there should be a link to the review of Appendix D for service incurred injuries.

➤ **Actions**

14. The Network agreed:

- (a) on the issue of interns;
- (b) to hold a video conference in the fourth quarter of 2007 to address the issue of the counselors.

(b) Update from the Medical Doctors Network on its meeting in April 2007.

15. The HR Network was briefed by the UN Medical Director, Dr. Brian Davis, on behalf of the Medical Doctors Network by video conference. As this was the first briefing provided to the HR Network, Dr. Davis provided some background information. The Medical Doctors Network is a formal Working Group of the HLCM. There is a core group which comes together between the annual meetings of the full group. The following issues were highlighted:

- The MDs first concern is the provision of adequate/quality medical care to staff in the field. There is a large number of medical facilities — there are 97 clinics but no regional structure has been developed.
- There is an urgent need to review the guidelines on medical care. A wide range of options are required. Medical insurance companies could help to finance some of these facilities. There is also a need to overhaul the management structure. The World Bank which has two thirds of its staff based in the field, is shifting its medical strategy from a Headquarters based structure to a Field based structure by appointing Regional MDs to coordinate/oversee medical care provision in the field. WHO is also taking this direction.
- A pilot program on Medical Standards has been implemented, which includes the development of a generic document on professional development. A programme, which aims at ensuring that MDs keep current/updated would include a points-based system (through conferences etc.) and a certification process.
- The MD Network is considering the Adoption of a Code of Standards that will be modelled after the Code of Ethics of Occupational Health practitioners.
- Regarding travel standards (9 hours rule for Business travel): MDs noticed an increase of requests for upgrade from Economy to Business class, by staff invoking the risk of deep vein thrombosis, commonly called “economy class syndrome”. Having noted that the practice *vis à vis* such requests varied among agencies, MDs reviewed it, from a policy and medical point of view in order to come up with a common approach.
- Based on scientific literature, the MDs Working Group confirmed that there is no such thing as “economy class syndrome”. The risk of “deep vein thrombosis” is the same in any class of travel. However, economy class travel increases fatigue and reduces

performance and productivity when staff arrive at their final destination, but these are not medical conditions. It should be noted that WHO conducted a review and has implemented a 6-hour rule for business class travel.

- The ICSC has endorsed the 6-hour rule but it has not been approved by the General Assembly. The JIU also endorsed the 6-hour rule.

(c) Update from the Information and Communication Technology Network (ICT) on its activities.

16. The HR Network was briefed by the ICT Network Spokesperson by video conference. The briefing focused on the work priorities related the Harmonization of Business Practices. The spokesperson highlighted the main issues with links to HR:

- Enterprise Resource Planning Systems (ERP) harmonization: There are three ERP systems in use in the UN: Oracle, PeopleSoft and SAP. The ICT Network considers that it is unrealistic to move to one system given the large investments made already. However there is a case for sharing best practices between agencies which have the same ERP. There could be a possibility for having the same service provider.
- There is a need to build bridges between ERPs and to have a single high level view, e.g. a high level dashboard. A timeframe of between 18 to 24 months with results after 2010 is envisaged.
- Common Services Global Networks to improve the service delivery capacity across Agencies. A prerequisite is to have technical infrastructure in place to support it.
- Internationally recognized standards for ICTs to facilitate interaction across organizations as well as common evaluation mechanisms and standards.
- A single UN system directory /database to provide quick and easy access to locate contact information for all UN system personnel. The issue is to decide what staff information should be available.
- Common UN System Portal to make the UN more open and accessible as well as having a consistent image for the UN system and clearer message.
- Common Payroll (in FB network)
- Delivering as One, the ICT Network is working closely with the UNDG working group on ICT with the aim of eliminating duplications and obtaining greater synergy between their tasks. The UNDG working group is concentrating on ICT issues that impact at the country level.

17. The ICT Spokesperson stated that resources will be required for the various activities. It is proposed to use seconded staff from agencies with the expertise required. The use of consultants would not be feasible, except for supporting some areas, as there is a need to know the business. Each Agency should consider seconding one staff member plus travel costs plus funds to backfill the post.

(d) Briefing from the Finance and Budget (FB) Network.

18. The FB Network Advisor briefed the HR Network on the main issues discussed at their meeting held from 20-22 June 2007:

- International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The implementation is on track. It will have an impact on HR as system-wide training activities will target 36,000 staff. Training plans are being finalized and ready for the procurement phase. WHO, WFP and ICAO plan to adopt IPSAS effective 1 January 2008 and their staff need training as soon as possible. It is planned to have one UN project for all participating organizations; a communication strategy will follow.
- Release of internal audit reports: some Organizations had been requested by a few Member States to share internal audit reports. Some form of information sharing is possible within limits. However the internal audit reports are technical positions and are considered an important management tool. A position paper on this issue will be prepared.
- Harmonization of Financial Rules and Regulations: The Controllers of the four UNDG Agencies and the UN agreed in October 2006 to develop one common set of Financial Regulations and Rules (FRR). A report proposing a new set of harmonized FRRs would be available by December 2007 for submission to the ACABQ and the General Assembly.
- Cost recovery policy, this was requested by Member States to reach greater harmonization on the rates. A Working Group would identify possible areas for further harmonization of cost recovery policies, particularly regarding the practices adopted by UN organizations beyond general definitions of cost categories.
- Cost-shared activities: The FB Network recommended that HLCM addresses the need to clarify and reinforce the consultative mechanisms through which UN system organizations provide their input in the budgeting process of Jointly Financed Activities.
- The FB Network considered that the position of Controllers in the UN system was generally weak as compared to the responsibility and authority of Chief Financial Officers in the private sector, and that such role needed to be strengthened.
- Financial reporting in inter-agency programmes, the FB Network urged its members to address the issue of timeliness and reliability of financial reporting by implementing partners.

C. Issues for discussion

(a) *The system-wide implications for HR management of the recommendations included in the report of the High Level Panel contained in A/61/583) (discussion on business process exercise and action plans)*

19. The Spokesperson briefed the HR Network. At their last meeting on 20-21 April, the executive heads of UN system organizations had decided that “*HLCM should finalize a plan of action for the harmonization and reform of business practices*”. At the 13th Session in March 2007, HLCM reviewed areas to harmonize practices. A Steering Group led by the HLCM vice-chair, Dennis Aitken, WHO and composed of the chairs of the HLCM Networks, would lead the development of the plan of action which will be submitted to HLCM for approval at the 14th session in September 2007.

20. The Steering Group had agreed that priorities would have to be identified on the basis of two key criteria: (1) achieving efficiencies and (2) support delivering as one at the country level.

21. The priorities in the Human Resources area are:

- Contractual arrangements
- Inter-Agency Mobility
- Senior Management Network
- Leadership Development Programme

22. The HR Network:

- Noted that the eight delivering as one pilot countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam) are moving rapidly. The Network needs to be on top of what is going on and what the HR implications are. This will be a subject for a video conference.

23. A review of current practices should be undertaken. Then an analysis of what would be cost effective and feasible must take place, taking into account that delivering as one is much easier if systems, rules and procedures are as harmonized as possible.

24. Regarding contracts, some pilot countries are moving to joint offices; it is important to give one type of contract to local staff.

25. Much cross-agency training is already taking place, such as Security. More can be done sharing learning material across agencies as a first step.

(b) UN Contracts –issues of concern

26. The Network was briefed by the representative from the United Nations. A proposal on the three types of contracts has been submitted to the General Assembly. The ICSC endorsed the efforts of the Secretary General to introduce one series of the Staff Rules and submitted the following recommendations in its report to the General Assembly:

- Temporary appointments: should not be more than one year at a time for maximum 2 years.
- Fixed-term and continuous appointments should not be limited.
- The eligibility and review process for continuous appointments should be more competitive. Not everyone should be eligible.

27. Staff/Management consultations have reaffirmed one series and three types of contracts. Some issues have to be discussed with staff (SMCC). A report should be issued soon.

➤ **Actions**

28. The Network asked that the needs of Funds/Programmes be taken into account when the new Staff Rules are drafted.

(c) *Senior Management Network (SMN)*

29. The Network was briefed by the representative of the CEB Secretariat.

- The CEB had approved the creation of the SMN and agreed that it would be responsible for supporting its establishment, guided by the HR Network on behalf of the CEB and HLCM.
- The Senior Management Network Leadership Development Programme (SMNP) is the main part of the Senior Management Network, and thanks to the SMNP the SMN is now moving forward.
- The launching of the SMN will coincide with the launching of the SMNP. A letter from the Secretary General to Executive Heads requesting nominations will be issued soon. The CEB Secretariat will support the nomination process.
- A Governance structure will be put in place comprised of a mixture of HR Directors as well as Finance and Management. The formal launching of the SMN could take place at the HLCM meeting on 20-21 September.

(d) *SMN Leadership Development Programme (SMNP)*

30. The Network was briefed by the representative from the United Nations Staff College on progress made on the Leadership Development Programme. The UNSSC took note of the comments at the Spring sessions of the HR network and HLCM at which the first design of the SMNP was presented. These have substantially been incorporated in the new design which was distributed to network members.

31. The Rotterdam School of Management and UNSSC are proposing a less costly and shorter programme with one event instead of five. This should be seen as the start of a larger programme (subject to the availability of funds).

32. The cost of the course itself, without travel and accommodation would be in the region of US\$8,200; thus the total cost which agencies would pay would not exceed US\$12,000 as agreed.

33. The SMNP would be a 4-day plus one-evening session in a retreat location probably in the Netherlands. Each cohort would comprise 49 participants. In each programme there would be one facilitator, up to five subject-matter specialists and seven coaches. The programme will be in English but the faculty will be bi/trilingual.

34. The programme would include a thorough evaluation with progress indicators established from the outset.

35. A paper was distributed which explains what makes this programme unique including the cross-agency nature of the programme and its close linkage with UN reform.

36. A note on the participation criteria was distributed, including notional membership and participation levels per agency. Important criteria include: think future leaders, think Field as well as headquarters and select staff who are dynamic, positive and constructive and who generally

support the reform agenda. Selection would be based on a combination of both the post/function and the person.

37. The Secretary General will send a letter to Heads of Agencies asking them to select members of the SMN and participants for the SMNP. The CEB Secretariat and UNSSC will then follow up with HLCM and HR Network members. HR directors are invited to be actively involved.

➤ **Actions**

38. Most agencies supported the new design and were pleased that their comments were taken into account. They also confirmed their preparedness to participate.

39. The HR Network mentioned the urgency to issue a letter to Heads of Agencies as soon as possible in order to allow them to proceed accordingly.

(e) UN Cares Implementation Plan 2008-2009 (CEB/2007HR/11)

40. The HR Network was briefed by the UN Cares Global Coordinator.

41. The Global Coordinator recalled that this was the third time the UN Cares document had been presented to the HR Network and felt that there was a need to have a concrete way to move forward on this issue since the current global funding for UN Cares is only until the end of 2007.

42. In March 2007, Organizations requested that additional information be provided in the Implementation Plan including a more detailed budget and additional implementation scenarios and these were presented and discussed at a video conference held in April 2007. Since then some Organizations have committed to fund one of the scenarios; however, not all were able to do so.

43. All Organizations expressed a strong commitment to the programme and support the minimum standards, the aim being to implement them all. The current lack of consensus is not a question of the programme activities but of the budget. Most Organizations operate under a bi-annual budget; therefore, at this stage, none would be able to commit funds beyond 2008-2009. Additionally, Organizations need to have a clear picture of all cost-sharing activities. Also emphasized was the need to review UN Cares in 2009 to help determine the future of the programme beyond 2009.

➤ **Actions**

44. The Network thanked the Global Coordinator for the document and the additional information provided. Although there was no consensus on the scenarios, scenario 3 was the most supported. The Chairperson stated that each Organization should contribute as much as possible and make a commitment before the end of July. Another video conference will be held at the beginning of August to sort out several issues before going to HLCM, which will take a decision on the budget.

(f) *Dual career and spouse employment programme (CEB/2007/HR/12)*

45. WFP presented the document by video conference as part of the hand-over of the Dual Career and Staff Mobility Programme from UNDG to the HR Network/CEB. WFP expected the transition to the CEB to start in September 2007. The GESA Team is committed to make the transition successful and will be available to brief and guide the new team.

46. The CEB Secretariat has started the transition by hiring a consultant who has been to Rome and held discussions with the GESA team. The Webmasters of the CEB Secretariat and WFP have discussed what the transition would entail. CEB is committed to taking on the Programme but would need resources to run the project. The transition period mentioned by WFP may not be realistic and January 2008 was recommended as the target date. The GESA team is finalizing guidelines for research and the “toolkit” for establishing LESAs. These would be available in November-December for consultations.

47. A discussion regarding the budget took place, approximately US\$70,000 are available for the final four months of 2007. Two budget options were presented for the biennium 2008-2009, one staffing the project with regular staff and the second with consultants. The costs at the local level should be separate from those at the global level. The CEB Secretariat will need more discussions on the details of the budget.

48. WFP agreed to revisit the transition proposal and will complete the paper by the end of July. A video conference will be held in August to discuss the next steps.

➤ **Actions**

49. The Spokesperson thanked WFP for undertaking this challenging project during the past few years. Now that the basics are in place and the programme is operating globally (67 countries on the website and 36 countries that have or are establishing LESAs) the CEB Secretariat can strengthen it effective January 2008, by giving spouse employment greater visibility and by making it a more inclusive programme. There is a need to go in September 2007 to HLCM with a proposed budget for approval.

(g) *Methodology for Salary Survey*

50. Discussion took place under Item II A(d).

(h) *Staff Management Relations*

(Documentation: Note and Background on the non-release of the FICSA General Secretary)

51. The FICSA President introduced to the HR Network two issues of concern. First, the Network was reminded of its intervention at the March 2007 Network session at which it was informed that FICSA had been unable to fill the position of FICSA General Secretary. This was due to the fact that one candidate from IMO had felt compelled to withdraw her name as a candidate during the 60th FICSA Council because the IMO management was doubtful about its ability to fund her post. The elected nominee from WMO was not willing to assume the FICSA position due to the inability of her organization to fund her post. This latter person resigned in

mid-May. FICSA subsequently called for nominations for a by-election but was unwilling to proceed if no guarantee existed for release with full pay.

52. The President of FICSA circulated a background paper on the 1979 discussions and agreement with CCAQ for releasing the President and General Secretary with possible support coming from a cost-sharing arrangement. HR Network members were queried on their views and clarification was requested from WMO and IMO as to their position and reasons.

53. The second issue concerned the newly created staff federation UNISERV comprised of the two New York-based staff associations/unions, NY UNSU and UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Staff Associations who, it had been learned, had applied for representation at the ICSC sessions. Both FICSA and CCISUA enquired if the prescribed procedures for participating in an inter-agency session established in 1982 by the CCAQ were being followed. It was noted that any applying federations must first be cleared by inter-Agency bodies and no formal submission had been received by the HR Network or HLCCM.

54. The Network:

- Took note of FICSA's concerns and agreed that a solution needed to be found within the next few months, followed by a revisit of the topic and development of a long-term, viable solution. WMO was requested to inform the CEB Secretariat as soon as possible as to how it might fund the elected FICSA representative. In addition, follow-up would also occur with IMO.
- Requested that a meeting should be convened by FICSA represented agencies to prepare a cost-sharing proposal if WMO funding is not available.
- Requested the CEB Secretariat to obtain the information on the procedure for the recognition on new staff federations and requested the Network spokespersons to discuss with ICSC on how it planned to handle UNISERV's application.

(i) Mobility and Hardship scheme, adjustments

55. The Network received a copy of the letter from the ICSC Chairman to Ms. Jan Beagle, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, dated 25 June 2007 concerning the implementation of the new arrangements for Mobility and Hardship. The letter pointed out that a number of the modalities for adjustments of payments as set out in ST/AI/2007/1 dated 8 March 2007 did not conform to General Assembly Resolution 61/239. The Resolution is based on Annex II of the Commission's 2005 report which excludes adjustments unless the Commission adjusts the amount of the entitlement.

56. The interpretation of the United Nations as well as most of the organizations is that as a result of the de-linking of the Mobility and Hardship from the base-floor salary, there is no longer an automatic increase of the allowance, except in the case of change in dependency status, promotion or receipt of a special post allowance.

57. Furthermore, participants of the Mobility and Hardship Working Group indicated that they were not consulted on the drafting of Annex II, which contains the provisions that allowances are not adjusted. It was also pointed out that there is a risk that this decision could be challenged by

staff members. Some organizations also stated that operationally it is not possible to change the payroll system once again, so shortly after the introduction of the new scheme in order to make these modifications.

➤ **Actions**

58. The Network agreed that the members of the Working Group would meet with the ICSC to discuss the issue further.

(j) Headcount of Field Staff as of 31 December 2006 for the Cost-sharing of Field Staff of the UN Security management System

59. The CEB Secretariat representative informed the HR Network that the HLCM has requested for a new census exercise on which to base the cost sharing exercise pertaining to the UN Security Management System. The census will be replaced by headcounts provided by each Agency's Headquarters. A letter requesting the headcount of Field Staff will be forwarded in the coming days to each Agency with a deadline of 27 July 2007.

(k) Cost-sharing arrangements for several projects

60. HLCM has requested a complete list of all cost-sharing activities including the amounts and the criteria used for the apportionment of costs among Organizations.

➤ **Actions**

61. The CEB Secretariat will prepare a paper by September.

(l) Work/life balance

62. The HR Network was informed by the CEB representative that the CEB Secretariat has hired a consultant to follow up on a recommendation from the HR Network to deal with common work/life balance issues. The Objective is to create a framework for the oversight and management of programmes and initiatives pertaining to staff well-being and work-life balance. It would include topics such as HIV in the workplace, dual career and staff mobility, staff benefits such as parental leave, after-service health insurance and flexible working arrangement, as well as gender balance.

63. The framework will be accompanied by a business plan for coordination and harmonization of good practices and an approach for cost-sharing or extra budgetary funding. The business plan will also address the required staff to manage this work in the long term, as well as outreach activities and a website.

➤ **Actions**

64. The Network welcomed the consultancy to move forward on this important issue.

(m) “Diploma mills”

65. The HR Network was informed by the Spokesperson that further to the discussions held at the Network’s Spring Session, a Working Group comprising the CEB Secretariat, UNESCO, the UN Secretariat, UNICEF and UNFPA was formed.

66. It was mentioned that some chancellors of Universities have lists of bona fide Institutions.

67. UNICEF issued an Information Circular on diploma mills which will be shared with the Network and UNFPA has put a list on its intranet site. UNESCO no longer keeps such list; this is done by another education body/NGO which has a website.

➤ **Actions**

68. The Working Group will decide on having a list of bona fide Institutions or of “dummy” ones, or both and will prepare a list of Institutions to be kept in the CEB Secretariat.

(n) Pending issues from March 2007 HR Network Session

69. The HR Network was informed that there are a number of issues pending from the Network’s Spring Session which will need action and follow-up. A list of these pending issues was shared as a reminder (see Annex II). Some of the issues had already been dealt with during this Session.

➤ **Actions**

70. The CEB Secretariat will follow up with the Network to ensure the remainder is dealt with.

III. ISSUES UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (ICSC)

A. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the common system (ICSC/65/R.2 and Add.1)

71. The HR Network was briefed by the Executive Secretary of ICSC about the need of improving communication since documents lack information.

72. Some Agencies (WIPO, ILO, UNFPA) indicated that they did not receive the questionnaire.

73. The HR Network:

- Suggested that ICSC sends communication to a wider list of people in each organization.
- ICSC provides a list of documents that each Organization has to provide. It does this on unanimous base and in advance.

B. Review of the pay and benefits system

(a) *Modernizing and simplifying allowances:*

(i) *All leave entitlements (ICSC/65/R.3)*

74. The HR Network:

- Thanked the Working Group for the comprehensive document on all leave practices of Organizations, as well as reference to practices of the United States comparator and other national and international institutions, which was submitted to the ICSC Secretariat.
- Noted that although there are minor differences in the implementation of leave provisions, there is a high degree of harmonization among the Organizations.
- Urged agencies which have not yet implemented paternity leave or adoption leave to do so.
- Supported WHO's initiative on the recent change to increase maternity leave by four weeks in the case of multiple births.
- Further supported recommendations made by WFP, WHO and UNDP that each staff member should be entitled to full adoption leave, that adoption leave should be a specific kind of leave rather than fall under "special leave". Furthermore WHO and UNDP recommended that eight weeks paternity leave be granted for multiple births irrespective of the type of duty station.

ICSC decision

The Commission decided that its coordinating and regulating role in the area of leave entitlements should be concentrated on ensuring a consistent common system policy with respect to those elements of leave which were essential to maintaining harmonized recruitment incentives, facilitating mobility of staff and ensuring coherent conditions of employment among organizations with similar situated staff. The areas of concentration would include, but would not be limited to annual, home and sick leave.

Taking into account any guidelines established by the ICSC on other leave entitlements, the organizations should have the flexibility to address these issues in the light of recent trends and best practices in work/life balance, healthcare etc. When considering such issues, the organizations should consult with the Chairman of ICSC.

ICSC urged the organizations to strengthen partnership with the Commission in monitoring best practices and developments in the area of leave entitlements and to share this information with the Commission in a timely manner. For this part, the Commission would continue to keep organizations informed of practices within the common system.

(ii) *Language incentives (ICSC/65/R.4)*

75. The Network:

- Supported and promoted multilingualism. However Organizations applied different approaches to language incentives which ranged from providing language training to the recognition of one or more languages. A number of Organizations made proficiency in two languages a recruitment requirement. Distinction between General Service and professional staff were also made by some Organizations in granting language incentives.
- Agreed that flexibility should be maintained to meet individual Organization's operational needs.
- Considered that testing would be an expensive undertaking for Organizations and not practicable to implement.
- Is of the view that the paper's analysis of this complex question was a good start but is not rigorous enough since it does not address some key issues, such as the impact of the use of language within Organizations as well as the cost implications.
- Concluded that the discussion is too premature to modify these incentives schemes since the broad-banding pilot projects are still underway and no comprehensive evaluation has yet been undertaken.

ICSC decision

The Commission decided to make the following recommendations to the General Assembly:

- (a) The long-standing flexibility provided to the organizations in applying the language recognition schemes and other tools to promote multilingualism in the United Nations common system has been effective in meeting their diverse operational needs and should therefore be maintained;
- (b) The organizations should be encouraged to continue, taking into account their practical needs and within their budget considerations, efforts to promote the use of additional languages in a multicultural environment of international civil service to further their operational goals;
- (c) When reviewing or developing programmes to improve the organizational effectiveness through multilingualism, the organizations should, where appropriate and advisable, consider the following general guidelines:
 - (i) If the operational mandate so requires, proficiency in more than one official language of the organization should be included in vacancy announcements as a qualification requirement;
 - (ii) The knowledge and use of additional languages should be taken into account in career development and promotions of staff;
 - (iii) Where a language allowance or a language incentive is administered, verification of language proficiency should be in place, with specific mechanisms to be determined by operational requirements and budget considerations; such mechanisms could include retesting examinations or certification or observance of language use under the performance appraisal system;
 - (iv) Where it could improve organizational effectiveness (e.g. facilitate mobility), free training in official as well as other languages could be considered for staff and family members;
 - (v) Where language proficiency is a job or mobility requirement, training should be fully paid for by the organization; in other cases, cost-sharing could be considered;
 - (vi) The language incentive or allowance should not be applicable to the use of the mother tongue nor to language staff;
 - (vii) Free training or cost-sharing could be considered in lieu of providing a language incentive or allowance;
 - (viii) Where monetary language incentive schemes are to be administered, the focus should be to encourage the practical use and application of languages in the interest of improved organizational effectiveness.

(b) *Monitoring of the pilot study of broad banding/pay-for-performance (progress report)*

76. The Network:

- Expressed disappointment at the lack of support from ICSC in moving the project forward and concern that the project is losing momentum and not moving the way it was planned.
- Agreed that it is crucial to review the pay and benefits system, that the momentum needs to be picked up again and suggested a special meeting of the pilot organizations with ICSC to look at the current situation and how to move forward

ICSC decision

The Commission decided to request its secretariat to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot study of the broad banding/pay-for-performance project in the five volunteer organizations, stressing the lessons learned, and to report to the Commission at its sixty-sixth session so as to enable it to take an appropriate decision on this study.

The Commission also requested the secretariat to collect information on best practices in national civil services and other international organizations on performance recognition and reward.

(c) *Education grant: review of the methodology for determining the grant (ICSC/65/R.6)*

77. The Network:

- Thanked the ICSC Secretariat for the document and the work undertaken by the Working Group.
- Agreed with the Working Group's proposal to further analyze and test a number of approaches relating to the introduction of lump-sum reimbursement for the education grant scheme.
- Believes that the proposed changes will result in simplification, reduction of administrative work and improvement in service delivery while still maintaining equity among staff.
- Welcomed the offer of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime to pilot the proposed scheme and requested further volunteer Organizations, especially field-based ones.

ICSC decision

The Commission decided that:

- (a) A task group including Commission members, representatives of the organizations and staff, as well as those of the ICSC and CEB secretariats should be established to continue work on the matter;
- (b) The group should conduct a comprehensive analysis of all relevant issues including those which had already been raised with a view to identifying a viable alternative to the present scheme based on considerations of simplification, equity and cost-neutrality;
- (c) The group should report to the Commission on its progress at the sixty-sixth session of ICSC and present its recommendations no later than the sixty-seventh session.

The Commission also requested the ICSC secretariat and the CEB/HR Network to cooperate closely in providing the task group with comprehensive and accurate data as the group may require for its proceedings.

Recalling section II, paragraph 2, of General Assembly resolution 61/239, the Commission further requested the organizations to keep the ICSC and CEB secretariats apprised of, and involved in, as necessary, the development of the integrated information technology and human resources programme (Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP)) to ensure that the reporting data needed for modelling and decision-making by the Commission were taken into consideration in the development of the requirements of the ERP systems.

C. Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories

(a) Evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin (ICSC/65/R.7)

78. The Network:

- Noted that the average margin level for the past five years (2003-2007) has been below the desirable midpoint of 115, currently standing at 112.3.
- Also wished to recall resolution 61/239 of the General Assembly whereby it reaffirmed that the margin's range of 110-120 should apply, with desirable mid-point of 115.
- Continues to express concern at the impact the various HR initiatives in the United States federal civil service, may have on the net remuneration margin.

ICSC decision

Based on the information provided, the Commission decided to report to the General Assembly that the margin 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 2007, was estimated at 113.9. It also drew the attention of the Assembly to the fact that the average margin level for the past five years (2003-2007) had been below the desirable midpoint of 115, currently standing at 112.3.

(b) Base/floor salary scale (ICSC/65/R.8)

79. The HR Network:

- Has taken note of the information contained in the document and supports the proposal in paragraph 10 of the document to recommend to the General Assembly, for approval with effect 1 January 2008, a 1.97 per cent adjustment to the base/floor salary scale for the Professional and higher category.

ICSC decision

The Commission recommended to the General Assembly, for approval with effect from 1 January 2008, the base/floor salary scale for the Professional and higher categories reflecting a 1.97 per cent adjustment implemented through the standard consolidation method of increasing base salary and commensurately reducing post adjustment multiplier points.

(c) Proposed agenda for the thirtieth session of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ICSC/65/R.9)

80. The Network:

- Expressed its appreciation to the ACPAQ and the ICSC Secretariat and endorsed the recommendations contained therein.
- Agreed with the proposed agenda for the thirtieth session to be held at the beginning of 2008.

ICSC decision

The Commission decided:

- (a) To endorse the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in respect of the proposed simplifications of the post adjustment index structure;
- (b) To request the secretariat to conduct an out-of-area survey to determine the out-of-area index and information on Internet purchases;
- (c) To authorize the secretariat to negotiate with the data provider's specific proposals to improve the transparency and readability of its biennial report, but postpone any methodological modifications to 2010;
- (d) To approve the Advisory Committee's recommendation to use the cost estimation models developed by the secretariat to estimate the financial implications of changes in both the base scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories, and in the mobility and hardship scheme (see annexes IV and V);
- (e) To request the secretariat to develop a model to estimate financial implications of the education grant and present it at its sixty-sixth session.

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

(a) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in London (ICSC/65/R.10)

81. The Network:

- Thanked the ICSC Secretariat for the document and took note that the survey for London was completed.

(b) Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment at Geneva (ICSC/65/R.11)

82. The Network:

- Noted the difficulties faced by the Local Salary Survey Committee (LSSC) which prevented the completion of the exercise.
- Wished to reiterate the need to start to review the methodology to address the various problems, including data collection, in order to ensure that the Fleming Principle is complied with.

ICSC decision

The Commission decided to:

- (a) Agree to extend the survey data collection phase until 30 September 2007;
- (b) Use external data if the survey was not completed by the set deadline;
- (c) Request its secretariat to circulate the updated survey data to the Commission and LSSC, so that the final survey results could be approved by correspondence.

E. Progress report on development of a Senior Management Network (ICSC/65/R.12)

83. The document is a report to the Commission.

ICSC conclusion

The Commission took note of the information provided by the CEB/HR Network on the development of SMN among organizations of the United Nations common system.

F. Implementation of decisions and recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission by Organizations (ICSC/65/R.13)

84. The ICSC Secretariat informed the Network that less than 50 percent response from Organizations had been received.

85. The Network:

- Urged those Organizations that had not responded to make all efforts to supply the requested information prior to the start of the Commission Session.
- Agreed to work closely with the ICSC Secretariat to improve the collection of data.
- On the subject of standards of travel, the decision needs to be taken by the General Assembly. The Network should reinforce these recommendations with the support of the WHO report and the JIU recommendation.

ICSC decision

The Commission decided to:

- (a) Take note of the information provided;
- (b) Urge those organizations that had not responded to provide the information requested by the secretariat;
- (c) Request its secretariat to provide further analysis of the items reported on, including a full review of:
 - (i) Mobility policies;
 - (ii) Use of appointments of limited duration;
 - (iii) Performance management systems in the organizations;
- (d) Refrain from reporting to the General Assembly on the item until further analysis was conducted.

G. Administrative and budgetary matters: proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008/2009 (ICSC/65/R.14)

86. The Network:

- Took note of the programme budget for the 2008-2009 biennium.
- Welcomed the proposal to reinforce the Personnel Policy Division by creating a new P-5 post in order to support important initiatives. The Network, however recommends that in future the ICSC Secretariat makes every effort to fill its vacancies in a more expeditious manner.
- Requested the ICSC Secretariat to consider prior consultations with the HR Network on budget proposals and priorities before submitting it for approval. This would ensure that the proposals are more focused on the needs of the Organizations and, thus ensuring a more strategic buy-in from all Organizations.

ICSC decision

The Commission took note of the work done by the programme budget for the biennium 2008/09 as presented in the document.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Standing Committee on Field Duty Stations

87. The HR Network Standing Committee on Field Duty Stations met on 3 July 2007, hosted by WHO (Minutes attached as Annex III).

B. Private Session

88. WHO, UNHCR and FAO shared their experiences on restructuring and change initiatives that have an impact on Human Resources. Presentations will be provided to members of the Network separately. The issue on the costs of the proceedings of the ILO Administrative Tribunal was briefly raised by UPU.

Annex I

List of Participants

Org.	Name and title
UN	Martha Helena Lopez , Chief, Staff Development Services and Chief, HR Policy Service
	Diana Russler , Deputy to the Under Secretary-General (by videoconf.)
	Brian Davey , Director, Medical Services Division, OHRM (by videoconf.)
ILO	Grace Strachan , Director, Human Resources Development Department
	Mark Levin , OIC, HR Policy Branch
	Susan Hudson , Policy Advisor, HR Policy Branch
FAO	Serge Nakouzi , Chief, HR Policy, Planning and UN Common System Branch
UNESCO	Dyane Dufresne-Klaus , Director, Bureau of Human Resources Management
	Annick Grisar , Chief, Policy Section, HR Management
WHO	Alejandro Henning , Director, Human Resources Management Department
	Mercedes Gervilla , Coordinator, Human Resources Management Department
	Josian Sidibe Pimpie , Human Resources Specialist, Compensation
PAHO	Dianne Arnold , Human Resources Area Manager
	Nancy Machado , Chief, Staff Relations
UPU	Michael Mauer , Director, Human Resources
ITU	Yajaira Freudiger , Head, Entitlement and Benefits Service
	Marianne Wilson , Head, Pension and Insurances Services
	Eric Dalhen , Administrator
WMO	Patricia Geddes , Head of Staffing and Staff Development
WIPO	Juan Antonio Toledo , Director, Human Resources Management Department (HRMD)
	Svein Arneberg , Deputy Director, HRMD
	Michel Ciampi , HR Officer
UNIDO	Paul Maseli , Unit Chief, Human Resource Planning and Development
IAEA	Doug Northey , Director, Division of Human Resources, Department of Management
UNWTO	Carmen Molina , Chief of Human Resources Section
WTO	Miguel Figuerola , Director, Human Resources Division
	Monica Lezama , HR Policy Counsellor
UNDP	Duncan Barclay , HR Policy Advisor
	Mark Farnsworth , HR Policy Officer
	Ann Sayers , HR Policy Associate
UNHCR	Marta Leichner-Boyce , Head, Human Resources Policy, Division of HR Management
	Mérida Morales-O'Donnell , Director, Division of HR Management
UNICEF	Steven Allen , Director, Division of Human Resources
	Ruth de Miranda , Chief, Policy and Administrative Law Section
UNFPA	Sean Hand , Director, Office of Human Resources
	Florence Sykes , Chief, Policy and Planning Branch, Division of Human Resources

Org.	Name and title
WFP	Susana Malcorra , Deputy Executive Director (by videoconf.)
	Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores , Chief, Policy Branch, Division of Human Resources
	Gina Paone , Chief, Recruitment Branch, Division of Human Resources (by videoconf.)
	Mayra de la Garza , Human Resources Officer
UNRWA	Matthias Burchard , Head, UNRWA Representative Office
	Yasmin Burton , Administrative Assistant
UNAIDS	Paul Greenstreet , Director, Human Resources Management
	Laurie Newell , Global Coordinator, UN Cares
	Geneviève Mercœur , Interagency Workplace Officer
ITC	Jay Wormus , HR Special Adviser
UNSSC	Michael Alford , Head, UNSSC Liaison Office at Geneva, and Co-ordinator Leadership Development Programmes
	Karine Sarajyan , Head of HR Unit

Organization	Name and title
ICSC	John P. Hamilton , Executive Secretary
	Vladislav Nisichenko , Chief, Cost-of-Living Division
	Yuri Orlov , Compensation Officer
UNOPS	Monika Altmaier , Director of Organizational Effectiveness and Human Resources
FICSA	Robert C. Weisell , President
	Steven Ackumey-Affizie , Executive Committee Member
	Maria Dweggah , Executive Committee Member
	Varghese Joseph , Executive Committee Member
	Valérie Seguin , Executive Committee Member
	Leslie Ewart , Information Officer
CCISUA	Ridha Zargouni , Bureau Member
ICC	Floris Kist , Human Resources Assistant
ICJ	Loud-Hein Jordans , Head of Administrative and Personnel Division
CTBTO	Yeshiareg Mekonnen , Chief, Personnel Section
CFC	Rebecca Hinchliffe , Personnel Assistant

CEB Secretariat
Marta Leichner-Boyce , Inter-Agency HRM Advisor Designate
Remo Lalli , Inter-Agency FB Advisor
Petra ten Hoop-Bender , HR Consultant
Laura Casellini , HR Assistant

Annex II

List of pending issues from March 2007 HR Network session

Issues	Actions	Comments
I. Harmonization of Rules and Regulations		
Recruitment and promotion	Review of recruitment and promotion policies and practices	
Administration of justice	Examine the various rules and processes in place in each Agency to determine if these can be more harmonized	
Performance evaluation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop common guiding principles for performance evaluation systems in the UN – Review the way UN agencies reward high performers and sanction poor performers 	
II. Compensation and benefits		
Noblemaire	Conduct equivalency study	
III. Mobility		
Inter-agency mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop general guidelines to staff as how to move from one Agency to another – Harmonization of medical plans 	<p>To promote the concept of “One UN”.</p> <p>To be reviewed by the HLCM</p>
IV. Age structure of Human Resources in the organization of the UN system – JIU report		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop guidelines on succession planning – Raise with ICSC and the UNJSP Board the question of the mandatory age of retirement – Review of the portability of pension in the UN system 	
V. Staff-Management relations		
	Create a W.G. to assist CCISUA and FISCA to develop a formal business plan	
VI. Senior Management Network		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Launch Network with letter from SG – Establish Governance structure – Move a head on business practices submission to get money for SMN admin – Urgently identify interim Network Manager – Launch Network (HLCM in September?) – Funding for Networking Tools and setting up Network 	
VII. SMN Leadership Development Programme		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Take note of progress and agree to development (and delivery) – Identify participants for first cohort – Set aside funds for participation 	

Annex III

Minutes of Meeting HR Network Standing Committee on Field Duty Stations 3 July 2007

Present:

FAO - Serge Nakouzi
ILO – Susan Hudson
UNDP – Duncan Barclay, Ann Sayers, Mark Farnsworth
UNESCO – Annick Grisar
UNFPA – Florence Sykes
UNHCR - Marta Leichner-Boyce, Jeanetta Terry-Short
UNICEF – Ruth De Miranda
WFP – Mayra de la Garza
WHO – Mercedes Gervilla, Josianne Pimpie

R&R

PNG – Port Moresby

Port Moresby, currently classified as ‘D’ in Security Phase II, is one of the duty stations that enjoys R&R but does not qualify under the existing methodology. It was moved from 8 weeks to 12 weeks R&R cycle effective 1st January 2007. A strong recommendation was received from the RR, requesting reconsideration due to a high level of stress and security issues, in particular threats against female staff. A report from DSS verified the high number of attacks on females, including car-jackings and rapes.

It was decided to maintain the exception and keep the 12 week cycle. It was also decided to monitor and keep Port Moresby on a watch list.

In this connection, it was ***decided*** that all exceptions would be reviewed on an annual basis at the mid-year meeting.

Sudan

Kassala has been transitioning from a non-family to family duty station. After being reclassified from E to D, it was decided at the December meeting that R&R would remain at 8 weeks and be reviewed in July.

It was decided to maintain the R&R cycle, noting that Kassala should normally be 12 weeks under the framework. As far as phasing out SOA was concerned, WFP and UNHCR, being the only Agencies with staff at this location, would get together and decide for themselves, and would advise the Group accordingly.

Port Sudan was moved to a 12 week cycle effective 1 January 2007. It was reported that UN staff were receiving 6 weeks. Discussions took place with DPKO, who confirmed they would harmonize once we all became “One” and no further action is required at this stage.

Timor Leste

Dili - it was decided at the December meeting that the R&R cycle would be 12 weeks effective 1st January and phased out in 6 months time. The CO appealed on the basis of disparity in standards used for UNMIT staff who remained on an 8-week cycle country-wide and crime and violence which had an impact on working conditions and work-life balance. Discussions took place with DPKO who will not harmonize until we become “one”. UNHCR had prepared a note explaining the Field Group has its own methodology and will not be driven by what the local ORB cycle is.

It was decided to keep Dili as an exception and maintain the 12 week cycle and review at the next mid-year meeting.

Iraq

UNHCR reported that staff serving in Baghdad, currently in Security Phase IV, had requested a 4 week cycle because Peacekeeping staff were receiving 4 weeks.

It was decided that as conditions had considerably deteriorated inside the “Green Zone”, although our current minimum is 6 weeks, we would make an exception for staff actually serving in Baghdad and reduce the cycle to 4 weeks.

As far as Erbil and Basrah were concerned, although conditions were restrictive, the R&R cycle would remain at 6 weeks.

In addition, Agencies had reported that there was often no room on departing planes at different duty stations for staff to leave for their R&R as the UN gave priority to their own staff.

It was decided that we would ask the HR Network to write to the UN about the problem of room on planes. (Action: A. Grisar).

Nepal

The CO had requested that we approve 8 weeks R&R for following locations:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Dadeldhura | 5. Gaur |
| 2. Janakpur | 6. Taulihawa |
| 3. Butwal | 7. Jaleswar |
| 4. Ghorahi | 8. Rajibiraj |

It was decided that UNDP would go back to the CO on behalf of all Agencies and ask them to report on number of staff and type of staff and share with the Group before we can pronounce ourselves.

Kiribati

UNICEF requested PT every 3 months for Tarawa, a 'D' capital city which was in a remote location with lack of fresh vegetables.

It was decided that no action would be taken for the time being and that we would review this duty station again at the December meeting.

Review of all 6 week cycle duty stations

Afghanistan – met criteria for 6 weeks.

Chad – all 6 week cycles would continue, including Mao which would change from 8 weeks to 6 weeks.

Iraq – 6 weeks was confirmed (except Baghdad – exceptionally 4 weeks and to be reviewed in 6 months)

Pakistan – Bagh – 6 weeks was confirmed due to infrastructure damage and little improvement in living conditions. All other 6 week locations would change to 8 weeks effective 1st July.

Russian Fed – Nazran – no one lives at this location as all staff have been evacuated. We will keep at 6 weeks if people go back.

Somalia – confirm whole country will retain 6 weeks.

Sri Lanka – All locations on the list are in Tamil Tiger country with continued hostilities. Confirmed we will maintain 6 weeks.

Sudan – any location in south Darfur – will retain 6 weeks.

Review of Global List duty stations who no longer meet criteria for R&R

Colombia – 'C' duty stations Apartado and Barrancabermeja - surrounded by Phase III locations, will remain an exception due to the specific situation in Columbia and maintain 12 weeks.

Congo (Dem) – Lubumbashi 'D' – will change to 12 weeks effective 1st July.

Eritrea – Asmara – review with other 'D' capitals. Problem: Asmara APA for other R&R locations. Either give up R&R or make destination somewhere else.

Jerusalem – currently 'B' in Phase I. WFP proposed to maintain the 12 weeks cycle due to the security situation and recent Gaza related tensions. All other members of the Group were in favour of sticking to the framework, i.e. no entitlement, noting the considerable work that had already gone into harmonizing conditions of service in this duty station and expressing the wish that any WFP

exception would not endanger the perceived coherence of the Group. WFP is encouraged in the strongest possible manner to move to the 16 weeks cycle as recommended in January 2007 to continue phasing out the agency-specific WFP R&R.

Iran – Kermanshah and Mashad, both ‘C’ in Phase II, should not be entitled to any R&R at all. Justification in past has been that they were holy cities and particularly difficult for non-moslems to live there. Only UNHCR has staff at these locations. It was recommended that we review phasing out R&R but keep at 12 weeks but get feedback from field.

Kuwait City – UNDP to report back on situation and review lifting of R&R.

Lao – Pakse – recently reclassified ‘B’ from ‘D’. It was decided to change to a transitional 12 week cycle effective 1st July and review in December.

Lebanon – Tyre – situation seems to be getting worse with recent bombings. Maintain 8 weeks and review in December.

PNG – all locations including Buka – ‘D’ and Goroka recently reclassified as ‘D’, would maintain 8 weeks except the capital Port Moresby.

Sudan - Kassala retains 8 weeks. Damazine, reclassified as ‘E’, will change from 12 weeks to 8 weeks effective 1st July.

Uganda:

Arua – should be changed from 8 weeks to 12 weeks effective 1st July.

Hoima – should be changed from 12 weeks to 8 weeks effective 1st July.

Mbarara – should be changed from 8 weeks to 12 weeks effective 1st July.

Moroto – WFP to investigate whether still in active conflict and report back.

SOA

Chad

Group in agreement that conditions in N’Djamena were not going to improve and to move to SOA with an APA of Addis Ababa but did not implement uniformly and were unable to reach harmonization on method of calculating SOLAR. The UN had done a provisional survey which was acceptable to most but not to UNHCR who had established a rate that included Darfur and cross borders and was lower than the UN rate. Two proposals had been previously presented:

- (i) WFP suggested that we stick with the established procedure for setting SOLA, and calculate it on the basis of either (a) 75% of the First 60 Day DSA rate ($\$264 \times 75\% \times 30 = \$5,940$ per month) in N’Djamena as local DSA applies for other duty stations; or
- (b) Use the MSA rate once established by the UN ($\$144 \times 30 = \$4,320$ per month)

(ii) UNICEF supported sticking to the established methodology and suggested that we use the MSA formula, which meant a monthly SOLA of \$ 4,320 per month countrywide.

UNHCR agreed with WFPs proposal to use the provisional MSA rate, but would apply to staff members based in N'Djamena only but was not in agreement with the \$5,940.

WFP had gone ahead and already declared SOA using the established DSA rate or MSA rate if official.

UNFPA just has 1 staff member. FAO does not apply SOA. ILO applies a modified MSA. WHO only has a staff member in N'Djamena and would prefer SOLA based on MSA. UNICEF has 50 people and considers it a difficult and expensive duty station in which to employ staff.

The emerging consensus was that we would base SOLA on MSA, and will all move to a country rate SOLA whereas UNHCR would still keep cross border SOLA for all locations outside N'Djamena and would have two SOLA rates: outside and N'Djamena.

It was agreed that N'Djamena moves to SOA of \$4,320 per month based on the after 30 days MSA rate of \$144 which would apply throughout the whole country with the exception of UNHCR. SOA will become effective when we receive a pronouncement from the Ethiopian government regarding the approval of Addis Ababa as the APA. In the meantime staff would remain on evacuation status and be paid EMEA. WFP has as per SOA policy, already implemented SOA for N'Djamena and applied SOLAR.

DRC

Lubumbashi – was downgraded to Phase II in April. UNICEF received request from CO to lift SOA with payment ending 31 July. Group agreed with exception of UNHCR who has already implemented decision.

Kinshasa – currently Phase III, C – SMT split at country level.

It was decided that we would maintain evacuation status and not put this duty station on SOA.

Guinea

Conakry, a 'C' capital city went to Phase III in February. The CO requested SOLA for all Phase III locations and were advised that we will review in July as long as the level of security remains in effect. Kissidougou and Nzerekore are already on SOA with APA of Dakar.

It was decided that we should leave Conakry on evacuation status and continue to monitor the situation and review again in December. If they were still in Phase III, we would give them SOA effective January 1st with an APA of Dakar. In the meantime, we would ask the Country Team to give us an update.

Indonesia

Banda Aceh City - it had been decided at the December meeting that Banda Aceh would keep SOA for another 6 months and be reviewed at the July meeting.

It was decided that we would lift SOA with a 3 month phase out from 1st July.

Nias – CO had appealed lifting of SOA in February.

It was decided that we would maintain our decision of lifting SOA.

Meulaboh – it was pointed out that this duty station had gone from Security Phase III to II in June.

It was decided that we would get clarification on the security phase before lifting SOA. (DSS has since confirmed the security phase was reduced to Phase II on 1 June 2007. Therefore we will lift SOA with a 3 month phase-out from 1st July).

Uganda

It had been decided in May that SOA status would be lifted effective immediately for: Adjumani, Arua, Gula, Kitgum, Moyo, and Pader with SOLA ending 31st July due to these locations having gone from Phase III to Phase II.

Concerns regarding the effects on staff morale have been raised by WFP's Country Director in Uganda regarding changed entitlements and lifting of SOA particularly in Gulu, Pader and Kitgum. UNCT is working to have security phase re-considered.

It was decided that we would stick with the methodology and confirmed the lifting of SOA with SOLA ending 31st July.

Other

CAR – WFP were establishing staff in Paoua and want to establish Bangui as an APA but there is a conflict as Bangui is receiving R&R. Yaounde will be the approved APA in line with duty stations in the rest of the country.

Somalia – WFP establishing staff in Merca, 'E', Phase IV – wants to give SOA. Group confirmed agreement.

Mobilization of National Officers in non-capital field duty stations

Agencies are experiencing difficulty in finding local talent, in particular NOs, for up-country locations. Professionally qualified staff in capitals do not want to give up what they have to take up assignments in villages. UN rules are very silent on what entitlements we can give to encourage staff to be redeployed to these areas. A proposal was made to pay 30 days DSA at location rate and maybe transportation costs of some personal effects up to 1,000 kilos and travel costs of the individual. UNICEF already has provisions for these exceptional circumstances. The Group was asked whether this was an issue for harmonization or should we continue on an ad hoc basis.

It was decided that there was agreement in principle to offer entitlements on an exceptional basis. UNDP would circulate draft guidelines based on UNICEF's policy of giving a regular assignment grant on an exceptional basis and putting "exceptional" in the contract.

Diaspora Staff – issue of attracting local talent in Somalia was discussed and how we can attract educated nationals to return to the country. Suggestions included offering financial incentives. It was concluded that this was an interesting but complex issue and that no solutions could be found.

Review of C and D category Capital Cities

Bangui is going through a transition – the 16 week cycle would be discontinued 1st January 2008

Tblisi – the PT 16 week cycle would be discontinued 1st January 2008

Ulan Bator – would keep its PT

Khartoum – according to the methodology, the 16 week cycle should be discontinued but due to political issues and in the interests of the credibility of the overall Sudan scheme, Khartoum will stay on the list.

Dushanbe – PT will be discontinued 1st January 2008

Ashkabad – was considered a special case and would continue to keep PT.

Thimphu – will keep PT for the time being. UNICEF to report back on isolation issues.

Astana – PT will be discontinued 1st January 2008

Bishkek – PT will be discontinued 1st January 2008

Tashkent – PT will be discontinued 1st January 2008

Action: need to write to our Bureaux that change is being implemented.

Eritrea/Asmara – would have no entitlements effective 1st January 2008

Iraqi National Staff in Amman

When war broke out, local staff and dependents were evacuated to Amman and have enjoyed 2 years of DSA. It was expected that conditions would normalize and these people could go home. After inter-agency consultations, it was decided to offer local employment to these people in their respective offices in Jordan, which was agreeable to the Jordanian authorities. Some agencies paid assignment grants, others DSA and others a lump sum. Staff were given the option of employment in Jordan or leave the Organization. Staff reported difficulties in getting work permits and housing and that they were being treated as foreigners. They requested we review decision to hire as local staff and give them recognition. All Agencies declined. Staff have now written to UNDG and asked them to intervene on their behalf. Essentially, they are asking they be given expat status through the granting of a non-resident allowance and ed grant for their children.

As we need to be ready with a reply on this, all Agencies were asked to check to see that they did at the time and are there any grounds for revisiting this issue.

Appendix I

Inter-Agency Framework for Rest and Recuperation

Applicability

1. R&R Travel applies to internationally-recruited employees posted or on travel status to the designated R&R duty station only. Locally-recruited staff members are only eligible for R&R travel when they are on travel status to the designated R&R duty station.

Designated R&R Locations

2. Eligibility for a location's entitlement for R&R is determined by the HR Network's Standing Committee on Field Duty Stations, the membership of which includes representatives of the organizations using R&R.

3. In its work, the Committee is guided by the framework provided below:

Cycle	Conditions
6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All extreme non-family duty stations with <u>considerable insecurity and active conflict</u>.
8 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All non-family duty stations (Security Phase III and above).All non-capital duty stations with hardship classification E, and Security Phase II, I, or NO Phase in effect.
12 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">First step of gradual discontinuation of R&R for duty stations having previously had shorter cycles, after conversion to family duty station status.All capital duty stations with a hardship classification E, and Security Phase II, I, or NO Phase in effect.All non-capital duty stations with a hardship classification D, and Security Phase II, I, or NO Phase in effect.
16 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Second step of gradual transition towards discontinuation of R&R following conversion of duty station from non-family to family status.Duty stations with lack of basic goods throughout the year for which regular importation is not feasible.
6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Duty stations with seasonal lack of basic goods for which regular importation is not feasible.

4. Exceptions or variations to the above framework will be granted only based on operational necessity and for a limited period of time. The framework itself will only be amended through a decision by the HR Network as a whole. Any changes to the framework will be reported to the ICSC for information purposes.

Single Agency Rule

5. If only one Agency has international staff assigned to a location, then the R&R cycle and SOA for that location will be determined by the operational requirements of that Agency.

Appendix II

Inter-Agency Framework Work Flow for SOA and R&R

SOA

Non-Family to Family

- Monitor situation for one month, as of change in DSS declared security phase, and initiate consultations with Agencies whether this is to be a sustainable situation or not.
- If it is considered sustainable:
 - Write to CO to confirm that, in view of the change in security phase, we will be lifting SOA, and to request its feedback on any concerns, giving a deadline for submission. Liaise with rest of Group on findings.
 - After one month an announcement will be made, confirming the 3 months' notice period after which the SOA is phased out. (The 3 months' notice period starts on the date the announcement goes out).
 - Once the security phase has changed and the SOA status has been lifted, all new recruits will be assigned to the duty station on a regular status.
 - For staff members already assigned to the duty station, without eligible family members, the change of duty station is reflected and SOLA is discontinued after the 3 month notice period.
 - For staff members with a spouse, whether or not there are other dependants, SOA is discontinued after 3 months.
 - If children are in the APA – they continue to receive SOLA until the end of the month the school year ends, as long as the children continue to study for the remainder of the school year at the selection location.
- If not sustainable, situation is monitored and reviewed again every 3 months.

Family to Non-Family

- Immediate evacuation status - staff receive EMSEA, if applicable.
- Initiate consultations with the Agencies and Country Teams and monitor situation.
- Initiate discussions with intended APA host government.
- Once APA government approval is received, jointly agree on an effective date of SOA, if at all.
- In situations where we move from family to non family, we discontinue payment of EMSEA and substitute it with SOLA as of the effective date of SOA status.

R&R

Change in Security Phase or change in classification:

- Whenever a situation occurs that results in an increased frequency:
 - Framework for R&R cycle automatically applies.
 - Agencies should notify of any implementation and R&R destination so Chair can inform rest of Group.
- Whenever a change in the R&R cycle takes effect with lower frequency:
 - Discontinuation or any reductions will be reviewed twice a year at the December and June meetings.
 - We give the CO 6 months' notice from the date of the inter-agency decision to reduce frequency as a result of either the semi-annual meetings or ad hoc consultations.