FICSA COUNCIL

74th SESSION
Virtual meeting

FICSA/C/74/Joint Session/ET
3 hours

15 January 2021 @ 12-3 pm Geneva Time CET (Teams)

JOINT SESSION ON THE FUTURE OF WORK

FOCUS: ENABLING TECHNOLOGY

Objective: to provide the FICSA membership with a rounded perspective of an emerging workforce topic

Provisional Programme

Facilitator: Simon Ferrar

Discussant: Aubra Anthony, USAID

Speaker: Aditya Jain, Nottingham University Business School, UK

Speaker: Marco Liuzzi, Chief Operations Officer, UN International Computing Centre, Geneva, CH

FIRST SESSION : 12-1h30pm

1. **Introduction by Evelyn Kortum, FICSA General Secretary** (5')

   Evelyn will explain the focus of and the expectations from discussions at this Joint Session. She will introduce the facilitator and the speakers and outline the proceedings.

   ### *Facilitator intervention*

2. **Introduction by Ambretta Perrino, Vice-Chair HRM SC, UNCCC, Bonn, Germany** (10')

   Ambretta will scope out the issue from a technical perspective and introduce the focus of the next presentations and discussion, that will take into account the inputs received from the survey launched on 14.12.2020 on mentimeter:
   https://www.mentimeter.com/s/56227a6e7157ed71ee652034e83239c0/452c67ee5424

3. **Emerging Technologies and Digital Ethics: Marco Liuzzi,** (20')

4. **Discussant intervention** (10')

5. **Facilitator: Discussion and Q&A** (including by SC Chairs) (35')

Break: 10'

SECOND SESSION : 1h40-3pm

Facilitator: starts off meeting

6. **Introduction by Alberto Fernández, Chair, GSQ (OPCW, NL)** (10')

   Alberto will introduce the focus of the next presentation, which addresses a decision taken at the 73rd Council (D/23) to prepare a paper on the impact of digitalization and artificial intelligence as triggers or causes of organizational change, and as tools in the implementation of organizational change, in the context of international civil service, as well as a readiness plan to assist staff representatives in supporting their members during periods of organizational change including recommendation for immediate and future action.

7. **Impact of Digitalization and AI as Causes and Enablers of Organizational Change: Implications for the International Civil Service - Aditya Jain, Nottingham University Business School, UK** (20')

8. **Facilitator: Discussion and Q&A**

9. **Facilitator: Way forward & closing**

FICSA COUNCIL

Joint Session on Enabling Technology

74th **SESSION**
VIRTUAL

Summary Sheet

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FICSA /C/74/Joint Session/ET

☒ **For sensitization and information**

Issue (title)	FUTURE OF WORK Enabling technology: an emerging issue for the FICSA membership
Issue description (including reach: global versus local)	This topic refers to one of the three main work streams in the High-Level Committee for Management (HLCM) which is attended by FICSA officers. The HLCM Task Force on the Future of the UN Workforce was established in 2019 with a mandate consisting of 3 principle aims - to review the current contractual modalities of the UN system; to consider new ways of working in order to propose elements to foster an enabling culture and positive employee experience from multiple perspectives, including leadership, people management, flexible work arrangements, transparency and dialogue; and to look into pilot initiatives that leverage the digitized work environment, enabled by technology. The latter which is the 'tool', but cannot be separated from remote working and new contract modalities, is the focus of this session. Cross-cutting issues relate to ethics, integrity, leadership, organizational culture, performance management, career development, and environmental considerations. COVID-19 accelerated the move towards new ways of working. The HLCM stresses that this is with a view towards organizations' visions to become more agile, effective and inclusive in the fulfilment of their mandates, with particular focus on the management, the equipment and well-being of their most valued asset: their personnel. The HLCM Task Force pronounces to have the following commitments: a. **Putting people first** by investing in and enabling our workforce b. **Driving a passion for results** and foster a "can do mentality" while holding people accountable c. **Embracing new leadership models** that foster greater collaboration with less hierarchy recognizing that the future of work requires different skills and different delivery and operating models d. **Building trust** through authenticity, dialogue, courage and transparency e. **Aggressively pursuing** the simplification of rules and policies to enable faster decision-making f. **Using technology** to strengthen delivery of results globally and enable new ways of working regardless of location g. **Embracing learning** and fostering growth mindsets and new skills for a volatile and increasingly complex world h. Showcasing and advancing diversity, inclusion and gender parity

i. Creating a clear **Employee Value Proposition** to position the UN System as an employer of choice

j. **Embracing the greater cause mindset: "A truly One UN"**- this aims to foster a mindset that goes beyond each organization and genuinely places the common objectives first

SESSION 1

Issues touched upon will include the following:

• Digital ID and data protection

• Data storage of the digital ID

• Opportunities for employee surveillance?

• Advantages/disadvantages of a unique UN Digital ID

• AI in talent acquisition, and recruitment

• Biased or non-biased AI algorithms and preventing bias for AI based biometric tool for digital ID

• Role of FICSA members to ensure good governance around AI implementation

• Types of new skills that staff need to acquire

• Engagement by FICSA members when administrations decide to transition to these technologies

Summary: *The presentation will briefly summarize key concepts and challenges in Digital Identity as well as Artificial Intelligence (AI). It will also briefly cover topics around digital ethics in general and as it relates to these two technologies, including privacy concerns and concerns around algorithmic bias in AI. We will then explore the current lay of the land as well as potential advantages and specific challenges of the adoption of these technologies in the context of the UN system.*

SESSION 2

Issues touched upon will include the following:

• Impact of digitalization and AI on ways of working

• Challenges and opportunities of remote working/working from home working

• Advantages/disadvantages of virtual work

• Implications of new forms of mobile work on dependencies, precarity and job insecurity

• Working in a virtual environment and impact on occupational health, safety and well-being (HSW)

• Recommendations for FICSA members to ensure development of a human-oriented approach to integration of digital technology

Summary: *This presentation will summarize an analysis of the literature and key policy developments on the impact of digitalization at work and provide recommendations for international civil servants to ensure the development of a human-oriented approach to the integration of digital technology. Working in a virtual environment will continue to accelerate following the Covid-19 pandemic, and there will be an overall decrease of physical workplaces with more virtual remote work and hot desking. Digitalization can be an opportunity and a threat. On the positive side, it is often linked to a growing autonomy for individual workers affecting working time as well as the place the work is done. On the other hand, mobile technology also means permanent access, control and blurring of work-life boundaries. Since working in a virtual environment is a complex area that involves various aspects (e.g. virtual telework, working virtually from home, working in a VR/AR environment) there are a range of occupational health, safety and well-being considerations associated with it. Changes in technology will bring about frequent changes in work processes, job insecurity will increase and there will be more*

	frequent job changes and organizational change. With many people working remotely and from home, social isolation will increase, and social support will be hindered despite new advances through VR. Interpersonal issues and cyberbullying might also increase, especially since more workers will work in virtual teams, often having little opportunity to get to know their fellow workers who might be living in other countries or might be hired only to complete that particular task/project, and the need for reskilling employees will only become more important in this context.
Background documentation	<u>Reporting back summary sheet D/23</u> Inter-agency security management network (IASMN) discussions are also being held by the *Project Group on personal security ID* which includes a proposal to establish a personal security profile, through the UN Security Management System (UNSMS) to improve security operations.
Action(s) requested from participants	Engage in the discussion and feel prepared to have an informed discussion with your administrations and your constituents. Take a FICSA position to be promoted during 2021 in high-level fora which should include basic principles that FICSA supports
Next step(s)/specific action(s)	1. Have more in-depth discussions on identified issues in 'Ask the FICSA Expert' webinars, in particular on ..... 2. ....