



**UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION  
TECHNOLOGY FACILITY (UNICTF)  
Valencia, 6–10 February 2023**

**REPORT OF THE 76<sup>TH</sup> SESSION  
OF THE FICSA COUNCIL**





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## Abbreviations

Abbreviations of the names of the organizations whose staff are represented by FICSA members are not given here, but spelled out in the participants list, Annex 11 to the report of the Council session.

CCISUA	Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System
CEB	Chief Executives Board for Coordination
COL surveys	Cost-of-Living surveys
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
FUNSA	Federations of UN Staff Associations
GS staff	General Service Staff
HLCM	High-Level Committee on Management
HQ	Headquarters
HR Network	Human Resources Network
IASMN	Inter-Agency Security Management Network
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
ILOAT	ILO Administrative Tribunal
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and identifying using different terms or no specific terms
LSC	Local Survey Committee (related to Professional staff salaries)
LSSCs	Local Salary Survey Committees (related to locally recruited staff salaries)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OSLA	Office of Staff Legal Assistance
IP staff	International Professional staff
Q&A session	Question-and-Answer session
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNAT	UN Appeals Tribunal
UNDT	UN Dispute Tribunal
UNICC	UN International Computing Centre
UNISERV	UN International Civil Servants Federation
UNJSPB	UN Joint Staff Pension Fund Board
UNJSPF	UN Joint Staff Pension Fund

## Terms for FICSA structures

ExCom            Executive Committee

### **Standing committees**

FIELD            Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field

GSQ              Standing Committee on General Service Questions

HRM              Standing Committee on Human Resources Management

LEG              Standing Committee on Legal Questions

PBAS             Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy

PSA              Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances

SMR              Standing Committee on Staff–Management Relations

SOCSEC          Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety

### **Permanent technical committees to standing committees**

PTC/GSQ        Permanent Technical Committee of the Standing Committee on General Service Questions

PTC/PSA        Permanent Technical Committee of the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances

## **Opening of the Council session**

### **Welcomes**

1. FICSA President Tanya Quinn-Maguire (UNAIDS) welcomed both experienced and new delegates to the hybrid 76th session of the FICSA Council.
2. Also welcoming all delegates, Rocio Martin, President of the UNICTF Staff Association, noted that the Association, one of the smallest and newest full members of FICSA, was honoured to host the Council. The UNICTF Staff Association was ready to learn from and exchange experience with fellow members, and eager to contribute its enthusiasm and fresh outlook. She thanked the UNICTF administration and staff for supporting the organization of the Council session.
3. Representing Michel Bergeron, Head of UNICTF Premises, who could not be present, Katharine Ghidella, Chief of Administration, welcomed the Council to UNICTF. She acknowledged colleagues from UNGSC and wished all delegates a successful meeting.

### **Address by the FICSA President**

4. The FICSA President welcomed the 105 delegates attending the Council session, especially newcomers. Before proceeding, she asked delegates to remember colleagues who had lost their lives in the service of the United Nations (UN) and its specialized agencies, and to honour them by standing for moment of silence.
5. Delegates would carry out their work during the Council session in the knowledge that UN organizations were in a permanent situation of being asked to do more work with fewer and fewer resources. Membership of the longest-standing UN staff federation, FICSA, had therefore become increasingly necessary. The active participation and contribution by all members present at the Council was essential to ensuring that FICSA remained relevant and effective.
6. The FICSA President urged all delegates to take advantage of the training on offer during the week of Council by FICSA experts – on the classification of hardship duty stations, mental health, communication with staff associations, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) and pension-related issues – as well as the important networking opportunities. Building competencies and creating support networks among members formed the core of FICSA's work. Delegates could also contribute outside the Council by promoting training offered by FICSA to colleagues in their organizations, suggesting ideas for new courses to FICSA, and by becoming trainers themselves.
7. The Council would make many important decisions in plenary, including the election of officers to the FICSA Executive Committee (ExCom) (see Annex 1). Delegates would do their most important work, however, in the standing committees that provided policy advice to ExCom on the many issues addressed by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM), the Human Resources (HR) Network and other key interagency bodies in which FICSA actively participated. In addition, the FICSA

President noted that the permanent economic crisis in the world had added to the pressure on UN staff, with the consequent danger of burnout and mental health problems. FICSA had helped develop the [United Nations Mental Health and Well-being Strategy](#), whose implementation would be discussed by the Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety. The implementation of the Strategy was at a critical juncture, and efforts were needed to preserve the gains made.

8. With FICSA and other stakeholders, ICSC had taken a historic step forward: by deciding on a simplified, unified parental leave framework which the UN General Assembly (UNGA), in [resolution A/RES/77/256 A–B](#), had already adopted for implementation in the UN Secretariat. The Framework provided for 16 weeks' leave for all parents, plus an additional 10 weeks' leave to meet birth mothers' specific needs. The FICSA President noted the importance of this decision with regard its contribution towards addressing gender equity in the UN workplace as well as the expectations of future generations of UN staff.
9. Further, FICSA was honoured by the participation of guest speakers from partners such as HLCM, UN Globe and the United Nations International Civil Servants Federation (UNISERV). In particular, the opportunity to interact with FICSA's main interlocutor, ICSC, was the traditional highlight of the opening session of the Council. The continuation of that tradition at the 76<sup>th</sup> Council session gave FICSA the opportunity both to hear from ICSC and to address important questions to its Chair and senior staff. While FICSA and ICSC did not always agree, their relationship remained constructive and collegial. That relationship had much to do with the leadership of the Chair, Larbi Djacta, and the FICSA President congratulated him on his recent re-election by UNGA and thanked him for his constructive approach. She also thanked him and two senior ICSC staff – Ibrahim Yansaneh, Chief, Cost-of-Living Division, and Yuri Orlov, Chief, Salaries and Allowances Division – for agreeing to engage in a question-and-answer (Q&A) session with Council delegates, as well as providing training for the Council.
10. The President concluded her address by thanking the UNICTF Staff Association for hosting the Council in its second year of FICSA membership, UNICTF's facilities and conference team for supporting the Council and the FICSA Secretariat for all its efforts in enabling the 76<sup>th</sup> session to take place.

### [Address by the ICSC Chair](#)

11. Larbi Djacta, ICSC Chair, expressed ICSC's gratitude for FICSA's constructive role in all ICSC's work. Following ICSC's 94<sup>th</sup> session in summer 2022, UNGA had approved some of ICSC's proposals and had made additional requests to the Commission that would affect ICSC's work for the next few years, in resolution [A/RES/77/256 A–B](#). He stressed the need for staff representatives and UN organizations' HR managers to intensify their collaboration with ICSC to deliver on UNGA's requests.
12. The parental leave framework approved in UNGA resolution [A/RES/77/256 A–B](#) was expected to have a range of benefits within and outside the UN common system. By following best practices, the UN would be better able to attract and retain the best talent. In addition, the new policy was expected to enable gender equity regarding career opportunities, and to



encourage all new parents to take on shared parenting responsibilities. In the broader context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), improved parental leave would not only serve UN staff and organizations but also help to improve public health by allowing parents to care better for their children and themselves, reducing the likelihood of physical illness and improving mental health.

13. The Chair described ICSC's forthcoming activities with a particular focus on post-adjustment issues. Immediately after the Council, the first meeting of the Working Group on the Review of Human Resources Management Framework would develop a detailed roadmap for the review and agree on the primary issues to address, considering the views of all stakeholders. At its March session, ICSC would examine progress reports from that Working Group and the Working Group on Standards of Conduct, which would meet for the second time in May. At its spring session, ICSC would also make a detailed outline of its comprehensive review of the compensation package, including its structure, parameters, and timeline, as well as discussing such topics as conditions of service in the field, the recruitment incentive and multilingualism.
14. The ICSC Chair recognized FICSA's constructive role throughout the development of the package of statistical methodology, procedures and guidelines, and operational rules for the 2021 round of salary surveys. The result was fit for the purpose of ensuring the equivalence of the purchasing power of staff remuneration, regardless of location. The roll-out of the 2021 round of surveys had started with headquarters (HQ) duty stations. Following the first two tranches, in Scandinavian countries and eastern European duty stations, respectively, surveys would be conducted in western Europe in February and March, and Asia in April. Surveys in field duty stations would start in September 2023. All survey results would be implemented based on the newly modified system of operational rules and under ICSC's authority, as prescribed by article 11(c) of its [Statute](#), which had been explicitly clarified through its recent amendment by UNGA resolution [A/RES/77/256 A-B](#).
15. The FICSA President reiterated FICSA's commitment to cooperation with ICSC.
16. The address was followed by a Question and Answer (Q&A) session with the ICSC (Annex 2)

### **Statement by HLCM Vice-Chair**

17. In a video message, Kelly T. Clements, Vice-Chair of HLCM, welcomed the Council delegates' gathering in Valencia as a sign that in-person meetings could be resumed across the world in the wake of the peak phase of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Although the pandemic had taken a heavy toll on everyone, the UN system had continued to fulfil its mission, and organizations and their staff had delivered using new, now mainstreamed approaches. She applauded personnel for both carrying on in uniquely difficult circumstances and devising innovative ideas to improve their ways of working and praised staff representatives for leading their teams while maintaining close collaboration within the UN system.
18. HLCM was acting on the lessons learned from the pandemic on staff wellbeing, mental health, and the importance of workplace culture. For example, the Task Force on the Future

of the UN Workforce had concluded its work at the end of 2022 and the [Senior Leadership Commitments](#) would further operationalize the [United Nations System Leadership Framework](#), as well as the “Boundaries at Work” and “Work–Life Harmony” guidelines. While continuing to fight sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, HLCM also sought better ways to tackle many other forms of toxic behaviour faced by personnel around the world, including racism, sexism, and gender discrimination. HLCM also sought to improve workplace culture by promoting and sharing good practices. Thus, ICSC’s new parental leave framework would contribute to achieving gender parity among UN staff and increasing the attraction and retention of high-quality staff. The framework had been a team effort involving ICSC leadership, UN management and staff federations, including FICSA, which had played a significant role throughout the process.

19. In that spirit, HLCM hoped for frank and constructive exchanges with commissioners and staff representatives as ICSC tackled two items: the new Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service and the forthcoming comprehensive review of the staff compensation package. In both cases, the objective was to ensure that the UN common system remained an employer of choice for the next generation, and to preserve the independence of the international civil service. The compensation review would have to take account of not only the needs and desires of all personnel but also the challenging global financial situation and its impact on publicly funded organizations, a situation exacerbated by the war on Ukraine and many other conflicts.
20. The UN had to find ways to use resources more efficiently, continue to deliver on its mandates, meet ever growing needs and continue to provide staunch support to affected people. FICSA was a notable example of a place where the UN system came together to ensure cooperation towards common goals. The Vice-Chair concluded her address by pledging that the HLCM Secretariat would liaise with the FICSA ExCom to find a way to collect and answer delegates’ questions and wished FICSA a successful and productive Council.

### **[Statement by UNISERV](#)**

21. Mark Polane, President of both UNISERV and the UNFSU staff union, noted that FICSA and UNISERV had built a strong relationship over a long time, further strengthened, and deepened over the last few years owing to the excellent cooperation and coordination between their leaders. Unfortunately, unity among UN Member States was strained. Economic and geopolitical realities, including the continuing erosion of trust in governments and government institutions, were resulting in economy drives and closer scrutiny than ever before of the conditions of service for international civil servants. Staff representatives must resist the translation of that distrust into a weakening of the international civil service, and staff federations must continue to be pragmatic, fair, and honest in their presentations and expressed positions to UN governing bodies, ensuring that the conditions of service of their joint constituencies were defended and optimized where feasible.
22. Corruption and fraud further damaged trust within and outside UN organizations and could lead to the victimization of those who report wrongdoing. Staff federations must insist to

UN managers and Member States in governing bodies on the necessity of strengthening whistle-blower mechanisms and systems, improving protections for whistle-blowers, and ensuring investigations of wrongdoing by more independent entities. The federations should also continue scrutinizing the UN's internal justice systems, to make them more independent and accountable.

23. Further, while UN organizations have made increasing efforts to address mental health issues in the workplace, staff federations must demand that they take concrete action, with dedicated resources and close involvement of staff-representative bodies. More resources needed to go into mental health and well-being programmes focusing on prevention, stigma reduction, support, and treatment; the identification of toxic work environments; and the development of clear policies for interventions to both remedy and prevent toxic behaviour.
24. Both UNISERV's and FICSA's constituencies included many staff working in the field, often under stressful conditions and thus with a disproportionately high potential for burnout and anxiety. Federations of staff unions and associations should work to empower their colleagues across the globe, including in hardship duty stations, in at least as good coordination as the organizations involved.
25. UNISERV looked forward to working closely with FICSA to create specific proposals to improve the conditions of service for all the people they represented.
26. The FICSA President thanked the UNISERV President for his statement and pledged continued cooperation with sister staff federations.

### **Statement from UN Globe**

27. Speaking to the Council remotely on behalf of the UN Globe Board and network of coordinators, Sophie West-Browne (UN Women), Secretary of the Board, stressed the importance of partnership with FICSA, with which UN Globe had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in 2020, expressing the partners' commitment to actively defend and advocate for staff who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and those who identify using different terms or no specific terms (LGBTQI+) in the UN common system, to encourage diversity across the organizations with FICSA members, and to combat discrimination against the groups of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics.
28. Together the partners had pursued the following joint goals and objectives:
  - promoting a more inclusive workplace culture by seeking to confirm that all policies, activities, and programmes of organizations with FICSA members respected the needs of LGBTQI+ staff, and by cooperating to promote diversity, equality, and respect for people with all sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and sex characteristics; and
  - ensuring that the views of LGBTQI+ staff were heard and to the management of the UN, through FICSA's consultation with UN Globe to ensure that those views were brought to relevant high-level bodies.

29. The partners' joint focus on the human rights and equity of LGBTQI+ personnel benefited not only those individuals but also the UN as a whole, as shown by UN Globe's contribution to ensuring that policies on parental leave were inclusive of all families.
30. She suggested several additional areas for mutual support in 2023 and beyond. FICSA and staff representatives could help UN Globe increase the visibility of LGBTQI+ staff by, for example, encouraging entities and duty stations to consider opening UN Globe chapters, sharing their knowledge of UN Globe whenever possible and encouraging UN personnel to join the organization. FICSA could also assist UN Globe's efforts to strive for inclusive workplaces for trans and gender non-conforming personnel and their dependents by sharing its recommendations with FICSA members and in interactions with individual personnel facing discrimination in their workplaces. Finally, as UN Globe explored the effects of mobility policies for its membership and LGBTQI+ personnel across the UN system and supported affected personnel, FICSA could keep those concerns and realities in mind in its advocacy and continue to include UN Globe in key conversations about mobility and its impact.
31. UN Globe appreciated FICSA's support on all the issues mentioned, and stood ready to provide input, strengthen dialogue and give feedback whenever possible.
32. In reply, the FICSA President agreed that FICSA's cooperation with UN Globe had preceded the signing of the MOU. She urged staff representatives to reach out to UN Globe if their organizations did not already have a chapter and to the FICSA ExCom if necessary, to help ensure equal rights for all UN staff.

### **Oath of office**

33. The FICSA President noted that many UN staff had formerly been obliged to physically sign an oath of office, swearing to uphold the values of the UN and the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#). The oath was now included in staff contracts and staff were unaware that they were in fact obliged to uphold the Standards of Conduct when they accepted their contract, which was normally now received electronically.
34. The FICSA President noted that the Standards of Conduct were being revised and FICSA was a participant in that process. She further noted that during the ICSC working group on the revision of the Standards, the Director of the UN Ethics Office had conducted a brief Oath-taking service for the participants which had been well received and which she was pleased would now be offered to those FICSA members present who wished to.
35. Mr. Alessandro Maggi, Director of the UN Ethics Panel, stressed that staff were the vehicle that enabled the UN system to bring about a just and peaceful world, and reflected the commitment of each staff member that took it.
36. To highlight the oath and its importance and express their commitment as international civil servants to the Standards of Conduct and the values of the United Nations, all the delegates to the 76<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council took the oath aloud.

## Election of Council officers, adoption of the agenda and credentials

37. Under Agenda item 2, the FICSA General Secretary explained that the 75<sup>th</sup> Council had requested that FICSA amend its Statutes to implement the HLCCM Cost-Sharing Agreement. Having considered decision [FICSA/C/75/D/5](#) of the 75th FICSA Council and the discussions with FICSA's Standing Committee on Legal Questions, legal adviser and heads of delegations, the Council considered an amendment to Article 6 of the FICSA Statutes (addition in **bold**):

Article 6: Full Membership of the Federation shall be constituted by the staff associations/unions of organizations belonging to the United Nations system as defined by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) or applying the terms and conditions of service of the United Nations common system which are governed by the ICSC, and by the staff associations/unions of regional offices of any of these organizations which:

- a. Possess legislative organs consisting of elected representatives.
- b. Receive adequate funding from sources other than the administration and are in sound financial condition.
- c. Accept these Statutes in writing and undertake to respect them.
- d. **Obtain agreement from the administration to participate in the HLCCM Cost-Sharing Agreement before becoming a Full Member.**

38. Following an objection by one member, the Council voted by a show of hands, and approved the amendment by more than the necessary two-thirds majority.

## Changes in FICSA membership

39. Changes in memberships during 2022 were as follows. IPU became an associate member, and FICSA welcomed a new associate member – the Staff Association IFRC – and three new members with consultative status – the Staff Association of GWPO, the ADB Staff Association and the Staff Council of WIPO.

40. Discussions were underway with IOM to convert from an associate to a full member of FICSA. The administration had committed to take part in the HLCCM Cost-Sharing Agreement and staff were voting on the issue in a global referendum.

## Report of the Executive Committee for 2022–2023

(May 2022–February 2023)

41. The FICSA President began her report by thanking all ExCom officers and the Secretariat for all their contributions to FICSA's work, and explained that she would give a summary, urging delegates to read the report ([FICSA/C/76/4](#)) in full.

42. Much of FICSA's work consisted of representing its members in the meetings of a range of bodies, including both formal, high-level meetings of the Fifth Committee of UNGA, ICSC, HLCCM, the UN Joint Staff Pension Board (UNJSPB) and numerous informal meetings with, for example, UN Globe, the UN International Computing Centre (UNICCC), sister staff federations and the Internal Justice Council (IJC), as well as other stakeholders. FICSA



provided feedback to and consulted its members on that work and negotiated with their managements on request.

43. FICSA representatives had attended ICSC's 94<sup>th</sup> session and participated in the working groups tackling parental leave and the reviews of the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), the classification of hardship duty stations and the methodology for salary surveys for locally recruited staff. FICSA was an observer at HLCM; that role had been expanded at the 44<sup>th</sup> session, with full participation over two days. FICSA continued informal consultations with the HR Network, under HLCM, to find solutions for duty stations in difficult situations. It took part in the Mental Health Strategy Implementation Board; the [Strategy](#) was at a crucial juncture, as it risked losing attention with the larger focus on economic issues. Previously represented by its sister federations, FICSA had also taken part in the meeting of the Inter–Agency Security Management Network – (IASMN).
44. Having been made, the HLCM cost-sharing agreement had then to be implemented by the CEB Secretariat. All the organizations had agreed on an official MoU on 22 November 2022, and the billing process had started. While the process would theoretically be fully complete on 23 February 2023, the FICSA President urged delegates to monitor the situation to ensure implementation.
45. As an observer, FICSA had made a statement to UNJSPB. As all three staff federations had been excluded from the participants representatives' group in 2022, FICSA had been unable to take part, but sought to return to the group.
46. FICSA had also made a [statement on ICSC's recommendations to the Fifth Committee of UNGA](#) and talked with many Member States on five issues: review of the UN jurisdictional set-up, parental leave, harmonization of accrual of annual leave, post adjustment (including Geneva concerns) and the revised methodology for salary surveys for General Service (GS) staff. Member States were strongly resisting some of the most basic parts of the compensation package; that indicated the importance of strong participation by FICSA and its members in the ICSC review of the package.
47. In the ensuing discussion, a delegate asked whether the Council's standing committees would address all the issues raised in ExCom's report. The FICSA President replied that delegates could raise any issue in plenary session and standing committees, particularly the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy. Another speaker asked FICSA to inform the membership about the results of its participation in interlocutor meetings more quickly. An ExCom officer agreed with that view and urged members to read FICSA [communications](#) immediately upon receipt. The speaker replied that staff representatives did not read more than half of those communications, which increased the importance of briefing at Council sessions. The President concluded the discussion by noting that faster relaying of results and information continued to be a goal for ExCom. While some events, such as ICSC working group meetings, led to little to report, FICSA had quickly issued its [statement](#) to the Fifth Committee:

[FICSA Comm on 76th Session of the Fifth Committee](#)

48. The Council Chair noted the ExCom report with appreciation.

## FICSA cooperation with the other staff federations

49. Describing cooperation with CCISUA and UNISERV, the FICSA President explained that FICSA continued to seek the cooperation spelled out in the [CCISUA/FICSA/UNISERV Cooperation Agreement](#) of 2020. Presenting a united front to their interlocutors helped them to protect the staff’s interests most effectively.
50. Asked about problems with that cooperation, the President replied that as instructed by the 75<sup>th</sup> Council session, she had continued to seek maximum cooperation, and would continue to do so. In addition to the 2020 agreement, the three federations had bilateral agreements.
51. An ExCom officer noted that the federations’ views sometimes diverged because they had different constituents, but cited the review of the local salary survey methodology as an example of remarkably successful inter-federation cooperation and praised the President for her work in that area. The President agreed that their joint work on the parental leave framework had been excellent.

## Election of Executive Committee officers and regional representatives for 2023–2024 (February 2023–February 2024)

52. The Council Chairperson announced the nominations received (in alphabetical order) for election to the Executive Committee for 2023–2024 (see [FICSA/C/76/5/Add1](#)). In plenary, the candidates briefly outlined the strengths that they could bring to the offices that they sought, and their priorities for the coming year. Table 1 lists the candidates for the Executive Committee and Regional Representative positions, and those who were elected.

**Table 1. Candidates for the Executive Committee and Regional Representative positions, and those elected**

Offices	Candidates (organizations)	Those elected (organizations)
General Secretary	Cosimo Melpignano (UNGSC)	Cosimo Melpignano (UNGSC)
One Member for Regional and Field Issues	Oleksandr Martynenko (WHO/ EURO)	Oleksandr Martynenko (WHO/ EURO)
One Member for Compensation Issues	Line Kaspersen (AP-in-FAO)	Line Kaspersen (AP-in-FAO)
Second Member for Compensation Issues	Véronique Allain (SCBD)	Véronique Allain (SCBD)
Member without portfolio	Steven Eales (UNIDO)	Steven Eales (UNIDO)
Regional Representative for Europe	Susan Murray (FAO/WFP-UGSS)	Susan Murray (FAO/WFP-UGSS)

Offices	Candidates (organizations)	Those elected (organizations)
Regional Representative for Asia	Ritesh Singh (WHO/SEARO)	Ritesh Singh (WHO/SEARO)

## Approval of the decisions from the reports and the election of chairs and vice-chairs of FICSA standing committees

53. Before and during the 76th Council, all delegates took part in virtual and face-to-face meetings of FICSA’s eight standing committees on Legal Questions, Human Resources Management, Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety, Conditions in the Field, General Service Questions, Professional Salaries and Allowances, Staff–Management Relations, and Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy. Having been pilot-tested since the 75<sup>th</sup> Council session, the last of these continued its work for the 76<sup>th</sup> Council session. In addition to meeting individually, several standing committees held joint sessions on overtime, and on federations of UN staff associations (FUNSAs) and the effects of current economic problems such as currency devaluation on the remuneration of locally recruited staff.
54. All committees debated the issues on their agendas, including discussing the actions taken to implement the [decisions of the 75th session of the FICSA Council](#), made recommendations on those issues and drafted reports for the Council to consider. Comprising annexes 3–10, these reports list each committee’s membership, describe its deliberations, give its recommendations, and list the elected officers and core-group membership for 2023.
55. As was customary, a member of each committee presented its report, recommendations, and future membership to all delegates in the Council’s final plenary session. The Council took note of the committee reports, discussed, and amended the recommendations submitted as necessary, and then adopted them as the decisions presented here. The Council also approved the chairs and vice-chairs nominated by the standing committees for the period 2023–2024. Before beginning the presentation and discussion of the standing committee reports, however, all delegates stood in a moment of silence to mourn the victims of the earthquakes in Syria and Türkiye.

### Legal Questions

56. The Standing Committee on Legal Questions had focused on two issues. First, how could FICSA support the transition of members from the authority of the ILO Administrative Tribunal to that of the UN Appeals Tribunal with the related issue of securing access to the UN Dispute Tribunal? It had already established a working group comprising representatives of members making that transition. Second, issues had arisen with FICSA members’ use of the legal insurance provided by Fortuna Legal Insurance through the agreement negotiated by FICSA. In at least one case, Fortuna had responded to increased demand for services by steeply raised the premiums demanded while reducing insurance coverage. The Standing Committee’s full report comprises Annex 3.



## Decisions

- **The FICSA Executive Committee should support ICAO's negotiations as necessary for accession to the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT), with the assistance of the Standing Committee on Legal Questions, by sharing best practices in the process of jurisdictional transition from the ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) to that of the UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT) with ICAO staff representatives.**
- **The FICSA Executive Committee should undertake an assessment of the usefulness of the legal protection agreement for staff with Fortuna, in consultation with the membership and after consideration of the cost–benefit ratio.**
- **The FICSA Executive Committee should establish a working group to review the different types of legal insurance coverage available for FICSA members and identify options for legal support for all staff associations.**

## Human Resources Management

57. The Standing Committee on Human Resources Management reviewed a range of issues, including unfair HR practices, changes in working practices and a case study in which staff were required to do more work with fewer resources and in a shorter time. The discussion focused, however, on a recurring issue: the status of and relations with personnel without regular staff contracts. The increasing numbers of such personnel necessitated further discussion, separately from regular staff issues and involving more than one standing committee. In addition, the Standing Committee met in a joint session with two others – those on Professional Salaries and Allowances and on Staff–Management Relations – to discuss the issue of overtime for GS staff. The Standing Committee's full report comprises Annex 4.
58. Delegates' discussion of the Standing Committee's report confirmed the importance of the issue of personnel without regular staff contracts. Various terms were used to describe that group, and delegates agreed that a satisfactory term, clear without being pejorative, needed to be settled after the closure of the 76<sup>th</sup> Council session.

## Decisions

- **The FICSA Executive Committee should assist the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management to complete the terms of reference for and establish a technical committee on issues related to contracts falling outside of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) contractual framework, which would operate on a pilot basis until the 77th session of the FICSA Council, with a view to converting it to a permanent technical committee should its value be sustainable.**
- **Bearing in mind the need for a sound work–life balance for staff, the FICSA Executive Committee should evaluate the input provided by FICSA members through the survey on overtime worked by staff in the Professional and National Professional Officer categories,**

address any concerns identified from the survey and raise them in all relevant for a, including during the upcoming review of the compensation package for UN staff by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC).

- FICSA ExCom should communicate to and inform all staff representative bodies regarding guidance on overtime for locally recruited staff contained in the ICSC [review](#) of categories of staff, and the terms of the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA), which is not designed to cover overtime for staff on missions or official travel.

## **Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety**

59. The Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety had decided to develop a set of recommendations on basic, standard procedures and best practices as a tool for staff representatives to use when negotiating medical-insurance contracts with providers. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) would publish a report on the various schemes in operation, and FICSA needed to help prepare staff for discussions with management and providers. The Standing Committee had also discussed how FICSA and its members could best to support implementation of both the [UN Disability Inclusion Strategy](#) and [the United Nations Mental Health and Well-being Strategy](#), and considered forming a voluntary joint working group with on harassment and abuse with the Standing Committee on Staff-Management Relations. Finally, the Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety wished FICSA to make use of the lessons learned – particularly about flexible working arrangements – from the COVID-19 pandemic and was concerned about the recent exclusion of the three UN staff federations from the participants’ representatives’ group of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board. The Standing Committee’s full report comprises Annex 5.

### **Decisions**

**The FICSA Executive Committee should:**

- Encourage Staff Representatives to ensure that their administrations are implementing the CEB Disability guidelines - UN Disability Inclusion Strategy - within their agencies/organizations; and
- advocate in all fora the need to ensure reasonable accommodation and the necessary support for staff with disabilities incurred before or during their service.

**The FICSA Executive Committee should continue to raise in all fora the concerns identified by members about discrepancies in or inequitable access to benefits offered to staff with children living with disabilities.**

**The SMR and SOCSEC SCs recommended that the FICSA Secretariat should contact core group members of both Standing Committees to request participation in the Joint Working Group.**

**The FICSA ExCom should send a reminder to staff-representative bodies to send their list of best practices (including implementation and monitoring), lessons learned and challenges in the context of the return-to-work following COVID-19, with a view to evaluating benchmarks for policies on flexible working arrangements (FWA).**

**The FICSA Secretariat should recall Staff Representatives that they should seek election to the boards of their organizations' staff pension fund, to participate in and report on their work.**

**The FICSA Executive Committee should make every effort to regain access to the participants representatives' group of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board.**

## **Conditions of Service in the Field**

As well as discussing issues with safety and security in the field addressed by IASMN in 2022, the Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field focused on FICSA's engagement with ICSC's work to classify duty stations according to their level of hardship and issues raised by staff's return to their offices in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and flexible new ways of working. The Standing Committee's full report comprises Annex 6.

The Standing Committee also held joint sessions with the Standing Committee on General Service Questions on two issues. The report of the latter (Annex 7) covers those discussions.

### **Decisions**

**The FICSA Executive Committee should continue to build and transfer to its members knowledge on the hardship classification exercise, regardless of the location where they are based.**

**The FICSA Executive Committee should:**

- a. engage with members to ensure that issues related to staff health and well-being are considered when establishing any new policies and regulations for returning to the office; and**
- b. maintain dialogue and highlight issues in high-level fora channels of communication on continued remote working and its potential effects on the overall conditions of service of all categories of staff.**

## **General Service Questions**

60. The Standing Committee reviewed the changes in the two methodologies for local salary surveys, and welcomed a new UN resource: [Salaries and Allowances for Staff Members in the Locally Recruited Categories in the United Nations Common System](#), which included an updated schedule of surveys in all duty stations, an online training tool and other useful resources to support members of local salary survey committees (LSSCs). It discussed and adopted the report and recommendations of its Permanent Technical Committee (PTC/GSC). There was a great need for FICSA training on salary-survey methodologies in multiple languages, and PTC/GSQ had called for FICSA to start a training-the-trainers programme to fulfil that need.

61. The Standing Committee's full report comprises Annex 7 and contains the results of its discussion of federations of UN Staff Associations (FUNSAs) with the Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field.

### Decisions

**The FICSA Executive Committee should respond to members' requests for training in salary survey methodologies by ensuring the availability of trainers in accordance with the guidelines of the FICSA Training Fund. To do so, it should:**

- carry the funds allocated for the training-of-trainers plan in 2021 forward to 2023–2024; and
- request FICSA members interested in becoming trainers to send brief resumés as soon as possible to the FICSA Secretariat for review and consideration.

**The FICSA Executive Committee and regional representatives, in a view to strengthen the role of the Federations of UN Staff Associations (FUNSA) should review the current model statutes and present a draft revision of the statutes for approval to the 77th session of the FICSA Council.**

### Professional Salaries and Allowances

62. The Standing Committee continued to discuss ways for P staff based in Montréal to cope with the challenges associated with the reimbursement scheme for the education grant. It welcomed training a vital means of preparing LSCs and P staff to take part in cost-of-living (COL) surveys in both HQ and other duty stations and discussed ways in which FICSA could most effectively prepare for and contribute to ICSC's upcoming comprehensive review of the compensation package for UN staff. The Standing Committee's joint session with the standing committees on Human Resources Management and Staff–Management Relations focused on overtime; its results appear in the report of the former.

63. The Standing Committee's full report comprises Annex 8.

### Decisions

**The FICSA Executive Committee should request the ICSC Secretariat to propose an amicable solution to the definition of admissibility of school expenses as per the [March 2022 judgement of the UN Administrative Tribunal \(2022-UNAT-1221\)](#) at ICSC's 2023 summer session to be held in Montréal, or at any time when that issue would be put on the agenda.**

**The FICSA Executive Committee should:**

- a. continue to request that the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) trains local survey committees (LSCs) in preparation for the cost-of-living (COL) surveys planned for 2023–2024.
- b. continue to encourage ICSC to organize hybrid training sessions on the new COL methodology and operational rules for Professional staff prior to any COL survey round.
- c. monitor the rollout of future COL surveys and continue to encourage staff association representation, including sharing of relevant information via the relevant FICSA regional representatives; and
- d. request ICSC to share examples of the terms of reference for LSCs used in the previous COL surveys, revise them with the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances and post the result on the website as a baseline to ensure that minimum standards are applied at all duty stations.

**The FICSA Executive Committee should:**

- a. continue closely to monitor the development of the ICSC review of the compensation package for UN staff, and promptly inform the FICSA membership of any major events; and
- b. ensure that a FICSA representative and/or expert is physically present at the meetings of all the UN bodies and/or ICSC working groups doing work related to that review.

The FICSA Executive Committee, in collaboration and coordination with the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances, should continue the successful “Ask the FICSA Expert” training sessions for staff representatives on all topics related to Professional salaries and allowances, with a particular focus on COL surveys, seeking the most effective way for staff to fill out the survey form and to increase their understanding of the operational rules. FICSA staff representatives attending those sessions should share their new knowledge with their colleagues, to develop staff capacity and to improve the understanding of COL surveys to increase participation.

## **Staff–Management Relations**

64. The Standing Committee addressed a range of topics, focusing on how to address misconduct and harassment, and the wide variations in both arrangements for release time for representatives of staff associations/unions and the role, operation, responsibilities, impartiality, and funding of an ombudsperson. It stressed the need for formal and concrete agreements on release time and the importance of a JIU report on the ombudsperson’s role and function, responsibilities and duties, funding, provision of services in the field, professionalism, and accountability. To develop more useful resources for FICSA members to use in dealing with misconduct and harassment, the Standing Committee proposed to create a joint committee with the Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety.
65. The Standing Committee’s full report comprises Annex 9.

## Decisions

Staff associations/unions should pursue the establishment of concrete release time for staff representatives through memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or other formal agreements with their managements. The FICSA Executive Committee should continue collecting such MOUs from its membership, as well as monitoring developments related to the amendments of UN Secretariat administrative instruction [ST/AI/293](#) related to Staff Representatives' release time, as discussed by the UN Secretary General ([A/67/136/Add.1](#)).

The FICSA Executive Committee should issue a communication to all members that urges staff-association representatives to become familiar with the Joint Inspection Unit [Report on review of the organizational ombudsman services across the United Nations system \(JIU/REP/2015/6\)](#), and advocate the adoption of its recommendations by their managements.

## Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy

66. The full report of the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy comprises Annex 10. The Standing Committee concluded that its work since the 75<sup>th</sup> session of the FICSA Council, carried out as a pilot test, had proved successful.

### Strategic development

67. The Standing Committee reviewed the progress of FICSA's social media strategy since the 75th FICSA Council and welcomed the results. It followed up the plenary discussion of the problems with relations with a sister staff federation, reviewed the arrangements to implement the HLCM cost-sharing agreement for elected FICSA officers and agreed on the need to continue monitoring that process and to sustain the relationships with HLCM that had enabled the agreement to be made. The Standing Committee welcomed the information that implementation of the [recommendations](#) resulting from the functional review of the FICSA Secretariat was nearly complete.

68. Further, the Standing Committee welcomed ExCom's proposal to develop a strategy for capacity building in FICSA, both to conserve institutional knowledge and recruit and develop new talent. It suggested several actions to pursue that aim.

### Recommendations

The FICSA Executive Committee, particularly the FICSA General Secretary, should continue to monitor the implementation of the HLCM Cost-Sharing Agreement, and to alert the membership to take action in case of problems.

The FICSA Executive Committee and the Secretariat should complete the outstanding work to implement the consultant's recommendations and referred document [FICSA/C/76C/PBAS/CRP.01](#) to the Standing Committee on Legal Questions for consideration of the legal aspects.

**The FICSA Executive Committee should review the proposals for capacity building made by heads of delegations in meetings of the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy, and prepare a concept paper on capacity building for discussion by heads of delegations by the end of May 2023.**

#### **Administrative and budgetary matters**

69. The Standing Committee considered the independent reviewer's report of the FICSA financial statements for 2021 (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/1); the Treasurer's report for 2022 (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/2); reports on the status of the Termination Indemnity and Installation Fund, Legal Defence Fund and Staff Development Fund (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/3); and the contributions received from member associations/unions, associate members, consultative bodies up to 31 December 2022 (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/5). The independent reviewer had delivered his last report virtually, and the Standing Committee thanked him for his pro bono service. Discussion of the reports included the costs of relocating the FICSA General Secretary and Information Officer to Geneva.
70. In addition to those reports, the Standing Committee discussed an additional document: a roadmap for future contributions to FICSA, which projected changes in those contributions in the following five years. It would need adjustment and reconsideration as circumstances changed. The heads of delegations comprising the Standing Committee approved the roadmap, which would be updated each year, and more often if necessary, and decided to make it a standing item on the Standing Committee's agenda.

#### **Recommendations**

- **The FICSA Executive Committee should seek a new independent financial reviewer, discuss its nomination with the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy and submit the nominee's name for approval to the 77th Council session.**
- **The FICSA Executive Committee should explore the possibilities of including all the costs related to relocation of FICSA officers in the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) cost-sharing agreement.**
- **The FICSA Executive Committee should contact previous recipients of funds from the Legal Defence Fund to collect reimbursement as per document ([FICSA/C/76/PBAS/5](#)) and the terms of reference of the Fund.**

#### **Draft programme and budget 2021–2022 and membership contributions to FICSA for 2022**

71. The Standing Committee presented to the Council the proposed budget and the scale of contributions for 2023 (documents [FICSA/C/76/PBAS/4](#) and [FICSA/C/76/PBAS/6](#); see also appendices 2 and 3 to Annex 10, respectively). In its own meetings, the Standing Committee continued to explore the possibilities of revenue streams for FICSA in addition to membership dues. The Standing Committee also discussed other revenue streams for FICSA, in addition to membership dues.

72. The proposed budget for 2023 (see table below) was calculated at CHF 550,000, representing a 10% increase over the budget for 2022 (CHF 499,500). It had been drafted through zero-based budgeting, considering spending trends observed in 2022 and pre-pandemic levels, as well as the actual activities, meetings, travel anticipated for the forthcoming year. The increase was in line with discussions during the 75th Council session, which foresaw that budgetary requirements would increase after the pandemic, upon resumption of face-to-face meetings and workshops. Travel costs had increased steeply after the pandemic, combined with the increased energy prices affecting ticket prices.

#### **Total budget (CHF)**

2021: 431,180

2022: 499,500

2023: 550,000 (proposed)

73. The Council took note of the proposed budget, and adopted the budget shown in Table 2 (see also Appendix 2 to Annex 10) and the scale of contributions (see Appendix 3 to Annex 10).

**Table 2. Summary of proposed FICSA budget for 2023, with percentage changes from budget for 2022**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Amounts (CHF)</b>	<b>Increase from 2022 (%)</b>
1	FICSA representation	90,800	8
2	FICSA Council and ExCom	41,500	15
3	FICSA administration	417,700	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>550,000</b>	

#### **Recommendations**

- The 76th FICSA Council should approve the draft Programme Budget for 2023 (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/4) in the amount of CHF 550,000.
- The 76th session of the FICSA Council should approve the Scale of Contributions for 2023 (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/6).
- The FICSA Executive Committee should identify and assign to a focal point from within FICSA membership the task of fundraising and identifying alternative sources of income, and to report on the progress made to the 77th session of the FICSA Council.



## **Date and place of the next Council session**

74. The General Secretary announced the date and venue for the 77th Council session: 4–9 February 2024 at the UPU premises in Bern, Switzerland, when UPU would celebrate its one-hundredth anniversary. In addition, two proposals have been received for hosting the 78<sup>th</sup> Council session.

## **Other business**

75. Although no other business had been scheduled for consideration, the FICSA President informed delegates that a message had just been received, about a withdrawal from membership by the WIPO Staff Association. ExCom would investigate the situation and report back to the FICSA membership.

76. In addition, a group of delegates requested that the FICSA Secretariat conduct more robust vetting of the credentials for staff representatives attending future Council sessions. Another speaker asked the FICSA Secretariat to ensure that all members of each standing committee would have the opportunity to read their committee's draft report before the session to discuss and approve it. The FICSA President replied that the Secretariat and Rapporteur would devise a more robust system for report processing.

## **Closing of the session**

77. The FICSA President thanked the FICSA General Secretary for his work in organizing the 76<sup>th</sup> Council session and for his support over last two years and praised the invaluable work of the FICSA Secretariat. She was grateful for the sponsorship of AMFIE and UNFCU for sponsorship, which is so valuable. Hearty thanks were also due to the UNICTF staff who had organized the session, and the conference and other staff who supported it. The President concluded by thanking all FICSA members, a family that enabled all the Federation's achievements.

78. The Chairperson declared the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the FICSA Council closed.

## **Annex 1. Plenary Programme for the 76th FICSA Council**

1. Opening of the session
2. Credentials
3. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chairs and approval of the appointment of the Rapporteur
4. Adoption of the agenda
5. Organization of the Council's work
6. Constitutional matters
7. Questions relating to membership status in FICSA (changes in membership)
8. Report of the Executive Committee for 2022–2023 (May 2022–February 2023)
9. FICSA cooperation with the other staff federations
10. Election of the Executive Committee officers and regional representatives for 2023–2024 (February 2023 to February 2024)
11. Approval of the session report:
  - a. Legal Questions
  - b. Human Resources Management
  - c. Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety
  - d. Conditions of Service in the Field
  - e. General Service Questions (including PTC/GSQ)
  - f. Professional Salaries and Allowances
  - g. Staff/Management Relations
12. Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy Committee
  - a. Draft programme and budget 2023–2024
  - b. The scale of membership contributions to FICSA for 2023
13. Election of Standing Committee officers for 2023–2024 (February 2023–February 2024)
14. Date and place of the next Council session
15. Other business
16. Closing of the session

## Annex 2. ICSC Questions and Answers

Delegates asked a dozen detailed questions, with the discussion focusing mainly on five issues:

- the effects of the amendments to the ICSC Statute by UNGA,
- solutions to the dire financial situation of staff in duty stations where the local currency, in which they were paid, had been devalued,
- the forthcoming comprehensive review of the compensation package for UN staff,
- issues related to post adjustment, and the cessation of temporary measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic and
- the lack of terms of reference (TOR) for local survey committees (LSCs).

The ICSC Chair and the Chief of the Cost-of-Living Division committed to supplying written answers to all the questions posed. Annex 2 gives the questions asked in full.

### Effects of the amendments to the ICSC Statute

A delegate asked about the implications of the amendments to the ICSC Statute by [UNGA resolution 77/256 A–B](#) for ICSC and staff of the UN common system.

The ICSC Chair welcomed both the question and the amendments, as they had settled implied concerns about the ICSC's competence to set post-adjustment levels and thus enabled ICSC to continue to do its work. Agreeing, the Chief of ICSC's Cost-of-Living Division explained that the amendments had clarified the Statute, rather than changing its meaning. While UNGA decided the value of one post adjustment multiplier point, ICSC decided how many points to apply in each duty station.

The FICSA President noted that the amendments had resulted from the failure to resolve the situation in which two post adjustment systems had been implemented in Geneva. She further noted that indications were that the concerns of the Geneva-based organizations had been resolved by the amendments to the Statutes, but it was not clear if this was the case for all affected organizations. She asked what that resolution would mean for affected staff in Geneva.

The ICSC Chair replied that all executive heads of organizations in Geneva had agreed that ICSC should apply one post-adjustment level, although some would need to involve their governing bodies in that decision. ICSC was starting to implement the amended Statute, and the Chair was confident that all Geneva organizations would implement ICSC's decision. The Chief of ICSC's Cost-of-Living Division added the application of the post-adjustment multipliers for Geneva set by the ICSC would entail a negative change in the post adjustment for specialized agencies, but that would not be as large as it had originally been.

### Solutions to financial hardships in duty stations where the local currency had been devalued

Noting that many duty stations, such as Cairo, were facing the devaluation of local currency, hyperinflation and challenging economic situations, a speaker said that the only solution was to follow the example set in Turkey and pay all staff in US dollars, although ICSC had

disagreed, on the grounds that the methodology did not allow it. What solutions could ICSC offer to the situation in Egypt?

The Chair replied that ICSC had already agreed to intervene in the dire situation faced by locally recruited staff in Cairo owing to the devaluation of the local currency. Although he needed to do more research on the effects of paying staff in US dollars, the ICSC staff present would meet with Cairo staff and FICSA representatives after the Q&A session to explore options to help those staff and would propose a solution acceptable to all stakeholders.

The Chief of ICSC's Salaries and Allowances Division noted that the methodology allowed ICSC to take into consideration the response of local employers to the current economic situation. Then it would work with the local UN agency to decide on a scheme of temporary special measures to help staff, whose adoption would be the responsibility of the local agency. That would probably also necessitate another General Service (GS) salary survey.

Representing the responsible agency, the Chief, Compensation and Classification Section, UN Secretariat, stressed that the central principle was to engage with conditions in the local labour market to enable the UN to be a competitive employer, which required assessing each country on its own merits, rather than applying measures taken in one country to another one. As any special measures taken would be temporary, a new comprehensive GS staff salary survey would follow them. It would allow the use of new comparators, according to the Flemming principle, which required looking at the local labour market. If the UN were the only employer in Cairo using dollars and the Egyptian pound depreciated, UN salaries would suddenly rise compared to the local labour market, which would be contrary to the Flemming principle.

The FICSA President noted that FICSA would continue to work with ICSC and the concerned staff representatives on this issue.

Asked whether the Egyptian Government would agree to paying UN staff in dollars, the ICSC Chair answered that ICSC would reach out to the Egyptian Government, find out and reply to the question in writing.

### **Plans for the ICSC review of the compensation package and implementation of its recommendations**

A delegate began by asking about ICSC's plans and timeline for the review of the compensation package, and, noting variations in the implementations of ICSC recommendations by organizations and Member States, then inquired whether ICSC were engaged in conversations with Member States on the fiscal sustainability of the UN common system and whether the Chair could predict when a conversation could be held on the system's future growth.

Thanking the speaker for relevant questions about system-wide issues, the Chair explained that ICSC often engaged with Member States, but did not interfere with management decisions, as it had no authority. Nevertheless, ICSC was in continual contact with Member States, pointing out to them what was needed to attract and retain the best staff, and thus

to sustain and preserve the UN common system. FICSA would be involved in every step of the comprehensive review of the compensation package, as its input, and that of staff more widely, was essential to enable ICSC to make good decisions for the future of the UN common system. He stressed however that organizations needed to provide ICSC with necessary data to use in its engagement with Member States.

The FICSA General Secretary asked for the exact timelines of the review, to ensure that FICSA and staff at large could provide their input.

The Chair pointed out that ICSC had a deadline for reporting to Member States, from which it would work back to set the timeline. ICSC usually established a working group to do such tasks and would request a FICSA representative to serve on the group once it was established.

The Chief of ICSC's Salaries and Allowances Division added that the review process had started. Document ICSC/95/R.5 (available only to attendees of the 95<sup>th</sup> ICSC session) was the opening paper for the review; the opening discussion would take place at ICSC's 95th session in March to get input from all stakeholders, including the three UN staff federations, which should be ready to supply feedback on the document. ICSC needed to establish the review's scope and structure. The Chair and Vice-Chair would consult with the executive heads of organizations and staff federations on those issues between the March and July ICSC sessions. Then ICSC would establish the timeline, based on the issues identified by stakeholders to be addressed, and report it to UNGA in autumn 2023.

### **Issues related to post adjustment**

Quoting from paragraph 12 of ICSC's post-adjustment classification memo for January 2023 ([ICSC-PADJ-0123-01](#)) – about the discontinuation of the special measures to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on post-adjustment classifications of group II duty stations, and the resumption of the revision cycle for the Personal Transitional Allowance – a delegate asked how this action would affect relevant duty stations, such as Cairo, and what the way forward would be.

The Chief of ICSC's Cost-of-Living Division noted that temporary measures had proved extremely helpful in keeping pay levels stable in a dire global economic situation. By neutralizing some ICSC practices, they had prevented decreases in pay for staff in field duty stations. The [ICSC-PADJ-0123-01](#) memo described what would happen when the measures were discontinued, which involved some grandfathering of measures that would affect existing staff but would not apply to new staff. The largest impact was expected to be on exchange rates for field duty stations where massive devaluation had taken place. In such cases, the operational rules could be applied to prevent corresponding decreases in salaries in those duty stations; such decreases would be limited to 3 multiplier points. A decline of 10 or more points would be needed to trigger new salary survey. ICSC would return to the regular schedule of surveys, but that would not automatically result in salary decreases. The Chief said he would elaborate more fully on that question in the training session scheduled for later in the Council.

After the ICSC Chair noted that that ICSC was very aware of the difficult situation of staff in Cairo paid in the local currency, the Chief of the Cost-of-Living Division explained that the post-adjustment change in Cairo had resulted from an increase in base salary, to keep salary levels consistent. The multiplier at last survey had been 34 and was currently 33. Delegates' concerns about the situation were legitimate, as the post-adjustment index had declined and stopping the special measures would result in a decline in salaries. If Cairo-based organizations asked for a new salary survey, ICSC would consider that request.

The UNISERV President referred to the situation in Lebanon where the decline in the exchange rate for the local currency would result in new staff getting zero post adjustment, which would hamper recruitment. He asked the ICSC how that situation could be solved, especially in view of fluctuating exchange rates in many countries in the region.

The ICSC Chair agreed that the situation in Lebanon was difficult. Exploring all avenues towards easing conditions for staff, ICSC would sending a fact-finding mission to study situation and possible responses; it would use the information gathered, to take measures to assist staff in the country.

The FICSA President echoed the concerns expressed about the financial situation for staff in countries such as Egypt and Lebanon. She hoped that the ICSC Secretariat would find the capacity to handle all the burgeoning issues on its agenda.

#### **TOR and composition of LSCs**

As there were no clear TOR for or set composition of an LSC in the methodology for a cost-of-living (COL) survey for International Professional (IP) staff, a speaker asked whether ICSC could share draft TOR to ensure consistency in the survey process across all duty stations.

The Chief of ICSC's Cost-of-Living Division replied that ICSC had no control over the coordinator of the local survey committee and could supply only general guidelines while trying to avoid micromanaging the process. Each coordinator needed a support system – representatives/focal points from all parties at duty stations, including staff associations – so the coordinator should establish that. It was best that ICSC did not make the process too rigid. Requirements for HQ duty stations were more formal, as criteria had to be set. As LSCs prepared their own TOR, he advised that coordinators of surveys for smaller field duty stations be allowed to assemble their own support systems, although involving staff associations remained essential. Staff representatives could reach out to ICSC and FICSA and ask LSCs for their TOR. ICSC could provide copies of TOR for HQ duty stations but not for those in the field.

#### **Further questions on post adjustment**

The Q&A session concluded with questions from the floor that focused on post adjustment: whether a new salary survey would settle the issues in Geneva, whether staff would see the implementation of the post-adjustment multiplier as retaliatory and whether drastic changes in post adjustment would justify a new COL survey.

The ICSC Chair said that ICSC had continued to implement the ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) judgement as legal commitment, even though they did not agree with it. All parties favoured a harmonized UN system in Geneva. That necessity was predominant, even if achieving it meant a financial loss to some staff while global inflation continued. In such a case, however organizations need to do their part.

The Chief of ICSC's Cost-of-Living Division explained that the surveys conducted during the pandemic had considered its effects in advance. The ICSC Secretariat had explained the possible effects, including through simulations, and the surveys were carried out with positive results for every duty station. ICSC would also do surveys more frequently if necessitated by any negative effects on the post adjustment. ICSC was open to helping all organizations, sometimes against the wishes of Member States, to ensure that staff received the post adjustment required by ILOAT. In addition, post adjustment in Geneva might continue to increase in February 2023 with the annual adjustment. There was no retaliatory intent.

The Chair reminded delegates that agencies could always ask ICSC to conduct new surveys if conditions changed. He thanked FICSA for its contribution to all parts of ICSC's work.

The FICSA President thanked all Council delegates for the patience and time that they had spent on the discussion.

**Annex 3. [Report of the Standing Committee on Legal Questions](#)**

**Annex 4. [Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management](#)**

**Annex 5. [Report of the Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety](#)**

**Annex 6. [Report of the Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field](#)**

**Annex 7. [Report of the Standing Committee on General Service Questions](#)**

**Annex 8. [Report of the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances](#)**

**Annex 9. [Report of the Standing Committee on Staff-Management Relations](#)**

**Annex 10. [Report of the Standing Committee on Programme, Budget, Administration and Strategy](#) (internal document – by request only)**



## Annex 11.

### PARTICIPANTS

MEMBER ASSOCIATION OR UNION	HEAD OF DELEGATION	MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION
AP-in-FAO	Florence Tartanac	Vanda Ferreira Santos Wadzanai Garwe Line Kaspersen
FAO/WFP-UGSS	Susan Murray	Marc Brown Dina Franchi Enzo Giorgio Lalli Silvia Mariangeloni Luca Vecchia
IAEA	Anthony Alozie	Erik Glass Houcine Mhadhbi Mariia Mikheieva Imed Zabaar
ICAO	Helena Debussy	Andrew Brown Sonia El-Sakka
IFAD	Lenyara Fundukova (Virtual)	Charles Forrest (Virtual)
ILO ITC	Cristina Pierini	Zakaria El Ghormli
IMO	Shereen Barry	Ivana Goode Fola Odulana Lionel Shen
OSCE	Nizar Zaher	
PAHO/WHO Washington	Pilar Ramon-Pardo	Glenda Moreira Lopez Eliane Pereira dos Santos
SCBD	Véronique Allain	
UNAIDS	Carlos Garcia de Leon Moreno	Andrea Palazzi Tanya Quinn-Maguire
UNESCO	Mary Mone (Virtual)	Federica Delconte Lina Oweis Ingrid Perper Denis Pitzalis Vivian Zaccaria
UNFCCC	Tracy Tollmann	Mary Jean Abrazado Marsha Cheddi Inès Hollbauer Sarah Klinghammer

<b>MEMBER ASSOCIATION OR UNION</b>	<b>HEAD OF DELEGATION</b>	<b>MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION</b>
		Marjorie Manduli
UNGSC	Alessandra Marcorio	Salvatore Brunori Cosimo Lunedi Cosimo Melpignano Annarita Palumbo
UNICTF	Maria Del Rocio Martin	
UNIDO	Steven Geoffrey Eales	Osador Akpata
UNRWA/ASA	Diab El Tabari	Daoud Korman
UPU	Birahim Fall	Silvia Baratech Leolinda Dieme Franck Landauer Magali Vifian Stéphane Vuillemin
WHO/AFRO Brazzaville	Hamidou Bague	Harris Benito Koubemba Mona Gildas Wilfrid Makaya Valerie Harmell Nganga Banzouzi
WHO/EMRO Cairo	Tonia Rifaey	Mina Nagy
WHO/EURO Copenhagen	Oleksandr Martynenko	Kay Miller Anita Stefin
WHO/HQ Geneva	Daniella Salmon	Neddy Mafunga Innocent Mugabe Jerome Zanga Foe
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WHO/WPRO Manila	Modesto VI Beligan	
WHO/SEARO New Delhi	Ritesh K. Singh	Kumar Ravinder
WMO Geneva	Andres Orias Bleichner (Virtual)	Jalil Housni (Virtual)
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<b>FEDERATION WITH OBSERVER STATUS</b>		
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