



**Universal Postal Union (UPU), Bern  
26 February–1 March 2024**

**Report of the 77<sup>th</sup> session  
of the FICSA Council**



## 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 13 to the report of the Council.

ACPAQ	Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions
ASHI	after-service health insurance
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
FWA	flexible working arrangements
FAFICS	Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants
FUNSAAs	Federations of United Nations Staff Associations
GS	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
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System
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
NPOs	national professional officers
OSLA	Office of Staff Legal Assistance
P staff	Professional staff
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan
Q&A session	question-and-answer session

SC	(FICSA) standing committee
TOR	terms of reference
TWG	(ICSC) Tripartite Working Group
TWODS	teleworking outside of duty station
UN	United Nations
UNAT	UN Appeals Tribunal
UNDT	UN Dispute Tribunal
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNISERV	United Nations International Civil Servants Federation
UNJSPB	UN Joint Staff Pension Board
UNJSPF	UN Joint Staff Pension Fund

## **Terms for FICSA structures**

ExCom            Executive Committee

### **Standing committees**

Standing Committee on Field Issues

Standing Committee on General Service Questions

Standing Committee on Human Resources Management

Standing Committee on Legal Questions

Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances

Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy

Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety

Standing Committee on Staff–Management Relations

### **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

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## Opening of the session

### Welcomes

3. FICSA President Tanya Quinn-Maguire (UNAIDS) welcomed both experienced and new delegates to the 77<sup>th</sup> session of the FICSA Council, particularly those who were attending virtually. Holding the Council session at UPU during the celebration of its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary was an honour, and FICSA was deeply grateful to the UPU Director-General and administration, Staff Association, and staff. (See annexes 1 and 13, respectively, for the session's agenda and participants).
4. Birahim Fall (UPU), President of the UPU Staff Association, was proud to welcome the Council delegates to UPU. UPU's anniversary was a good time to welcome FICSA; which was dedicated to supporting and defending UN staff. He thanked the general management of UPU for its support in hosting the Council session, which exemplified the spirit of cooperation that prevailed between the management and staff. He praised the FICSA President for her excellent service. He thanked the FICSA Secretariat, its Executive Committee (ExCom) and members, who together were responsible for FICSA's success. He hoped that delegates would explore the hidden treasures of Bern.
5. Masahiko Metoki, UPU Director-General, welcomed FICSA delegates to UPU. Hosting the Council session during UPU's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary year was an honour. UPU predated the United Nations (UN) by more than 70 years, becoming a specialized agency in 1978 and a member of FICSA in 1966. Hosting delegates from so many UN agencies was an excellent sign of cooperation among UN agencies, which he hoped would continue to grow. He welcomed the Chair of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and promised to continue cooperation within the UN and its governing bodies to work for the welfare of staff. He was grateful for choice of UPU as host and wished delegates successful Council session.
6. The FICSA President noted with appreciation that Mr Metoki, the head of a UN organization, had stressed the importance of mental health for staff and thanked the Director-General for UPU's hosting the 77<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council session.

### Address by the FICSA President

7. The FICSA President was the first of a series of speakers to the Council session to note that the UN was living through probably the most difficult time in its history, as it struggled with the effects of the global financial crisis, the continuing impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, increasing numbers of global conflicts, climate change and a clear lack of support for the multilateral system. Member States were cutting funding while demanding increased output, and staff representatives had to deal with all the fallout, including the impact on the mental health and wellbeing of their members, as well as their own.
8. The Council session, however, provided hope for the future; staff representation was tangibly increasing, bringing new and younger faces to the FICSA Council. FICSA was proud to welcome IOM as a full member as of January 2024 and the increased interest in FICSA participation from staff organizations in the field and Federations of United Nations Staff Associations (FUNSAs), to which FICSA wanted to provide better support. FICSA also welcomed the rising number of requests for

training to enable staff representatives to build their capacity to deal with staff concerns in their respective organizations.

9. She urged delegates who had not already done so to take advantage of the training offered at the Council session and from the FICSA catalogue. It would build the capacity of staff representatives, helping them to help their members more effectively. She noted the serious responsibility on Delegates to elect effective new members to ExCom.
10. The FICSA President also urged delegates to raise their concerns in the standing committees, provide feedback and ask questions. ExCom needed the committees' advice on how to move forward.
11. Being FICSA President was an honour; the staff representatives comprised FICSA; and they were its future.

### **Address by the ICSC Chair**

12. Inviting the ICSC Chair to take the floor, the FICSA President noted that FICSA had continued to develop and maintain a collegial working relationship with the ICSC Chair and Secretariat, and trusted that this approach would continue.
13. Larbi Djacta, ICSC Chair, welcomed the chance to address, through FICSA, nearly 40,000 UN staff around the world, and expressed gratitude for FICSA's continued constructive role in all aspects of ICSC's work.
14. Focused and values-based partnership between ICSC and staff federations, including FICA, was important to ensure consistent and equitable conditions of service for staff across the organizations in the UN common system, and thus preserving a single, unified, and coherent UN common system. Various factors were testing the traditional model of an international civil service career in an unprecedented way. UN organizations would need to adapt to retain talented staff and their relevance.
15. Turning to ICSC's recent and forthcoming activities, the Chair explained that the UN General Assembly (UNGA) had decided to take no action on either ICSC's recommendations in its 2023 [report](#) or the Secretary General's review of the jurisdictional set-up of the UN common system. That meant, in the opinion of the ICSC, that the risk of divergent jurisprudence in the UN system would continue, and that UNGA would have to revisit the topics requiring its approval under the ICSC [Statute](#), including the adjustment of the base/floor salary scale, and of the children's and secondary dependents' allowances. In contrast, ICSC's decisions on, for example, adjustment to the levels of the hardship allowance, mobility incentive and danger pay, and the level of the security evacuation allowance. would be implemented, effective 1 January 2024. ICSC would continue its work on all other items discussed in its report, including the comprehensive review of the compensation package and post adjustment.
16. As to the comprehensive review of the compensation package requested by UNGA [resolution A/RES/77/256 A-B](#), close collaboration with UN organizations and staff federations, and a robust communication and outreach strategy had secured a solid 27% response rate (over 35,000 responses) for ICSC's Global Staff Survey on the Common System compensation package, which

would provide important guidance for the review. ICSC had established three working groups on the review of the Professional compensation package and would consider the report of the first at its session in March. The two other groups would consider dependency-related benefits, including the education grant, and field-related entitlements.

17. Further, the working group on the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#) was expected to complete and report on its work to ICSC in July. ICSC would also conduct General Service (GS) staff salary surveys under the revised survey methodology: in Jamaica and Rome in 2024 and Montreal and Paris in 2025. ICSC looked forward to continuing its fruitful interaction with FICSA and other stakeholders to the benefit of UN common system.
18. The FICSA President reiterated FICSA's commitment to cooperation with ICSC.
19. She asked the Council and its guests to stand for a moment of silence to honour the unprecedented number of colleagues who had lost their lives in the service of the UN, and the passing of an important member of the FICSA community, Maria Dweggah, who had literally fought for staff welfare through her last days.
20. The subsequent question-and-answer (Q&A) session involving the ICSC Chair; Yuri Orlov, Chief, Salaries and Allowances Division, and Acting Executive Secretary, ICSC; and Bart Willemsen, Chief, Compensation and Classification Section UN Secretariat comprises Annex 2.

### **Statement by HLCM Chair**

21. The FICSA President invited the Chair of the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) to take the floor.
22. Like the FICSA President and ICSC Chair, Catherine Pollard, HLCM Chair and UN Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy, and Compliance, stressed both the value of the UN system and the strain placed on its workforce by multiple factors: not only the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing crises in the world but also increasing workloads, budgetary restrictions, and deteriorating security conditions in conflict areas.
23. The challenges of the current environment continued to serve as a catalyst for UN organizations to have more meaningful conversations about staff wellbeing, mental health, and the importance of workplace culture. For example, more counselling resources were available to staff, and HLCM had recently agreed to increase joint funding for the support structure of the Mental Health Strategy Implementation Board, with FICSA playing a particularly constructive role.
24. HLCM continued to work to reshape workplace organization and culture for the better. A multidisciplinary working group hosted by the Human Resources (HR) Network focused on fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. It also sought not only to reduce negative behaviour – such as sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse; other forms of harassment; and racism, sexism, and gender discrimination – but also to promote and share good practices and communicate more clearly to staff and Member States about the interdependencies between results and resources. In addition, UN organizations needed to embrace new opportunities such as the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in a manner that would avoid burdening staff and manage the associated risks.



25. Partnership with staff federations was important to all those efforts, as was the work of ICSC, including both its revision of the [Standards of Conduct](#) and its comprehensive review of the UN compensation package, which needed to strike a balance between financial sustainability and the preservation of the UN's attractiveness as an employer of choice. FICSA's contributions were important not only to HLCM but also to ICSC.
26. HLCM and all its members were mindful of the concerns and needs of all personnel and looked forward to continuing dialogue and collaboration.
27. The FICSA President thanked the HLCM Chair for her statement and opened the floor for questions.
28. The Q&A session involving the HLCM Chair comprises Annex 3.
29. The FICSA President welcomed representatives of FICSA's sister staff federations, the United Nations International Civil Servants Federation (UNISERV) and the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA), who addressed the Council virtually.

### **Statement by UNISERV**

30. Milan Victor Dawoh, Vice-President of UNISERV and President of the UN Field Staff Union, noted that both federations were fighting for staff, and joint action would make their advocacy more effective in addressing such issues as the non-permanent roster membership, mobility, continuing appointments and, most importantly, staff reductions. UNISERV was alarmed about the effects of the UN's liquidity crisis on staff but was confident that joint action by staff federations would be successful.

### **Statement by CCISUA**

31. Nathalie Meynet, President of both CCISUA and the UNHCR staff association, was grateful for CCISUA's good cooperation with FICSA. CCISUA remained committed to the [CCISUA/FICSA/UNISERV Cooperation Agreement](#) of 2020 and to continuing the good cooperation that had been established, for example, to present a united front at ICSC and HLCM sessions, and to support staff in conflict situations.
32. She outlined action taken by CCISUA on such issues as preserving the viability of the UNJSPF. Further cooperative action would be needed on the ICSC comprehensive review of the compensation package, training on salary-survey methodologies, and the creation and expansion of FUNSAs as an important mechanism to promote greater coordination among staff associations.
33. The FICSA President pledged continued cooperation between FICSA and its sister staff federations.

### **Statement by UN GLOBE**

34. The FICSA President welcomed the annual address from UN GLOBE, to raise the concerns of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and identifying using different terms or no specific terms (LGBTQI+) staff.
35. Anna Giudice (UNODC), a Vice-President on the UN GLOBE Board, considered the partnership with FICSA as one of its most important.

36. Since making their memorandum of understanding (MoU) in 2020, UN GLOBE and FICSA had worked together to promote more inclusive workplace cultures and ensure that the views of LGBTIQ+ staff were heard and conveyed to UN management. Although UN GLOBE represented the interests of all UN personnel with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and sex characteristics, including those who are LGBTIQ+, its advocacy and partnership with FICSA benefited all staff. For example, the partners had worked together to ensure equal treatment of all families. The adoption by UNGA in December 2022 of the first gender-neutral parental leave policy for the UN system benefited all parents, not just those who were LGBTIQ+.
37. UN GLOBE sought the continued assistance of FICSA and its members in several areas of its future work, including increasing visibility and engagement to ensure safe and inclusive workspaces and equitable policies for all staff. That would entail asking all entities and duty stations to consider opening UN GLOBE chapters and including UN GLOBE coordinators in decision-making processes.
38. In addition, UN GLOBE had many concerns about the effects of the new mobility policy for the UN Secretariat on existing and prospective LGBTIQ+ personnel. As UN GLOBE asked difficult question about the policy and supported personnel affected by it, it asked FICSA to continue to include UN GLOBE in the key conversations about the mobility policy.
39. UN GLOBE also looked forward to continued cooperation with FICSA to ensure access to coverage for health care essential to the mental and physical health of LGBTIQ+ personnel, and to try to mitigate the effects of the conflict situation in Gaza on all staff. Further, UN GLOBE was confident that FICSA would support its efforts to push back on the worrying backlash, globally and in many UN governing bodies, aiming to reverse the progress made on gender and human rights, particularly those of LGBTIQ+ staff.
40. UN GLOBE appreciated FICSA's support on all those issues, and was ready to provide input, strengthen dialogue and give feedback whenever possible. UN GLOBE hoped that the forthcoming approval of the first UN-system-wide strategy on violence and discrimination against LGBTIQ+ persons would allow it to open spaces for increased dialogue in entities and duty stations jointly with staff associations/unions.
41. The FICSA President thanked UN GLOBE for its advocacy on diversity, equity and inclusion issues and urged FICSA members to reach out to UN GLOBE coordinators and other relevant groups to ensure that those issues were properly handled.

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

42. The Council elected Susan Alexander (UPU) as Chairperson by acclamation, and Anita Stefin (WHO/EURO) and Philippe Pypaert (UNESCO) as Vice-Chairs. Mary Stewart Burgher served as Rapporteur.
43. The Council adopted the agenda (document [FICSA/C/77/1](#) – see Annex 1) as submitted. Six training sessions were offered during the Council session, on topics including hardship classification, the knowledge sharing approach to training, flexible working arrangements, AI in the workplace and pension issues.

44. The FICSA General Secretary, Cosimo Melpignano (UNGSC), explained that, out of the 31 current full members, 27 were physically present at the Council, three were joining in a virtual modality and one was not present. The FICSA General Secretary welcomed three associate members, four consultative members and two observer organizations to the Council session. The full list of participants who attended physically and virtually are available in Annex 13.

## Questions relating to membership status in FICSA

45. Changes in membership during 2023 were as follows: FICSA was glad to welcome IOM (the International Organization for Migration) as a new full member, two new associate members (BIPM – Bureau international des poids et mesures – and GCF – the Green Climate Fund) and a new member with observer status (FUNSA Rwanda). The Council agreed by acclamation the applications from FUNSA Somalia and FUNSA Zimbabwe to become FICSA members with observer status.
46. In addition, FICSA was negotiating with another staff association with a view to membership. WIPO SA's withdrawal from FICSA membership was confirmed.

## Report of the Executive Committee for 2023–2024 (March 2023–February 2024)

47. The FICSA President urged all delegates to read the ExCom report ([FICSA/C/77/4](#)) in full, and thanked every member of ExCom and the FICSA Secretariat for their contributions to the work discussed. She briefly reviewed FICSA's representation of UN staff at high-level meetings, and described how the work of those bodies was connected. The other members of ExCom elaborated on FICSA's work in all those fora. She stressed that FICSA worked at the high-level fora to ensure that FICSA members' interests were considered in ICSC recommendations. When UNGA approved ICSC decisions, organizations were obliged to implement them; FICSA members played a vital role in ensuring that their organizations implemented those decisions.
48. Discussions with Member States at meetings of the Fifth Committee of UNGA were the most challenging. UNGA's decision to take no action on ICSC's 2023 [report](#) had meant that there would be no adjustment to the base/floor salary scale, consolidation of post adjustment or adjustment to the children's and secondary dependents' allowances. ICSC decisions on the hardship allowance, mobility incentive, danger pay and the security evacuation allowance, however, would be implemented.
49. FICSA had attended two meetings of ICSC, which had dealt with: amendments to the ICSC Statute, post adjustment issues, the comprehensive review of the compensation package, the global staff survey on the review. FICSA had also taken part in the ICSC working groups on: the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), the classification of hardship duty stations and the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ).
50. FICSA had attended two sessions of HLCM as an observer. The issues addressed included: the disability inclusion strategy, sexual harassment in the UN, the use and governance of AI, the Occupational Health and Safety Forum, and diversity equity and inclusion. Under HLCM, FICSA had

taken part in the work of the Task Force on the Use of AI, the UN Digital ID Project, the HR Network, the Implementation Board for the [United Nations System Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy](#) and the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN).

51. As the HR Network provided administrative guidelines, FICSA had successfully collaborated with it on guidelines for all the recent conflict situations, particularly advocating for the safety and security of locally recruited staff.
52. FICSA had observer status on the UN Joint Staff Pension Board (UNJSPB), but staff at large were represented through their elected representatives on the staff participant committees (SPCs). UNJSPB addressed such issues as the impact of key investment decisions, funding policy, actuarial matters, eligibility for spousal benefits and governance. One delegate noted the positive impact of FICSA's participation in the participants group during the meetings of the UNJSPB and suggested that this practice should continue. FICSA would continue to promote better UNJSPB governance through the participants group.
53. A delegate praised the FICSA President's service, and asked what FICSA could do to ensure that CEB Secretariat supplied the data needed; that ICSC was open to input in decision-making about hardship duty stations, which were proliferating; and that the governance of the UNSJPF improved. Others asked what FICSA could do to support UNRWA in the current political context so that the organization could fulfil its mandate. One delegate urged all delegates to publicize FICSA's important work as widely as possible in their organizations.
54. The FICSA President was glad to have secured a greater voice in HLCM over the past two years and noted that while FICSA had continued to work closely with the HR Network through informal discussions, particularly around staff in conflict zones, FICSA had been invited to participate in some sessions of the HR Network meeting in-person in 2023 for the first time since 2020. She urged delegates to propose a recommendation on HR data and openness in the ICSC if they thought it necessary.
55. An ExCom Member for Regional and Field Issues described how FICSA continued to push for the release of the methodology for designating hardship duty stations. ICSC would not release it as yet. Nevertheless, the quality of submissions left much to be desired; sending the most accurate and recent data was in duty stations' interest.
56. The FICSA President agreed that the situation of staff in Gaza and UNRWA was dire. As reported during meetings of the Heads of Delegations, FICSA consistently raised the issue in all possible fora, including with the co-chairs of HLCM and dedicated meetings with the HR Network and UNDSS; it had been advised that the best way for staff to show their support was to stress the positive efforts and work of UNRWA, and counteract false statements about the organization.
57. The Council Chair noted ExCom's report with appreciation.

## **FICSA cooperation with the other staff federations**

58. The FICSA President was proud of the [CCISUA/FICSA/UNISERV Cooperation Agreement](#) of 2020, and stressed that all three federations strove to present a united front in dealings with management and governing bodies.

## Election of the Executive Committee Officers and Regional Representatives for 2024–2026 (March 2024 to February 2026)

59. The Council Chairperson announced the nominations received (in alphabetical order) for election to the Executive Committee for 2024–2026 (see [FICSA/C/77/5.REV.1](#)). 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)
President	Wadzanai Garwe (AP-in-FAO)	Wadzanai Garwe (AP-in-FAO)
Treasurer	Jérôme Zanga Foe (WHO/HQ)	Jérôme Zanga Foe (WHO/HQ)
Member for Compensation Issues	Evelyn Siula (UNAIDS) Silvia Mariangeloni (FAO/WFP-UGSS)	Silvia Mariangeloni (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
Member for Regional and Field Issues	Oleksandr Martynenko (WHO/EURO)	Oleksandr Martynenko (WHO/EURO)
Regional Representative for Africa	Christian Stéphane Tounta (WHO/AFRO)	Christian Stéphane Tounta (WHO/AFRO)
Regional Representative for the Americas	Glenda Moreira Lopez (PAHO/WHO)	Glenda Moreira Lopez (PAHO/WHO)

60. As the new FICSA President came from AP-in-FAO, and ExCom could not have two serving members from the same organization, Line Kaspersen (AP-in-FAO), the Member for Compensation Issues, would stand down. The FICSA General Secretary thanked Ms Kaspersen on behalf of the ExCom for her work over the years, particularly on all post adjustment related issues. A byelection would be held to fill that position.

## Approval of the recommendations from, and the election of chairs and vice-chairs of, FICSA standing committees

61. Before and during the 77th Council, all delegates took part in virtual and face-to-face meetings of FICSA's eight standing committees (SCs) 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. In addition to meeting individually, the standing committees on Conditions in the Field and Professional Salaries and Allowances met jointly to discuss the ICSC review of the UN compensation package, and those on Human Resources Management, Legal

Questions and Conditions in the Field met in joint session on flexible working arrangements (FWA) and AI.

62. All committees debated the issues on their agendas, including discussing the actions taken to implement the decisions of the 76th session of the FICSA Council, made recommendations on those issues and drafted recommendations for the Council to consider. These are contained in the committees' reports, which comprise annexes 5–12 to the Council report. Those reports list each committee's membership, describe its deliberations, give its recommendations, and list the elected officers for 2024.
63. As was customary, a member of each committee presented its recommendations and proposed Chair and Vice-Chairs to all delegates in the Council's final plenary session. The Council 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 2024–2025.

## Legal Questions

64. The SC on Legal Questions had addressed a range of topics, including the current review of the jurisdictional set-up of the UN common system; the review by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU) of the internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms available to UN staff (as per report [JIU/REP/2023/2](#)); an update on the Legal Defence Fund guidelines and requests for FICSA training courses. The SC's full report comprises [Annex 5](#).

## Decisions

- **The FICSA Executive Committee should ensure that the information on the legal support accessible to members reflects the current evolution of the internal appeals mechanisms in each organization.**
- **The FICSA Executive Committee should organize some training sessions by legal experts on basic legal concepts, including information on the procedures pertaining to both tribunals, the ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) and the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT)/UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT).**

## Bern Declaration

65. In addition to the recommendations listed above, the SC presented the “Bern Declaration for the Protection of International Civil Servants Working in Conditions of War or Armed Conflict” for approval by the FICSA Council. Although UNGA had adopted the [Convention for the Safety and Security of United Nations and Associated Personnel](#) in 1994, attacks on UN staff had increased in the previous decade. FICSA's mandate included the protection of conditions of service of international civil servants but also included safety.
66. The FICSA President suggested, that, as the Declaration was completely new to most delegates, it be taken as a draft for modification, and that it start with an expression of grief for all lives lost to conflict, noting the unprecedented loss of UN staff in 2023. In the ensuing discussion, the Council' decided that the draft would be sent to heads of delegations for review, modification for more inclusive language and subsequent approval. See [Annex 4](#) for the Bern Declaration in its final form.

## Human Resources Management

67. The SC on Human Resources Management tackled an agenda focusing on the concept of a contract “with no duty-station”, based on the HR Network discussion and the FICSA position paper; and the impact of AI in the workplace, including an update on the work of the HLCM task force for a system-wide normative and operational framework on the use of AI in the UN System and a presentation by Professor Aditya Jain (Nottingham University, United Kingdom). [Annex 6](#) contains the SC’s full report.

### Decisions

- **When planning the 78th FICSA Council, the FICSA Executive Committee should ensure that the new Human Resources Management Permanent Technical Committee on Non-regular Contracts meets and opens a constructive dialogue on the dual-track employment framework(s). The FICSA Executive Committee should build an agenda for the Committee that covers different frameworks used by UN organizations and scenarios of cultural overlap, and investigate the availability of case studies, with enough lead time to inform the membership before the 78th Council meets.**
- **The FICSA Executive Committee should issue guidance that encourages staff representatives to take part in discussions on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the workplace through FICSA communications on the impact of AI on mental health and wellbeing, based on the recommendations of the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) Task Force on Artificial Intelligence.**
- **FICSA should explore options to add capacity building and training related to the use of AI in the workplace to its catalogue.**

## Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety

68. The SC discussed an update on and FICSA participation in the work of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Forum; a vision for future of the UN Mental Health Strategy; staff health insurance, including after-service health insurance (ASHI); the forthcoming JIU report and cooperation with the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) on topics such as ASHI. [Annex 7](#) comprises the SC’s full report.

### Decisions

- **The FICSA Executive Committee, in conjunction with the officers of the Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety, should:**
  - a. **continue to raise in all fora the members’ concerns about discrepancies in or inequitable access to benefits offered to staff with children living with disabilities; and**
  - b. **develop, distribute, and discuss among FICSA members a white paper on benefits and allowances for staff with children living with disabilities, with a particular focus on equitable access to the benefit for all staff, including locally recruited staff.**
- **The FICSA Executive Committee should continue to actively participate in the Participants’ Group of the UN Joint Staff Pension Board.**

- The FICSA Executive Committee should organize a joint session of the standing committees on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety and Staff/Management Relations to finalize the toolkit of best practices on harassment, sexual harassment, and abuse of power, with a view to the final result being posted on the FICSA website.
- Once the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report on staff health insurance is released, the FICSA Executive Committee should inform staff associations about its recommendations, to enable them to be included in discussions with their organizations; and the Executive Committee should follow up in all related fora.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should advocate in the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) to urge UN organizations to make funds available for the implementation of the [UN strategy on disability inclusion](#).
- The FICSA Executive Committee, in consultation with the Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health should advocate in all relevant fora for the improvement of benefits for UN staff living with disabilities.

## Conditions of Service in the Field

69. The SC received a presentation from Professor Aditya Jain (Nottingham University, United Kingdom) on FWA in the UN common system, and an update on the process of the ICSC methodology of classification of field duty stations according to the conditions of life and work. It discussed the security of local staff in the field during the current increased geopolitical turmoil and armed conflicts. The SC's full report comprises [Annex 8](#).

## Decisions

- In collaboration with the Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field, the FICSA Executive Committee should continue building the FICSA membership's capacity, awareness, and knowledge of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) Tripartite Working Group (TWG) classification of hardship duty stations during 2024.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should alert the ICSC TWG to ensure that issues related to access to education are one of the elements to be considered in the current methodology used in the classification of hardship duty stations.
- In collaboration with the Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field, the FICSA Executive Committee should continue to work with the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN) to increase FICSA members' awareness and knowledge of safety and security issues in 2024.
- In collaboration with the Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field, the FICSA Executive Committee should continue engaging with ICSC on differences in the allowances that are available to internationally versus locally recruited staff members, particularly in the context of emergencies, to work towards equitable treatment of all staff, regardless of their contract category. Specifically, the FICSA Executive Committee should advocate for an amendment to the methodology that determines the level of danger pay for locally recruited staff, to ensure that the



midpoint takes account of all locally recruited staff, including national professional officers (NPOs).

- In consultation with the Standing Committee on Conditions of Service in the Field, the FICSA Executive Committee should collaborate with all relevant stakeholders to bring to the attention of ICSC and all relevant entities, including the US State Department, ongoing issues with G-4 visas and green cards for retirees in the United States of America.
- In collaboration with the standing committees on Conditions of Service in the Field, Human Resources Management and Legal Questions, the FICSA Executive Committee should prepare and present to 78th FICSA Council a draft strategy paper to educate and advocate flexible working arrangements (FWA) to FICSA membership, based on the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report on FWA ([JIU/REP/2023/6](#)), and other pertinent information sources.

## General Service Questions

70. The SC considered the report of the Permanent Technical Committee of the Standing Committee on General Service Questions (PTC/GSQ,) and issues related to the FICSA task force on the comprehensive review of the compensation package, including any implications for GS staff and its terms of reference. [Annex 9](#) comprises the SC's full report.

### Decisions

- The FICSA Executive Committee should supply to the members of the Standing Committee on General Service Questions a document, to be constantly updated by FICSA members, that consolidates the experience of, and lessons learned by staff involved in local salary survey committees (LSSCs).
- The FICSA Executive Committee should continue liaising with standing committee chairs and vice-chairs before the meetings of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) working groups set up for the review of the compensation package, in order also to consider the conditions of service of locally recruited staff, as per the terms of reference of the FICSA task force on the review of the compensation package.
- With the eighth round of salary surveys being rolled out in headquarters and non-headquarters duty stations, the FICSA Executive Committee should organize capacity-building and training workshops on salary-survey methodology and job classification, as requested by FICSA members.

## Professional Salaries and Allowances

71. The SC discussed the effects of UNGA's choice to make no decisions on the recommendations made in ICSC's 2023 [report](#); and issues related to the FICSA task force on the comprehensive review of the compensation package, including its possible implications for Professional staff, its terms of reference and possible nominations to it from the SC. The SC's full report comprises [Annex 10](#).

### Decisions

- The FICSA Executive Committee, in conjunction with the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances, should develop model terms of reference for local survey committees

(LSCs) based on the ICSC guidelines, and share them with staff associations/unions prior to the roll out of future cost-of-living (COL) surveys to Professional staff.

- In relation to the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) comprehensive assessment and review of the compensation package for staff in the Professional and higher categories, the FICSA Executive Committee should consider time-zone differences when organizing online training sessions for Professional staff and explore the feasibility of organizing additional sessions in different languages and for staff in the same time zone.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should ensure that the Chair or a designated member of the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances is present during the virtual meetings of the Task Force on the Compensation Review and update the Task Force's budget and terms of reference to reflect the meeting modality.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should collect from the membership policies related to the criteria for eligibility for the education grant and present the results of its analysis for further discussion by the FICSA Executive Committee and the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances prior to the 78th FICSA Council.
- The FICSA Executive Committee should continue to reinforce to the Human Resources (HR) Network and the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM), that, in order for inter-agency mobility to be effective, the inter-agency mobility framework agreement should include the retention of acquired rights and facilitate career development and exchanges among organizations.

## **Staff–Management Relations**

72. The SC addressed such topics as best practices with respect to the terms and conditions of staff associations in their organizations and the legal status of staff associations/unions with regard to financial activities. [Annex 11](#) contains the SC's full report.

### **Decisions**

- The FICSA Executive Committee should continue emphasizing the importance of staff associations/unions' having a signed memorandum of understanding or recognition agreement with the administration.
- The FICSA Executive Committee and Secretariat should proactively advertise, organize, and conduct online or pre-recorded orientation training sessions/webinars for newly elected staff representatives, working within the available budget, resources and using in-kind contributions from members.

## **Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy**

73. The SC on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy presented to the Council the proposed budget and the scale of contributions for 2024 (documents FICSA/C/77/PBAS/4 and FICSA/C/77/PBAS/6; see also appendices 2–4 to [Annex 12](#), respectively). Its discussions had also addressed both strategic issues, such as finding other revenue streams and a long-term strategy for FICSA, and reviews of the various financial reports submitted to it.

## Decisions on strategic development and FICSA funds

- The 77<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council should confirm the permanent merger of the former ad hoc committees for Strategic Development and Administrative and Budgetary Matters into the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy.
- In collaboration with officers of the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy, the FICSA Executive Committee should establish, call for nominations for and draft clear terms of reference for a working group to develop a long-term strategy for FICSA.
- In collaboration with officers of the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy, the FICSA Executive Committee should set up, call for nominations for and draft clear terms of reference for a working group to adopt guidelines on fundraising, drawing on organizations' existing guidelines, to find alternative sources of income, with the aim of reporting to the 78th Council.
- The 77<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council should maintain the level of the Termination Indemnity Fund at CHF 184,684 (no change) since the funds were expected to be at CHF 151,850 at the end of 2024 after the invoices for the relocation of the General Secretary and Information Officer had been received and settled.
- The 77<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council should write off the amount of CHF 25,230 from the Legal Defence Fund, which was not recoverable from the WIPO and PAHO/WHO staff associations.
- The 77<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council should leave the Reserve Fund underfunded since there are no expectations of any further usage of the Reserve Fund.

## Draft programme and budget and scale of membership contributions to FICSA for 2024

74. The proposed budget for 2024 (see list below) was calculated at CHF 679,219, representing a 12% increase over the budget for 2023 (CHF 550,000), and of which CHF 615,945 was for operations and CHF 63,274 for funds replenishment, to be taken from the reserves. The proposed budget was drafted through zero-based budgeting, considering spending trends observed in 2023 as well as the actual activities, meetings and travel anticipated for the forthcoming year.

### Total Budget (CHF)

2022: 499,500

2023: 550,000

2024: 679,219 (CHF 615,945 is operational and CHF 63,274 for funds replenishment)

75. The Council took note of the proposed budget, and adopted the budget shown in Table 2 (see also Appendix 2 to [Annex 12](#)) and the scale of contributions (see Appendix 3 to [Annex 12](#)).

Table 2. Summary of proposed FICSA budget for 2024, with changes from budget for 2023

Chapter	Title	Amounts (CHF)	Change from 2023 (%)
1	FICSA representation	107,400	+18
2	FICSA Council and ExCom	34,500	-17
3	FICSA Administration	474,045	+12
<b>Total</b>		615,945	

## Decisions

- The 77th FICSA Council should approve the draft programme and budget for 2024 ([FICSA/C/77/PBAS/4](#)) in the amount of CHF 679,219, of which CHF 615,945 was for operations and CHF 63,274 for funds replenishment.
- The 77<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council should approve the scale of contributions for 2024 ([FICSA/C/77/PBAS/6](#)).

## Election of the Standing Committee officers for 2024-2025

The Council elected the following Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Standing Committees for 2024-2025:

### Legal Questions

Co-Chairs: Maria Rocio Martin /UNICTF) and Andrés Orias-Bleichner (WMO)  
 Vice-Chairs: Joël Lahaye (CERN) and Salvatore Brunori (UNGSC)

### Human Resources Management

Co-Chairs: Anthony Alozie (IAEA) and Alessandra Marcorio (UNGSC)  
 Vice-Chair: Helena Debussy (ICAO)

### Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety

Chair: Paola Monroy (CTBTO)  
 Vice-Chairs: Sotirios Markopoulos (CTBTO) and Michelle Delinde (CTBTO)

### Conditions of Service in the Field

Chair: Marc Brown (FAO/WFP-UGSS)  
 Vice-Chair: Fares Kady (WHO/EMRO)

### General Service Questions

Chair: Evelyn Siula (UNAIDS)  
 Vice-Chairs: Mina Nagy (WHO/EMRO), Glenda Moreira Lopez (WHO/PAHO) and Kay Miller (WHO/EURO)

### Professional Salaries and Allowances

Co-Chairs: Houcine Mhadhbi (IAEA) and Leolinda Dieme (UPU)  
 Vice-Chair: James Howlett (WHO/WPRO)

### **Staff/Management Relations**

Chair: Viera Seben (ICAO)

Vice-Chairs: Shereen Barry (IMO), Anita Stefin (WHO/EURO),  
Jaswinder Maan (WHO/GSC), Neddy Mafunga (WHO/HQ)

### **Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy Committee**

Chair for Administrative and Budget: Nizar Zaher (OSCE)

Vice-Chair: Kay Miller (WHO/EURO)

Chair for Strategy Committee: Anthony Alozie (IAEA)

Vice-Chair: Birahim Fall (UPU)

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

76. The FICSA General Secretary was glad to inform the delegates that FICSA had received an invitation for the 78<sup>th</sup> Council session in 2025 from UNESCO in Paris, France.
77. A delegate representing UNESCO looked forward to welcoming the FICSA Council on the tentative dates of 1- 7 February 2025. The administration had already allocated premises for the event. As a founding FICSA member, UNESCO would celebrate an important date in its history: its eightieth anniversary.
78. In addition, an invitation for the 79<sup>th</sup> Council session in 2026 had been received from UNGSC Brindisi

## **Closing of the session**

79. The FICSA General Secretary bade sad farewells to two extraordinary friends who were starting new chapters of their lives: Véronique Allain (SCBD), who would soon retire from UN service, and outgoing FICSA President Tanya Quinn-Maguire (UNAIDS). The Council gave both standing ovations. Presenting a plaque commemorating her service to FICSA, the General Secretary noted Tanya Quinn-Maguire's achievements in leading the way to solutions on several issues that had persisted for decades.
80. The President of the UPU Staff Association congratulated the whole FICSA family for its work; UPU had been glad to host the Council as part of its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and to celebrate the outgoing FICSA President. He welcomed the incoming FICSA President and the continuation of the FICSA family.
81. The Chairperson thanked all the colleagues who had contributed to the success of the Council session, including UPU staff, the Polling Officers, the staff of the FICSA Secretariat and the Council vice-chairs. She thanked those who were leaving ExCom for all the work they had done for FICSA and those who had accepted the challenge of ExCom office for the coming year and declared the 77<sup>th</sup> session of the FICSA Council closed.

**Annex 1. [Agenda for the 77th FICSA Council](#)**

**Annex 2. [Q&A session with the International Civil Service Commission](#)**

**Annex 3. [Q&A session with the Chair of the High-Level Committee on Management](#)**

**Annex 4. [Bern Declaration for the Protection of International Civil Servants Working in Conditions of War or Armed Conflict](#)**

**Annex 5. [Report of the Standing Committee on Legal Questions](#)**

**Annex 6. [Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management](#)**

**Annex 7. [Report of the Standing Committee on Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety](#)**

**Annex 8. [Report of the Standing Committee on Field Issues](#)**

**Annex 9. [Report of the Standing Committee on General Service Questions](#)**

**Annex 10. [Report of the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances](#)**

**Annex 11. [Report of the Standing Committee on Staff–Management Relations](#)**

**Annex 12. Report of the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy (internal document – by request only)**

**Annex 13. [List of participants](#)**