



## COMMUNICATIONS

### UPDATES FROM THE 77<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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**34/22**

**Geneva  
16 November 2022**

To: All FICSA Members  
For distribution to: All staff  
From: FICSA Information Officer

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We are bringing you the latest updates from the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

The FICSA President, Ms Tanya Quinn-Maguire, has been on mission since 2 November to meet and brief key stakeholders of the Fifth Committee of the UNGA (Committee of Administrative and Budgetary Questions) of your position and views on the matters being discussed.

On 15 November at 10.00am New York time, the agenda item UN Common System was discussed at the Fifth Committee. FICSA's statement, as presented by Tanya Quinn-Maguire, can be viewed through this [link](#) and available on the [Circulars section](#) of the [FICSA website](#). It is also reproduced below for your convenience. FICSA delegation to the UNGA includes Executive Committee Member for Compensation, Mr Imed Zabaar.



The Chair of the ICSC presented the [annual report](#) and recommendations of the ICSC to the Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly. A summary of the recommendations can be found in the table below. This was followed by statements from the Staff Federations and Member States.



Para ref	Recommendations / Decisions
63 (a)	Annual Leave for temporary appointments across the common system organizations should be harmonized at 2.5 days of leave per month.
91 and 10 of A/77/7/Add.11	ICSC decided to replace the current maternity, paternity and adoption leave provisions with a parental leave provision of 16 weeks for all parents and to provide an additional period of 10 weeks to birth mothers.
148 (a) and annex IX	From from 1 January 2023, the revised unified base/floor salary scale, as well as the updated pay protection points for the Professional and higher categories, reflecting a 2.28 per cent adjustment, to be implemented by increasing the base salary and commensurately decreasing post adjustment multiplier points, resulting in no change in net take-home pay.
154 (a) and annex X	The Commission reports to the General Assembly that the margin between the net remuneration of United Nations officials in the Professional and higher categories in New York and that of officials in comparable positions in the United States federal civil service in Washington, D.C., was estimated at 113.9 for the calendar year 2022.
171	<p>The Commission recommends to the General Assembly that, based on its decision to revise the methodology, as of 1 January 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The child allowance be set at \$3,322 per annum;</li> <li>(b) The disabled child allowance be set at \$6,645 per annum;</li> <li>(c) The secondary dependant's allowance be set at \$1,163 per annum;</li> <li>(d) At hard-currency duty stations, the United States dollar amount of the allowances, as established in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above, be converted to the local currency using the official United Nations exchange rate as of the date of promulgation and remain unchanged until the next biennial review;</li> <li>(e) The dependency allowances be reduced by the amount of any direct payments received by staff from a Government in respect of dependants;</li> </ul>

	(f) Any transitional measures remaining in effect as a result of the revised methodology of 1 January 2009 would be discontinued in accordance with the Commission's earlier decision to discontinue such transitional measures upon the completion of two review cycles (A/63/30, para. 129 (d)).
219 and annex XI	Hardship allowance: review of level  3.1 per cent increase to the hardship allowance, effective from 1 January 2023
223	Mobility incentive: review of level  Increase in the mobility incentive, effective from 1 January 2023

The Fifth Committee will deliberate and finalize their decisions on these recommendations and issue a final resolution in the upcoming weeks. FICSA will keep you updated on the progress.

Please disseminate this communication freely to all staff so that they know what their staff associations/unions have been advocating for through their staff federation, FICSA, at the UN Common System level.

**Quick Links related to this topic:**

- [Introductory remarks Chair ICSC](#)
- [Statement of the President of FICSA](#)
- [Statement of the President of UNISERV](#)
- [Statement of the President of CCISUA](#)
- [FICSA's statement to the 76<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly](#)



Federation of International  
Civil Servants' Associations

## CIRCULAR

FICSA/CIRC/1367

Ref: Offorg/UNGA

Geneva, 16 November 2022

**STATEMENT BY  
THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATIONS (FICSA)  
TO THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
AT ITS 77<sup>th</sup> SESSION**

**(New York, 15 November 2022)**

Delivered by the President of FICSA, Ms. Tanya Quinn-Maguire

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To: Chairs, Member Associations/Unions  
Members of the Executive Committee  
Chairs, Members with Associate Status  
Chairs, Associations with Consultative Status  
Presidents, Federations with Observer Status  
Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Standing Committees

From: Tanya Quinn-Maguire, FICSA President

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Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Members of the Fifth Committee,

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations, which represents the voices of 40,000 staff across the United Nations common system, thank you for the opportunity to address this meeting. Please also accept our congratulations to the Chair and other Bureau members on their appointments.

FICSA thanks the ICSC Chairman, Mr. Larbi Djacta, for his presentation of document A/77/30. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Djacta on his re-election and thank him

for enabling a healthy exchange of opinions from all stakeholders during ICSC meetings over the past 12 months. FICSA continued to maintain a constructive dialogue with the ICSC Secretariat and with the distinguished members of the Commission and looks forward to continuing in this manner going forward.

FICSA believes that a strong and independent international civil service is imperative for our organizations to deliver on their mandates, as I believe you all do as signatories to the UN Charter. As such, we have advocated strongly during our discussions with the ICSC for measures that will protect that concept and ensure that the Common System continues to attract and retain the most competent staff members for generations to come.

The on-going review of the jurisdictional set-up of the United Nations common system is a matter of prime concern to staff in our organizations, as it is to you. FICSA and its sister Federations regret that our request to participate in the meetings of the working group as an observer was denied. Instead, FICSA received briefings and was invited to comment on proposals that had already been discussed at length and decided on by the UN Legal Advisors networks. Going forward, FICSA respectfully requests the full participation of the Staff Federations in these consultations. Failing to do so, would risk strengthening any negative perceptions concerning the lack of transparency in the application of the ICSC methodologies to determine the level of compensation for staff. Our Federation is of the opinion that the proposal to establish a joint chamber as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (A/77/222) to the 5<sup>th</sup> Committee would not address the root cause and would infringe on the independence and autonomy of the tribunals.

FICSA understands that there is a proposal before this Committee to amend the statutes of the ICSC with a view to eliminating any legal ambiguity which may have contributed towards the current post adjustment situation in Geneva. We remain concerned that this issue has not been resolved, despite the vast improvement in the consultation process with the ICSC during the last round of surveys. We recommend all stakeholders for the concerned effort to improve consultation, transparency and communication with staff over the past months, including all efforts to reach a workable solution during the summer session of the ICSC, and regret that those efforts did not ultimately yield the expected results. FICSA awaits with interest the legal advice from the OLA, particularly their opinion on whether the proposed amendment will resolve this matter once and for all.

The approval by the General Assembly to harmonize the accrual of annual leave across the common system for staff on temporary appointments as per paragraph 63(a) of document A/77/30 will ensure that the UN common system treats its staff equitably and staff at the same grade, working side by side, do not experience vastly different leave entitlements.

With regard to the revised methodology for children's and secondary dependency allowance, FICSA notes with concern that staff have not received any legitimately expected adjustments in line with the agreed ICSC methodology since 2011. This allowance is a fundamental pillar of the benefits and compensation package for UN staff. As such, this allowance is also a factor when

holistically addressing the issue of gender, diversity, and rejuvenation of the workforce to ensure that the UN remains and employer of choice and continues to attract and retain the most competent staff members. While FICSA would prefer to retain the current methodology, we would support the recommendations in paragraphs 170 and 171 of document A/77/30 as a pragmatic attempt to resolve this long-standing issue.

FICSA is proud to have been an active participant of the ICSC Working Group on parental leave and the related technical task force. One of our aims in the WG was to ensure that we delivered on the often-repeated goals on the UNGA related to the rejuvenation of the workforce as well gender parity. FICSA believes the decision presented in paragraph 91 of document A/77/30 is a step towards the UN achieving those two goals for a relatively minor financial investment by the organizations. FICSA proudly supports this decision as we believe it provides for the equitable treatment of all parents across our workforce and demonstrates a commitment to future generations of staff that the UN is working to modernize its workplace and understands their expectations on this important topic.

With regard to the review of the level of hardship allowance, FICSA notes with appreciation the modest increase to this allowance resulting from the update based on the agreed methodology. This adjustment will address concerns raised by staff and organizations and will help to ensure that the UN can continue to attract staff to the duty station where they are needed most. UN Staff members in the field are the heart of our organizations and they are key to delivering on our organization mandates in the most difficult of circumstances, all the while without any family support system.

Following extensive discussions and thorough analysis held throughout the past years, new revised methodologies for surveys of the best prevailing conditions of employment at headquarters duty stations and non-headquarters duty stations and similar duty stations for locally recruited staff have been approved by the Commission and presented for your review and consideration.

FICSA believes the ICSC working group on this topic fully complied with the standards established by the Charter related to the employment of locally recruited staff which provides that organizations of the United Nations system must be competitive with those employers in the same labour market who recruit staff of equally high calibre and qualifications for work which is similar in nature and equal in value to that organizations. Remaining competitive to both attract and retain staff of these high standards requires that the conditions of service among other employers in the locality. Overall, the revised methodology capture most of the concerns raised by the Local Salary Committee and other stakeholders. FICSA will participate in the Pilot Monitoring Mechanism and will share its experience from the upcoming accelerated round of surveys with the Commission as well as with the members of the 5<sup>th</sup> Committee.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates, the common system organizations now exist almost permanently in a situation where they are being requested to do more and more with less and less. Our members fully understand the state of permacrisis and the economic reality of the world

that we live in. However, the consistent lack of adequate resources not only has an impact on programme implementation, it also incrementally adds to the ever-increasing pressure on staff which results in a direct impact on their mental health and wellbeing, with the real and present threat of burnout or worse.

The staff of our independent International Civil Service are the people who work to fulfil our collective commitments. In doing so, they make enormous sacrifices and sometimes even put their lives at risk. We trust that members of this Committee will understand that, under these circumstances, our fulfilment of the duty of care requires making a modest investment as recommended by the Commission to help ensure that the UN Common System continues to be fit for purpose and effectively deliver on our mandates to the people we serve.

Thank you for your attention and I wish you all the best in your continuing deliberations.

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