

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FIELD ISSUES

Introduction

1. The Standing Committee on Field Issues (FIELD – see Appendix 1 for participants) met virtually on 16 January and face to face on 6 and 7 February 2023 to address its agenda. Marc Brown (FAO/WFP-UGSS) was elected rapporteur. In addition to the topics addressed below, FIELD held joint sessions with the Standing Committee on General Service Questions to discuss the effects of the current economic turndown and high inflation on the remuneration of locally recruited staff in field duty stations who were paid in non-hard currencies, and the representation of staff in duty stations away from HQs. The report of the latter (Annex 7) covers those discussions. Further, the joint sessions and the training session on hardship classification provided participants with the latest updates on field-related topics.

Activities in 2022

2. FIELD considered the [decisions of the 75th session of the FICSA Council](#), noting that they had been fully implemented. Action on decision FICSA/C/75/D/17 had included continued FICSA advocacy of the importance of the hardship-classification exercise and the provision of a training session on the subject at the 76th Council session. Work on decision FICSA/C/75/D/18 would include a survey on the modalities of post-COVID-19 returns to offices in 2023.

Safety and security in the field

3. A presentation summarized the discussions held during the summer 2022 meeting of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN). Three revised policies of the UN Security Management system had been approved on hostage risk management (formerly known as hostage incident management), residential security measures, and hiring of armed private security companies for residential purposes. FICSA had become a member of the Armed Security/Residential Security Measures Working Group, and UNISERV had agreed to hold an information session for FICSA members about hostage incident management. The FICSA ExCom would continue to be actively involved in IASMN working group meetings.

Classification of duty stations according to hardship

4. A presentation provided an overview of the 2022 meetings of the Tripartite Working Group (TWG) established by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). The second TWG session had focused on the comprehensive review of duty stations in the Asia and Pacific region.
5. The hardship classification process rated duty stations around the world where internationally recruited Professional (IP) staff were present for one year or longer. The FICSA ExCom would

continue its active engagement with all stakeholders (ICSC, UN organizations and other staff federations) through continued participation in the biannual hardship classification exercise.

Recommendation

- **FIELD recommended that 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.**

Staff return to their offices following the COVID-19 pandemic

6. The participants exchanged their organizations' experiences and best practices in relation to returning to the office in the wake of the pandemic, in order to identify lessons learnt and way forward. The discussion revealed wide variations in policies and terminology for returning to the office, such as teleworking, flexible working arrangements, remote working and hybrid working. The flexibility of the so-called new ways of working had raised concerns among SC participants. The FICSA ExCom encouraged staff representatives to advocate for regular interactions and communications between managers and their staff, following a return to the office as well as in cases of long-COVID.

Recommendations

- **FIELD recommended that the FICSA Executive Committee should continue:**
 - **to engage with members to ensure that issues related to staff health and well-being are taken into account when establishing any new policies and regulations for returning to the office; and**
 - **to maintain dialogue and highlight issue 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.**

Nomination of officers and core group members

7. The following participants in the SC were nominated as members of the core group:
 - Marc Brown (FAO/WFP-UGSS) and Tonia Rifaey (WHO/EMRO) as Co-Chairs.
 - Sonia El-Sakka (ICAO) and Houcine Mhadhbi (IAEA) as Vice-Chairs

Appendix 1. Participants

Officers

Co-Chairs	Marc Brown (FAO/WFP-UGSS) and Tonia Rifaey (WHO/EMRO)
Vice-Chairs	Houcine Mhadhbi (IAEA) and Sonia El-Sakka (ICAO)
Rapporteur	Marc Brown (FAO/WFP-UGSS)
FICSA President	Tanya Quinn-Maguire (UNAIDS)
FICSA General Secretary	Cosimo Melpignano (UNGSC)
FICSA ExCom member	Véronique Allain (SCBD)

Staff association/union

AP-in-FAO	Line Kaspersen, Vanda Ferreira Santos
FAO/WFP-UGSS	Marc Brown, Luca Vecchia, Susan Murray, Enzo Giorgio Lalli
IAEA	Houcine Mhadhbi
ICAO	Helena Debussy,
IMO	Folake Odulana
ILOTG	Cristina Pierini
OSCE	Nizar Zaher
PAHO	Elaine Pereira dos Santos, Glenda Moreira Lopez
UNAIDS	Andrea Palazzi
UNIDO	Steve Eales
UNFCCC	Sarah Klinghammer, Mary Jane Abrazado
UNESCO	Lina Oweis, Vivian Zaccaria
UNGSC	Cosimo Lunedi, Annarita Palumbo
UPU	Silvia Baratech
UNRWA	Diab El Tabari
WHO/AFRO	Harris Benito Koubemba Mona, Valerie Harmell Nganga Banzouzi
WHO/HQ	Neddy Mafunga, Innocent Mugabe
WHO/EMRO	Mina Nagy, Tonia Rifaey
WHO/EURO	Kay Miller
WHO/GSC	Haznim Ahmad, Liana Michael Abdullah, Khalid Aizat

WHO/SEARO

Ritesh Singh

WHO/WPRO

Modesto Beligan

Members with Associate Status

OPCW

Ivona Zakoska-Todorovska, Begimai Sataeva

Members with Consultative Status

OAS

Maria Isabel Rivero de los Campos

WIPO SC

Faizan Ul-Haq

Members with Observer Status

FUNSA Guinea

Lucie Gnongo Beavogui, Bangaly Kaba

