



Federation of International
Civil Servants' Associations

CIRCULAR

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OPENING STATEMENT

**DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATIONS (FICSA)
TO THE 94TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (ICSC)
(UNESCO Paris, 11 July 2022)**

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: Cosimo Melpignano, FICSA General Secretary

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Commission and Distinguished Colleagues, the FICSA delegation looks forward to working with all members of the Commission, representatives of the organizations and our sister Federations over the coming two weeks. Many thanks to UNESCO for hosting us for the next two weeks and giving me the perfect opportunity to return to Paris, which I have not visited in many years.

As many of our colleagues are enjoying the day off today to celebrate the Aïd El edha, please allow me to wish those celebrating a very happy Aïd.

On behalf of the Federation, I would like to thank the entire staff body of the ICSC Secretariat for their work in preparation of this session and in supporting the work of the various working groups over the past months.

I will be very brief in my opening statement Mr Chair as most of our comments will be better made during the discussions on each agenda item. Before starting on the programme of work, however we would like to offer general observations on some of the documents before us.

At the last session in March, I remarked that the cloud of the COVID pandemic was lifting. Unfortunately, I was premature in my remarks and it is clear that we will be living with the effects not only on the health – both physical and mental - and general wellbeing of staff, but also the socio-economic impact the world over for some time to come. Coupled with the numerous ongoing conflicts and humanitarian crises, it is clear that UN staff have much to contend with.

Mr Chair, there has been very little time since the end of the ACPAQ meeting in New York. FICSA would like to thank the Vice Chair, Commissioner Winid for his chairing of that meeting. We would also like to commend the considerable efforts by the Secretariat to ensure that the various requests from the ACPAQ have been fulfilled which will greatly facilitate an informed discussion by the Commission on the results of the baseline cost of living surveys. I am sure that we do not need to remind anyone here that, as mentioned by our CEB colleagues, international professional staff in the HQ duty stations are anxiously awaiting the recommendations of the Commission on their post adjustments. UN staff are not immune to the raging cost of living crisis. There is enormous expectation from staff that the massive inflation being experienced on a daily basis over the last months will be addressed through the post adjustment; in many duty stations staff eagerly participated, despite the worry amongst many that the time was not yet ripe for another round of baseline and HQ surveys in the midst of a pandemic. We look forward to working with you all to ensure the best possible outcome for staff.

The report of the 7th meeting of the working group on GS salary survey methodologies will be presented in the coming days in document R.14. Tens of thousands of locally recruited staff are awaiting the finalization of these new methodologies. FICSA has actively participated in all the meetings of the WG. We were pleased to see that many of the suggestions from our experts were taken into account in the draft methodologies before you for consideration this week. We look forward to doing our part in rolling out the new methodologies by helping to ensure that staff representatives on LSCs are properly trained.

Much is said in this, and other, fora about the need to ensure diversity, achieve gender equality and opportunity for all, and make efforts to rejuvenate the UN workforce. The Commission will be presented with the opportunity next week to establish guidelines for the common system that takes large steps towards enabling UN organizations to make concrete progress to ensure that the UN remains an employer of choice for current and future generations. Critical to this concept is a unified parental leave policy: a must in any modern organization. FICSA fully supports the protection and promulgation of the best conditions of employment of staff and would hope that throughout our discussions this week we could together keep the health and well-being of staff, our most important assets, into consideration. FICSA sincerely hopes that the Commission will approve the most sustainable and forward-looking guidelines in this regard.

Mr Chair, with your permission, FICSA will make interventions as necessary on each of the specific agenda items up for discussion during the coming days.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to a productive two weeks.
