



Federation of International
Civil Servants' Associations

CIRCULAR

FICSA/CIRC/1401
Ref: CCISUA

Geneva, 25 November 2025

**STATEMENT
DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATIONS (FICSA)
TO THE CCISUA MID-TERM REVIEW**

20 November 2025 in New York

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: Wadzanai Garwe, FICSA President

Dear friends and colleagues,

It is a pleasure to join you today, especially at a moment when both our federations are carrying a heavy workload and navigating a demanding Fifth Committee session. Let me start by acknowledging the values that bind us together. At the end of the day, what unites FICSA and CCISUA is simple: we care deeply about the people we represent, and we take our promise to them seriously. Whatever healthy competition might exist between our organizations, when it comes to speaking for staff, we stand side by side and act as one voice.

As many of you know from your own engagement, the discussions in the Fifth Committee are becoming increasingly difficult. We have to be honest with ourselves. The likelihood of cuts to the compensation package is growing, and the political pressure behind these conversations is real. That can feel discouraging, but it should not discourage our presence.

This is exactly when staff representatives need to be at the table, ensuring that due process is followed and that staff–management relations remain grounded in fairness and respect.

What we are seeing very clearly across our engagement mission is that many delegations do not fully understand how UN work compares to national civil services or private sector professions. Even the delegations that are sympathetic often hesitate or show uncertainty because the comparison is not obvious to them. And we should not blame them for that. International service is unique. The mix between domestic and foreign service models is not something that is easily understood without context.

This is where our responsibility becomes critical. We need to explain who UN staff really are. We must describe the reality of what it means to uproot families, to serve in hardship locations, to move repeatedly, and to carry the responsibilities that come with international mandates. If we do not tell this story ourselves, others will tell it for us, and usually not accurately. We have all heard the tired stereotype of the “fat cat” international civil servant. It is not only wrong, it distorts the professionalism and sacrifice that define our colleagues across the system.

Our system has benefited for decades from a solid, evidence-based methodology. Fast-tracking decisions without proper analysis, or relying on anecdotal impressions of staff, risks undermining that foundation. We must continue insisting on the established processes for staff, management, and stakeholder negotiations, because these processes are what protect fairness, transparency and accountability.

Let me end with a simple message. FICSA and CCISUA have always worked well together because we share the same purpose. We may organize differently, we may debate our approaches, but when it matters, we pull in the same direction. Our solidarity is our strength, and it will carry us through the challenges ahead. I am confident that our cooperation will continue to grow, and that together we will protect a system that is worthy of the people we represent.

Thank you, and I look forward to our continued work together.

In Solidarity.