



NINTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Reports of the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee**Second report: Personnel questions***Contents*

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I. Statement by the staff representative
(Eighth item on the agenda)

1. The statement by the staff representative is reproduced in the appendix to the present report.

II. Composition and structure of the staff
(Ninth item on the agenda)

2. The Committee had before it a paper¹ on the composition and structure of the staff. The document was submitted for information.
3. Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, referred to the statement of the Staff Union representative and noted a more positive atmosphere than that of November 2009. He urged the ILO to act as an agency of excellence in matters of labour-management relations and stressed the need for consultation on an ongoing basis. He requested further information concerning the progress of the road map for re-launching dialogue in the ILO agreed between the Office and the Staff Union in November 2009.
4. He welcomed the improvement in gender balance across the ILO staff and requested that the Office continue to provide information in that regard.
5. The Workers' group noted its concern regarding the low number of officials holding without-limit-of-time contracts in comparison with those on more precarious short-term contracts, in particular those who served a total of less than five years with the ILO and whose pensions did not therefore become fully vested. The group also highlighted the situation in the International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), where they understood that only ten officials had a permanent contract and 473 were precarious; such imbalances should be corrected.
6. The Workers' group also commented that they saw insufficient effort to address the number of countries that were either not represented or under-represented among ILO staff.
7. Ms Horvatic, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, took note of the information contained in the paper.
8. The representative of the Government of Tunisia, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, made reference to the geographical balance as shown in table III of the report and highlighted the under-representation of African countries. He added that such was the case for both non-linguistic and linguistic posts and stressed the need for a much more geographically egalitarian approach in respect of staff at all levels, including in managerial positions.
9. The representative of the Government of South Africa supported the previous speaker's statement and reiterated the African region's request, made during the Committee's discussion in March 2009, for the inclusion of more detailed information in the report concerning recent recruitments and pending retirements.

¹ GB.307/PFA/9.

10. The representative of the Government of Nigeria also supported the statement made on behalf of the Africa group and added his particular concern that there should be a greater number of Nigerian nationals among the staff of the ILO. He commented on the overall age distribution of staff and highlighted the obvious need for clear succession planning.
11. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the industrialized market economy countries (IMEC), expressed support for the efforts of the Office to improve the diversity of staff through transparent and objective recruitment processes.
12. She reminded the Committee of the request made by IMEC in November 2009 for an implementation report in respect of the 2006–09 Human Resources Strategy. IMEC considered that such a report should identify lessons learnt from the past and therefore help to set and adjust baselines and targets for the 2010–15 Human Resources Strategy, as endorsed by the Governing Body in November 2009. She commented that it could be circulated inter-sessionally and discussed at an informal meeting.
13. She also reminded the Office of requests made by IMEC in November 2008 and March 2009 for more detailed information concerning vacant positions, in particular any that had been vacant for more than six months. Similarly, IMEC had requested data over the past ten years on the distribution of staff between headquarters and the field.
14. In conclusion, she stressed the importance of the composition and structure of the staff in ensuring effective results-based management and thereby achieving the objectives of the ILO, particularly in relation to the demands of the Global Jobs Pact and the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.
15. The representative of the Government of Japan, speaking on behalf of the Asia–Pacific group (ASPAG), noted the informative report produced by IRIS and urged the Office to accelerate the roll-out of IRIS to the field in order to provide more comprehensive and accurate data about the ILO in the regions. The speaker noted that the total number of non-linguistic, Professional and higher category staff had increased from 645 in 2005 to 698 in 2009, while the number of such staff from the Asia–Pacific region had increased by only three. He considered that to be not commensurate with the population and size of the region, which had been under-represented for a long time, and that the recruitment of new staff seemed therefore to be in contradiction with article 4.2 of the ILO Staff Regulations.
16. The speaker recalled that geographical diversity of staff was one of the key elements of the Human Resources Strategy, and urged the Office to conduct a thorough analysis of the underlying cause of the problem and to propose concrete corrective measures and time frames to amend the geographical imbalance to the Governing Body in November 2010. He requested that, in order to better promote geographical diversity, section 1 of Annex I to the ILO Staff Regulations (different linguistic requirements for officials whose mother tongue was one of the working languages and for those whose mother tongue was not one of the working languages) be fully implemented and reflected in the recruitment procedures for Professional staff under the recruitment and placement system (RAPS).
17. The representative of the Government of Japan stressed the issue of under-representation. He expressed concern that the number of Japanese staff had in fact decreased compared to the previous year, and requested the Office to present concrete measures and time frames for remedying that imbalance. Concerning the number of staff in senior grades, he recalled that the 2006–09 Human Resources Strategy had set a target for one third of existing P5 positions becoming vacant by the end of 2009 to be downgraded, and pointed out that there had been a decrease of only nine P5 staff between 2006 and 2009. He requested the Office to explain the discrepancy between the target and reality and to propose concrete measures

and time frames to improve the situation. Lastly, he suggested that General Service (GS) positions also be downgraded to cut personnel costs, and requested that more information on the distribution by grade of GS staff be included in the report.

- 18.** The representative of the Government of India endorsed the comments made on behalf of ASPAG and added the particular concerns of India in relation to the geographic imbalance in the staff. He also noted that, despite improvements, there continued to be a gender disparity, and recalled the usefulness of the ILO Gender Equality Action Plan. Lastly, he stressed the need to promote the recruitment of officials from developing countries and commented that the RAPS mechanism should be used accordingly.
- 19.** In response to the comments and questions of the Committee, the Director of the Human Resources Development Department (HRD) agreed that there was room for improvement in the standard report on the composition and structure of the staff. However, such improvement could not result simply from the addition of all the different types of data requested by the various groups. HRD intended to align the information provided to the targets and indicators contained in the 2010–15 Human Resources Strategy in the presentation of the first report on the implementation of the Strategy in March 2012. In the meantime, the Office would continue to provide data on all areas of interest, either through the standard report or through reports prepared at the request of the groups.
- 20.** HRD had also taken the initiative of posting information on its web site concerning outreach and trends in recruitment and promotion practices, including on progress towards a more balanced workforce in terms of gender, regional diversity and the promotion of internal talent, as opposed to the recruitment of new staff. HRD would expand that initiative to other areas.
- 21.** Concerning the request for an update on the implementation of the 2006–09 Human Resources Strategy, the Director of HRD recalled that the Strategy for 2010–15 attempted to redefine and refocus the major areas of action of the previous Strategy, namely recruitment and selection, diversity, mobility, performance management, the promotion of staff development and learning, safety and security, and work–life balance. HRD would continue to report on all those areas, but its reports would be presented around the four outcomes of the refocused Strategy. In that regard, the Director reiterated the offer made in November 2009 to organize briefing sessions on specific areas of work of the Department for interested groups.
- 22.** With respect to social dialogue within the Office, the Director indicated that the existence of some areas of disagreement with the Staff Union had not been an obstacle to the Administration’s engagement in day-to-day dialogue with staff representatives, both at headquarters and in the regions, concerning all areas of the work of the Department, including recruitment and selection, the field structure review, work–life balance initiatives and contracts policy.
- 23.** The Committee took note of the paper.

III. Decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the International Civil Service Commission (Tenth item on the agenda)

24. The Committee had before it a paper² on decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the International Civil Service Commission, submitted for information.
25. Sir Roy Trotman indicated that the ILO seemed to be doing better than other organizations with regard to achieving gender balance, especially at more senior grades. His group insisted that efforts should continue to ensure gender balance at all levels, including through the provision of career opportunities to serving women staff, not exclusively through the recruitment of external candidates.
26. With regard to the call for harmonization of separation payment practices across the United Nations common system, he considered that it should not lead to the systematic reduction of benefits. The common system left sufficient room for manoeuvre and the ILO had a duty to remain a model for other organizations in terms of conditions of employment. He urged the Office to engage in negotiations with the Staff Union before bringing any proposal to the Governing Body in November 2010.
27. The Committee took note of the paper.

IV. Pensions questions (11th item on the agenda)

(a) Decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the Board of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund

28. The Committee had before it a paper³ for information concerning the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the 56th Session of the Board of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund.
29. Sir Roy Trotman noted that the decline in the assets value of the Fund experienced during the financial crisis seemed to have recovered as the market value had risen again, and that the long-term real rate of return objective of the Fund was being met. He also noted the cautious investment strategy of the Fund, aimed at preserving the principal in the long term. He pointed out that the number of staff contributing to the Fund had increased, but that the number of officials leaving before they were fully vested in the plan at five years had also increased. His group requested that that matter be carefully addressed in the context of the Office's contracts policy. He also requested to be provided with statistical information in that regard.
30. The Committee took note of the paper.

² GB.307/PFA/10.

³ GB.307/PFA/11/1.

(b) Report of the Board of the Special Payments Fund

31. The Committee took note of the report of the Board of the Special Payments Fund.⁴

(c) Appointments to the ILO Staff Pension Committee (United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board)

32. The Committee had before it an Office paper⁵ on the proposed appointments to the ILO Staff Pension Committee, in accordance with article 6(c) of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund.

33. Mr Julien, noting that Mr Michel Barde would be leaving the Staff Pension Committee, expressed appreciation to Mr Barde for his excellent work in the Committee, as well as in other committees of the Organization.

34. Sir Roy Trotman was pleased to announce that Mr Marc Blondel had agreed to continue to serve for another three-year term.

35. *The Committee recommends to the Governing Body that it submit the following resolution to the Conference at its 99th Session (June 2010):*

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Appoints to the ILO Staff Pension Committee (United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board), for a period of three years until 8 October 2013, the following members and alternate members:

Members:

Mr D. Willers (Government)

Mr J.-P. Bernard (Employers)

Mr M. Blondel (Workers)

Alternate member:

Mr T. Montant (Switzerland)

V. Other personnel questions
(12th item on the agenda)

(a) Matters relating to the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO: Statute of the Tribunal

36. The Committee had before it a paper⁶ concerning the timing for consideration by the Governing Body of the possibility for staff unions and associations to file complaints in

⁴ GB.307/PFA/11/2.

⁵ GB.307/PFA/11/3.

⁶ GB.307/PFA/12/1.

their own name before the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization. The Committee supported the following point for decision:

- 37. The Committee recommends to the Governing Body that it place this item on the agenda of its 310th Session (March 2011) for its review based on the outcome of the 65th Session of the UN General Assembly and any other relevant developments.***

Geneva, 22 March 2010.

Points for decision: Paragraph 35;
Paragraph 37.

Appendix

Statement by the representative of the Staff Union Committee to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee of the ILO Governing Body (307th Session – March 2010)

Madam Chairperson, Director-General, members of the Governing Body, dear colleagues and others present here today, before entering into the content of my address, let me begin by expressing our sympathy and solidarity with the people of Haiti and Chile, whose lives have been affected by the terrible earthquakes that hit their countries this year. In Haiti, the United Nations lost more than 100 staff, who were there to contribute to development and peace in that country.

I was in Santiago, attending the ICSC meeting, when the earthquake hit and I have to say that the response of the ECLAC Department of Safety and Security and the staff involved in getting the ILO Santiago Office back up and running were impressive. We have launched a collection for our staff and for the people of Haiti. We will soon be doing the same, in cooperation with our federation, to support relief efforts in the south of Chile.

As our organizations mobilize to respond to these crises, so too do the people – the staff – who make up the UN system, in solidarity with the people of Chile and Haiti.

Let me turn now to the most recent developments that have affected industrial relations within the Office.

Last November, many of you noted through your interventions the deterioration of the industrial relations environment in the ILO.

Some of you referred to a “Siberian” climate predominating labour–management relations, and called for a return to good-faith negotiations.

Others referred to the “conflict culture” in the Office, which stood in the way of a successful implementation of the Human Resources Strategy. You encouraged all stakeholders, including our Union, to engage constructively to find a way out of these difficulties.

As Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee, it would be an understatement to say that we have eagerly awaited the opportunity to react to some of what was said in this room not four months ago. But rather than focus on a culture of conflict, in particular as we are within the walls of the ILO, we prefer to focus on returning to a culture of negotiation.

Personally, I commit the Union to doing its part to find a solution. In fact, the Union took the initiative last November when we proposed a “road map” to re-launching good-faith dialogue within the Office. As part of the road map, and in an effort to calm the situation and to promote a culture of conflict prevention, the Union committed to respect a ceasefire.

The Union welcomes the decision of the Director-General to request the intervention of the Executive Director of the Social Protection Sector with a view to finding a solution. Assane Diop is someone with a great deal of practical experience in the area of industrial

relations, including in times of crisis. We recognize his intervention as a sign of the Director-General's will to do something concrete regarding an untenable industrial relations climate.

Out of respect for the mediation process, the Union has not been launching bombs. Unfortunately we continue to receive them from the other side, as a Union, and as staff.

From ongoing censorship of union communications, to retaliation against a staff representative, from – once again – changes in statutory procedures without negotiation to a continued denial of our right to recruit our own legal adviser.

Speaking of the changes to statutory procedures, the Joint Advisory Appeals Board – our impartial and independent appeals body – has pointed out in its last two annual reports that the Office had deviated from the applicable rules and procedures in relation to recruitment and selection, the use of short-term contracts, and so-called “technical cooperation” contracts.

So what do we do? What should the Union and Administration do in the face of these problems? We should sit down at the table and negotiate, in good faith, to find solutions. This is clear.

What we as staff *cannot* accept are unilateral changes to practices and rules, in the complete absence of negotiations or good-faith consultations. If something is not working, change must be negotiated, not imposed.

But change cannot come at any price. If we are in a period of ceasefire, the provocations *must* stop. This is, unfortunately, not the case.

Imagine our surprise when the Union received information from several sources across the ILO concerning a consultancy on the possible delocalization or even subcontracting of core functions of the Office.

Is this not a subject with potentially serious impact on our staff, and over which the Union should be consulted from the very outset? The fact that this information was not shared with the Union, the fact that we learned of it from our informal networks rather than from our designated interlocutors, immediately raises suspicions. It erodes trust.

When we speak of the conflict culture, who is at the origin of this latest conflict?

Involve us from the beginning, building a common understanding of the problems, and as a partner in seeking solutions, and we avoid the clashes we face now, with staff fearing for their jobs, and the inevitable impact on morale.

It should be noted that some of the people whose functions are targeted by the possible outposting are the very ones which the Office counts on to implement the roll-out of IRIS to the field. This cannot be an effective means of ensuring the smooth management of this important change process.

It is ironic that the ILO has developed numerous materials on socially responsible restructuring, advising your countries and promoting social dialogue as a key to success, while totally ignoring these common sense principles for itself.

Our ILO Helpdesk, which was established to help companies put Decent Work principles into practice, promotes a responsible approach to restructuring. It outlines five steps.

Do you know what step one is? Step one is *dialogue*.

And step two? Step two is information and consultation – in other words: *dialogue*

I certainly do not have to go into the details of the costs and benefits of socially responsible restructuring with you, who face these issues in your own countries, in your own companies, on a daily basis.

But our question is, then, if we are able to promote these principles, which are tried and tested in your countries, why is there no interest – no intention – to apply these materials for our own situation? Why not practice what we preach?

Instead, we are forced into a situation where the starting point is distrust. We begin in confrontation.

We have to find another way ... and soon!

Many of the problems identified with the existing rules – in particular related to recruitment and selection and precarious contracts – require negotiated change. Our members are *calling* for change – in precarious employment, in discriminatory treatment between international and locally recruited staff, and in strengthening the objectivity, transparency and fairness in recruitment and selection procedures.

You do not need to look any further than to the documents you have before you to see that change is needed, and urgently. While it is near impossible to draw any real conclusions from the information as it is presented in the paper on the Composition and structure of the Staff, the Union was able to do some calculations, which point to a worrying trend in the ILO.

Since 1997 we note an increase in staff on what the Office calls “technical cooperation contracts” of over 123 per cent to the point where these men and women represent almost 40 per cent of the ILO workforce. At the same time, while the regular budget has remained relatively constant, the total number of so-called “regular staff” has fallen as a total percentage of staff, from almost 80 per cent in 1997 to just over 60 per cent today. The implications for the job security, and the terms and conditions of work for staff under TC arrangements require urgent attention. This must be negotiated.

We are ready to negotiate. But this requires respect for the rules as they currently stand. It requires openness. And it requires clarity – on what is negotiable and what is not. This is already set out in the Recognition and Procedural Agreement.

We commit ourselves to returning to a culture of conflict prevention. What we ask is that the Administration does not put us in a situation where we are obliged to react – to fight. Because the day we relinquish this duty, to negotiate where possible, and to act with strength when forced, is the day we cease being a union worthy of this name.

We sincerely hope that the mediation process will lead to concrete results in the near future. This is not only a hope, it is a duty.

We hope to be in a position to stand before you to announce these results in November, and not standing in front of the Governing Body room mobilizing in response to some provocation.

The credibility of our Organization is at stake.

If we really want decent work to start here, the ILO should be practicing those dialogue principles that it preaches to the entire world.

We hope that our counterparts are ready to take up this challenge. We, on our side, are ready to move.

Thank you.