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STAFF REGULATIONS AND STAFF RULES

ADDENDUM

COMMENTS BY THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION OF UNESCO (ISAU)

OUTLINE

In accordance with Item 9.2.7 of the UNESCO Human Resources Manual, the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU) submits its comments on the report by the Director-General on the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules (document 41 C/43).

1. UNESCO's Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, which are the basis of all human resources policies of the Organization, must guarantee, through their provisions, both the proper functioning and efficiency of the Organization and the rights of its staff. Consequently, their revision, while necessary to ensure that the Organization adapts to constantly changing needs, must always be carried out with due regard for the acquired rights of staff, if not to increase their protection.

2. Before presenting our comments on the Administration's document on the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, we wish to denounce the excessive and incomprehensible delay in the publication of the document. This lack of organization on the part of the Administration hinders the smooth running of our work and that of the Member States. The Staff Regulations and Staff Rules are supposed to guarantee the rights of staff. Any proposed changes made by the Administration thus deserve more time to be carefully studied and analysed. Member States must be in a position to hear and take into account the views of staff associations before adopting decisions. The delay of one working day between the publication of the Administration's documents and their discussion before the Commission is unprecedented and unacceptable.

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Section 1. Proposed amendments to Staff Regulations

Mobility

3. We welcome the support of Member States for the recommendation by the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) to allow staff to express interest for posts at a higher level, with the aim of integrating professional incentives into mobility. This recommendation is a matter of fairness and efficiency. In addition to encouraging staff to embrace mobility, it would be a first step towards building a career development policy, which would lead to an improvement, albeit modest, in staff motivation.

4. With regard, more specifically, to the two options for the wording of Staff Regulation 4.4.2, as they appear in the draft decision, ISAU would like to express its preference for option 2. Indeed, while both options pursue the same laudable objective, the wording in option 2 seems preferable, particularly in view of the nature of the Staff Regulations as a legal text. ISAU, while thanking Member States for their support for the implementation of the IOS recommendation, sees the following disadvantages in option 1:

- As worded, at least in the French version, the text may suggest that the purpose of this provision would be the *designation* of certain posts by the Director-General as falling within the remit of the mobility exercise, rather than the *limitation* of applications for posts to internal candidates alone;

- The posts referred to are necessarily vacant posts, a clarification that is missing in option 1;

- The term “internal staff” could be confusing. We believe that the term "internal candidates" would be more appropriate.

5. This reform, once adopted and applied, will be part of a mobility policy that must be implemented in accordance with the legal provisions in force, in an equitable and, above all, transparent manner. Attempts to circumvent this policy, which we have already decried, can do nothing but undermine staff confidence and their support for mobility.

Section 2. Amendments to Staff Rules

Reclassification

6. ISAU will continue to express its profound disagreement with the abolition of Rule 102.2 of the Staff Rules, which gave staff members the possibility of making individual requests for reclassification. This fundamental right has simply been abolished, although its purpose was to ensure that the nature of the duties and the level of responsibilities of staff members are consistent with the criteria applicable to the grades in which their posts are placed.

7. We express our concern at the Administration’s propensity to insidiously erode the fundamental rights of staff through multiple revisions of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules and the Human Resources Manual, in disregard of the alarm bells rung by staff members and their representatives.

Performance management

8. We reiterate our opposition to the abolition of the Review Panel and the Reports Board, which allowed staff members to express their disagreement with their appraisal and to contest it by having at their disposal legally defined and supervised means of appeal.

9. The abolition of these bodies and their replacement by the Performance Review Board is a blatant infringement of staff rights. In practice, the new system gives increased powers to supervisors and leaves the door open to arbitrariness and abuse. This is all the more worrying in view of the

legal vacuum regarding the possibilities for staff members to contest their evaluation in the event of disagreement. For example, if a staff member's overall rating is "partially meets expectations", the staff member has no opportunity to challenge his or her appraisal and a performance improvement plan is imposed.

10. Furthermore, if the Performance Review Board is automatically seized of the matter, owing to the results of the appraisal, the staff member cannot be heard before that body, which is not, moreover, subject to any legal time limit within which it must rule. Moreover, the Committee's powers are very limited, as it simply issues a recommendation. In short, the whole process lacks transparency and objectivity, as recent examples in the Organization have shown.

11. In view of all these factors and in order to ensure that corrective measures are taken, ISAU would like an objective and transparent evaluation of this performance management policy to be carried out. It goes without saying that the staff associations must be involved in this exercise.