



**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FICSA EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE AND SECRETARIAT
TO THE 77TH FICSA COUNCIL
FOR THE PERIOD MARCH 2023 TO FEBRUARY 2024**

Tribute to Maria

FICSA mourns the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Maria Dweggah



We have the sad duty to inform you of the loss of our dear friend and colleague, Maria Dweggah, who passed away peacefully this morning with her loved ones by her side following a period of ill-health.

Many of you will know Maria either in person or by reputation. She worked tirelessly for staff rights and was a treasured member of the FICSA family throughout. Following her many years of service as the President of the WHO/HQ Staff Association, Maria was elected FICSA General Secretary in 2003. She remained a tireless FICSA advocate as part of the FICSA Executive Committee, including as Acting General Secretary and FICSA Information Officer.

Even in her “retirement”, Maria strove endlessly to promote recognition of the work of the Federation and to defend staff interests, delivering training courses to our members, and always ready to assist FICSA members when needed, without fanfare or need for recognition, always putting the needs of others before her own. She supported countless numbers of individual staff members in preparation of legal appeals to the ILOAT and UNAT, winning many more cases than she lost and ensuring that her wisdom is enshrined in the jurisprudence of both Tribunals for the benefit of generations of UN staff members to come.



Besides her remarkable knowledge and experience in staff matters, she will be remembered for her great sense of humour, her generous, kind and gentle personality and her humanity.

During the 70th anniversary of FICSA, Maria was awarded a special award to recognize her impactful contribution to FICSA over the years.

Maria will be remembered by many of us as an inspiration and a mentor; we would not be here without her. We mourn her passing and convey the Federation’s sincere condolences to Maria’s family and friends.

Rest in Peace, dearest Maria.

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1. Background

1.1 [Mission Statement](#)

FICSA fosters the international civil service's development in accordance with the principles in the United Nations (UN) Charter and the specialized agencies' constitutions.

The Federation:

- Promotes amongst its Member staff associations/unions, the exchange of information and views on all questions of common interest and coordinates their activities
- Represents all Full Members in negotiations with bodies of the UN Common System
- Defends staff rights
- Ensures that equitable conditions of service for all common system staff are maintained at a level, which will ensure the recruitment and retention of the most qualified people
- Contributes to building a positive image of the international civil service and defends its independence

1.2 [Activities and objectives](#)

FICSA's annual and ongoing programmes of work include the following (non-exhaustive) list of activities:

- Representing the interests of international civil servants in interagency bodies and legislative organs of the common system
- Coordinating activities at the local level and exchanging information on conditions of service
- Informing all staff on issues affecting their conditions of service
- Organizing training seminars, workshops and working groups on specific aspects of conditions of service
- Advising member associations/unions on staff-management relations
- Producing position papers on the technical aspects of conditions of service
- Coordinating industrial action
- Supporting the use of the appeal process (internal appeals and Administrative Tribunals) in cases of non-observance of terms of appointment
- Formulating strategies to prevent violations of staff rights
- Participating in cost-of-living surveys that determine the post adjustment indices
- Providing technical assistance to member associations / unions in preparation for local salary surveys
- Advocating staff positions with representatives of Member States
- Providing guidelines on how staff associations should deal with organizational reform
- Assisting member associations / unions in capacity-building and knowledge transfer
- Execution of FICSA Council Decisions as captured in the annual Index of Decisions (see Annex I)

1.3 [How to use this report](#)

The information in this report is presented in three ways, which cross reference and link to each other for ease of navigation.

1. As you scroll through the report, you will see the information sorted by the main body or entity that FICSA engages with throughout the year.

2. Please note that, regardless of the actual FICSA representation to a particular meeting, the whole ExCom is involved in the drafting and creation of FICSA's position and technical papers, under the leadership of the President, in their capacity of Chair of the ExCom.
3. In the interest of brevity and readability, the report provides the reader with a concise and brief overview of the body, the meeting, and the high-level proceedings. To facilitate a further deep dive into a topic or meeting, links are provided in each section to the Meeting's official report, FICSA Circulars or FICSA Communications.

2. Message from the President

Dear friends and colleagues,

On behalf of the FICSA Executive Committee, it is my pleasure to present the report of the work carried out on your behalf in 2023.

The Executive Committee hopes that this report will be useful to inform our members on the key issues currently being discussed at the highest levels, which have an impact on all staff across the Common System. While this report provides a summary of those discussions, it does not capture the unmeasurable number of informal side-meetings, team calls, emails, and WhatsApp chats that is required to support the more formal processes. It has been a pleasure to work with the team you elected in Valencia last year. They have worked diligently and passionately on your behalf and have been an amazing support in the ever-increasing number of official high-level meetings and working groups. Of course, all this work would have been in vain if it were not for the unwavering professionalism of the FICSA Secretariat.

In the ever-worsening climate of global financial instability, including galloping interest rates and dramatically fluctuating exchange rates, the member states of the United Nations are under increasing pressure to scrutinize any recommendation which has a financial implication. As staff-related costs make up the vast majority of the UN budget, it will not come as any surprise that discussions with representatives of the member states to the UNGA Fifth Committee were challenging. Unusually, the UNGA did not take any action on the report of the ICSC, this resulted in no action on: the adjustment to the base/floor salary scale; consolidation of the post adjustment; and, (yet again) no action on the proposed adjustments to the children's and secondary dependants' allowances. Despite this, the ICSC took the decision to implement the following as per the recommendations of the ICSC's Annual Report ([A/78/30](#)): 3.1 per cent increase of the hardship allowance effective 1/1/2024; increase in the mobility incentive as per the matrix contained in Table 2 of the ICSC annual report; update of the level of danger pay for both internationally recruited and locally recruited staff with effect from 1/1/2024; maintenance of the levels of the security evacuation allowance and the single lump sum for shipping, applicable when staff members or their families were evacuated.

The ongoing Comprehensive Review of the Compensation Package was a constant theme for all high-level meetings, both at the HLCM and the two annual sessions of the ICSC. Again, while the UNGA did not take any action on the recommendations by the ICSC in this regard, the Commission has started work according to their agreed timeline which is provided in Annex to this report. The Executive Committee looks forward to completing the membership of the FICSA Task Force on this issue during the 77th Council with representatives from both the PSA and GSQ standing committees. FICSA members are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with all related information provided in this report and elsewhere and engage with your members and the FICSA ExCom on those issues so that we can continue to have a well-informed FICSA position in the meetings of the working groups going forward. The ICSC also considered the feasibility of establishing both a separate PA Index and a separate GS salary scale for Bern. We are pleased to report that this issue was resolved to the satisfaction of FICSA member UPU which was the sole UN organization effected.

The ICSC working group on the review of the standards of conduct for international civil servants continued its work with the active involvement of FICSA. We look forward to the finalization of that work this year and the publication of what we hope will be an improved version of this invaluable document which provides clear guidance on how every staff member, from Executive Heads down, should conduct themselves.

FICSA was involved in discussions at two meetings of the CEB HLCM which included the important issues of the Disability Inclusion Strategy, the developments in the OHS Forum, Sexual Harassment, the latest version of the UN System Workplace Mental Health and Well-being Strategy, and Diversity Equity and Inclusion. Unfortunately, as the HLCM is operating in the same financially restricted climate as the rest of the world, it was clear that any new initiatives would have to find “creative” ways around the current financial crisis. This was especially apparent when discussing the implementation of the Disability Inclusion Strategy, leaving many participants with a sense of frustration.

As always, we made every effort to keep you informed of key developments and topics of interest through regular communications, meetings of the heads of delegations, and the popular Ask the FICSA Expert online sessions. If you missed any of them, they are all listed in section 9 of this report, with the relevant links provided for ease of reference.

Of course, many of you have also been supporting the work of FICSA by helping to ensure that the recommendations from the 76th FICSA Council were implemented through the work of the standing committees, Executive Committee and FICSA Secretariat. You will see all related actions taken on the recommendations listed in Annex to the report

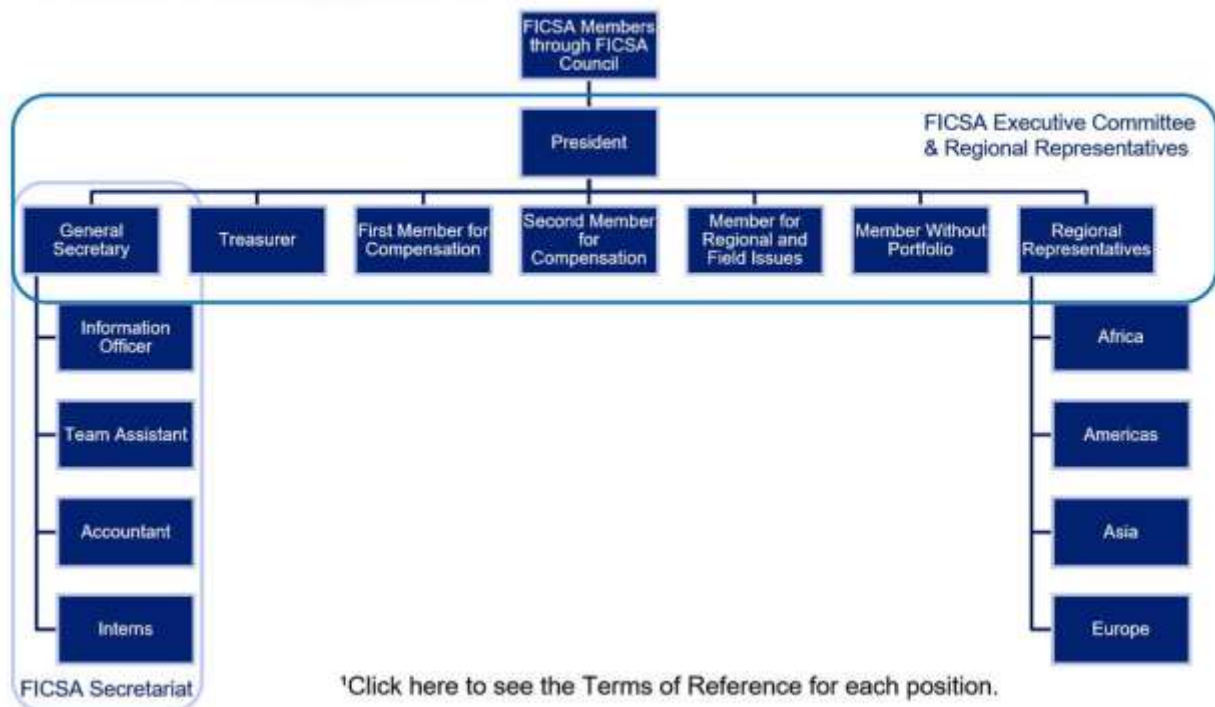
This report is intended to ensure that you are fully informed of the work of the Executive Committee and the Secretariat on your behalf. It should also be used as a source of information to help you to build your own knowledge and capabilities as a staff representative to help the staff members who elected you and, in turn, for you to bring that accumulated knowledge back to benefit of the Federation by standing as an officer for one of the standing committees, or as a candidate for a position on the Executive Committee. FICSA is a Federation, we are only as strong as our members, and we rely on you to continue to support the work of the Federation to ensure that we can continue to serve you in the interest of current and future generations of international civil servants.

In Solidarity,
Tanya

3. Composition of Executive Committee (Mar 23 - Feb 24)



FICSA Structure¹



4. FICSA participation at high-level meetings

The UN common system represents common standards, methods and arrangements being applied to salaries, allowances, and benefits for the staff of the UN, those specialized agencies which have entered a relationship with the UN, the International Atomic Agency, and several other international organizations. The common system is designed to avoid serious discrepancies in terms and conditions of employment, to avoid competition in recruitment of personnel and to facilitate the interchange of personnel. It applies to over 125,000 staff members serving at over 600 duty stations.¹

The core mandate of the FICSA Executive Committee is to represent our members' interests in all the following fora, where Federations speak on behalf of staff:

- The former Consultative Committee on Administrative questions (CCAQ), now the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) recognized the importance of staff representation through the staff federations, when it decided, in 1973, that local associations/unions should raise matters of general importance through FICSA, as it was deemed impossible to expect the individual staff associations/unions to represent staff at the common system level.
- FICSA represents its members to the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) as stated in Article 4, 12, 17, 24, 25, 28 of its Statutes adopted by the UN General Assembly through resolution 3357(XXIX) in Dec 1974.
- The United Nations General Assembly resolution 34/220 (Dec 1979) and 35/213 (Dec 1980) reiterates its readiness to receive and consider fully the views of staff as set out by FICSA. FICSA attends the agenda item "UN Common System" at the 5th Committee of the UN General Assembly to present its statement and views to the Member States.

UN General Assembly (UNGA)	International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)	Chief Executive Board High Level Committee on Management (CEB HLCM)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fifth Committee of the UNGA• Deliberates and approves ICSC Recommendations• Sets guidelines at Common System interagency level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual Spring and Summer sessions• ACPAQ• Working Groups• Discussions on all elements of the compensation package(s) for UN staff members, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salary Surveys• Cost of Living Surveys• HR and Contractual Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HR Network (HR Directors)• IASMN (Agency Security Focal Points)

4.1 United Nations General Assembly Fifth Committee

The Fifth Committee is the Committee of the UN General Assembly responsible for administrative and budgetary matters. Based on the reports of the Fifth Committee, the UN General Assembly considers and approves the budget of the Organization in accordance with Chapter IV, Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations. This function was reaffirmed by the GA in its resolution 45/248 B, Sect. VI. The

¹ Source: [UN OHRM website](#) and [ICSC website](#)

Committee also considers and approves financial and budgetary arrangements with specialized agencies and makes recommendations to the agencies concerned.

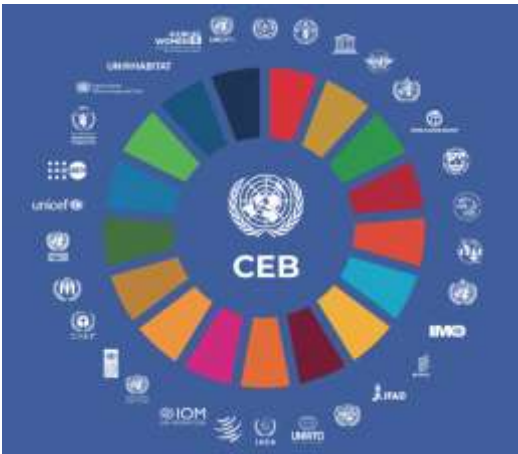
Of particular interest to FICSA membership, the Fifth Committee is the forum where the Annual Report of the ICSC is presented for the first time to the UN General Assembly (UNGA), under the agenda item “common system issues” (see section 4.4 below for further details related to FICSA participation at the ICSC and related meetings). Traditionally, FICSA Officers travel to New York around the time of the meeting of the UNGA Fifth Committee to ensure that member states are aware of staff perspectives on issues on the agenda from the ICSC annual report and other topics related to the UN Common System, as necessary.

In 2023, Tanya Quinn-Maguire, FICSA President, accompanied by Oleksandr (Sasha) Martynenko, FICSA ExCom Member for Field issues, delivered a statement on behalf of the FICSA membership to the Fifth Committee. In addition, the FICSA delegation held a number of meetings with delegates of Member States to the Fifth Committee to discuss the perspective of staff on the main Common System items on the Committee’s agenda, including: Children’s and Secondary Dependents’ Allowances; Danger Pay; Hardship Allowance; Mobility Incentive; the Review of the Jurisdictional Set-up of the UN Common System; and the Comprehensive review of the Compensation Package.

As expected, the discussions with delegations of member states were challenging. It was clear that the global economic climate was at the fore, resulting in an intense focus on the financial implications of each of the ICSC recommendations.

While the Fifth Committee decided not to act on common-system agenda items (deferred to the 79th General Assembly), the ICSC recommendations on Hardship Allowance, Mobility Incentive and Danger Pay were implemented as of 1 January 2024.

4.2 UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and its subsidiary bodies and networks



Under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) provides broad guidance, coordination, and strategic direction for the UN system in the areas under the responsibility of Executive Heads of the UN Common System organizations. Focus is placed on inter-agency priorities and initiatives, while ensuring that the independent mandates of organizations are maintained. The work of the Board is supported by two high-level committees: The High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM). Under each Committee there are inter-agency mechanisms and networks to coordinate specific topics. The CEB closely cooperates with other

inter-organizational bodies, including the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), as well as the UN Sustainable Development Group.

Staff Federations are not invited to participate in meetings of the CEB. **FICSA represents the voice of our members at the HLCM as well as at its sub-committees,** i.e., the HR Network (HRN), and the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN). See below for the reports of FICSA participation in each of these fora.

4.3 [CEB High-Level Committee on Management \(HLCM\)](#)

The [CEB High-level Committee on Management \(HLCM\)](#), established on 27 October 2000, identifies and analyzes administrative management reforms to improve efficiency and simplify business practices. The Committee is comprised of senior administrative managers from the member organizations of the UN system who meet twice a year. The HLCM acts on behalf of and in the name of the CEB on matters affecting the administrative management of all member organizations, both multi-sectoral and specific to a given area. The Committee is authorized to take decisions on behalf of the Executive Heads of member organizations and to identify, promote and coordinate management reforms that will improve services, achieve productivity improvements, and increase efficiency and effectiveness across the UN Common System.

4.3.1 [45th HLCM Session](#)

The 45th meeting of the HLCM was held in Amman, Jordan, in April 2023. **FICSA was represented at that meeting by Tanya Quinn-Maguire, FICSA President.** The full Report of the meeting is available on the [CEB HLCM website](#). The following items, of specific interest to FICSA members, were on the agenda of the two-day meeting:

[The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy \(DIS\)](#) was adopted by the CEB in May 2019. While reporting considerable progress in disability inclusion and accessibility since 2019, the HLCM Chair noted that only 30% of the benchmarks were being met system wide. As a result, the Secretary General had tasked the HLCM to address this issue as a priority with a view to removing systemic barriers and increasing the pace of implementing measures to improve disability inclusion measures.

High-level speakers during the session informed participants about: the **opportunity of the Global Disability Summit 2025** for the United Nations to make concrete, tangible commitments and to demonstrate opportunities available to donors to invest in disability inclusion and to highlight the importance and impact of this work moving forward; the **importance of enhancing consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities**, including in strategic planning processes; the importance of **advancing human resource policies regarding reasonable accommodation and establishing reasonable accommodation funds; increasing employment of persons with disabilities** and supporting continued development of policies and procedures; the **role of digital technology** in driving inclusion, and the impact on organizational culture which results from **building knowledge and capacity of all staff on disability inclusion**; examples from UNICEF (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund) on actions taken to advance and monitor organizational progress on disability inclusion, which included a centrally managed reasonable accommodation fund as well as an online physical and digital accessibility helpdesk.

During the discussion on this issue there were repeated calls for continued and sustained political leadership and high-level support across the organizations. In addition, participants highlighted the importance of including persons living with disabilities at all levels of discussions. Also highlighted was the importance of increased collaboration and coordination across the system, including pooling of resources such as training materials and learning resources. **The HLCM agreed to request the Human Resources Network (HRN) to lead an initiative to advance disability inclusion in an integrated and cross-function manner, in close consultation with the Secretary General's Disability Inclusion Team.**

Occupational Health and Safety: The Co-Chair of the [HLCM OHS Forum](#) used the example of observations made during the visits of UNWRA's Palestine refugee camps to demonstrate to participants how OHS needs had been identified and addressed by following the HLCM-adopted OHS

Framework. He noted that while the progress in the last ten years on OHS-related issues across the UN organizations had been considerable, it was now necessary to establish a central coordination mechanism to ensure harmonized OHS risk management and a framework of accountability for OHS risk management at Headquarter level and its integration with the accountability framework of Resident Coordinators at UN Country Team level. Participants were also informed about the recently finalized [Global OHS Repository](#), **a platform including information on health and safety accessible by all UN system personnel**, which is available in English and French. See section 4.3.7 for a full report on the work of the OHS Forum.

Towards a More Diverse and Inclusive UN System: The HLCM Chair recalled that, building on the work of the Secretary-General's [Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations](#), HLCM agreed in April 2022 to take a common approach in addressing racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system, using the Secretary General's Strategic Action Plan as a baseline for coordination and collaboration among the organizations. The HLCM had established a timebound multidisciplinary Group of Focal Points on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) consisting of diversity experts to deliver on a [Glossary, Principles and Best Practices](#), led by the HR Network. **The HLCM adopted the final version of the DEI Glossary, noting that it will remain a living document.**

Addressing Sexual Harassment in the UN System: The Chair of the [HLCM Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Organizations of the UN System](#) provided the participants with a brief update on the work on the four workstreams, which included information on: the launch of a training module on the rights and dignities of victims of both sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse; the development of a results framework with forward thinking indicators of good practice to encourage policy progress by suggesting innovative ways to address sexual harassment; and a public knowledge hub hosting products from across the UN system to further prevention of and response to sexual harassment.

While the Task Force was initially created as a time-bound one-year effort, there was a consensus within the Task Force that there was a clear need to continue coordination on addressing sexual harassment at the UN system-wide level. Considering this, the meeting was briefed on a proposal for a mechanism to succeed the Task Force, with a view to sustainably upholding zero tolerance for inaction on the issue.

Noting the importance and urgency of the matter at hand, **the HLCM endorsed, for the Secretary-General's review and decision, the establishment of a UN Executive Group to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment in the UN System, which would succeed the Task Force upon its conclusion in late 2023.** This endorsement included the application of a coordinated system-wide approach to sexual harassment prevention and response, monitoring of progress and impact evaluation, capacity building, and communication and engagement with relevant stakeholders, as priority objectives of the UN Executive Group.

At the conclusion of the item, UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) offered a presentation of their pilot project, [Not Only Me](#), which provides **a platform to persons that have experienced sexual harassment to enter information about the perpetrator without triggering an official process.** The victim will only get notified if another person entered the same perpetrator in the escrow system. This mechanism leaves the full control to the victim, who also has the option of being connected to a victim care officer throughout the experience.

4.3.2 46th HLCM Session

The 46th meeting of the HLCM was held in Copenhagen on 5-6 October 2023. The session was preceded by a dedicated Joint Session on the Use and Governance of Artificial Intelligence and Related Frontier

Technologies with the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) on 4 October. **FICSA was represented at both meetings by Tanya Quinn-Maguire, FICSA President and Steven Geoffrey Eales, FICSA Executive Committee member without portfolio.** The full Report of the 46th CEB HLCP is available on the CEB [HLCP website](#). The following items, of specific interest to FICSA members, were on the agenda of the meeting:

The Joint HLCP/HLCP Session on the Use and Governance of Artificial Intelligence and Related Frontier Technologies built on prior work related to data, digital technologies, and Artificial Intelligence undertaken by the Committees and the deliberations on frontier technologies and the digital commons by the CEB. The session included a scoping discussion on AI governance and the role of the UN system as an input to the Secretary-General’s efforts on this topic, including the work of the High-level Advisory Body on AI and the Summit of the Future.

The discussions benefitted from the presence and active engagement of senior UN leaders and external topic experts. Presentations and facilitated discussions covered issues surrounding the ethics of AI, human rights, information integrity, sustainable development, data governance, and business transformation.

Key outcomes of the Joint Session were the request by the Committees to the HLCP Interagency Working Group on AI, with input from HLCP, as relevant, to develop a White Paper that presents a deep dive into existing global institutional models that could inform global AI governance, and existing normative frameworks, including international law, that could apply to AI; and the decision for HLCP to develop, with input from HLCP, as relevant, a system-wide normative and operational framework on the use of AI in the UN System, based on the [UN Principles for the Ethical Use of AI](#), and taking into consideration its benefits and risks.



Joint meeting of the HLCP and HLCP on use and governance of AI in the UN System

Occupational Health and Safety: During a brief presentation of the [OHS Forum](#)’s 6th activity report, reference was made to the high-level outcomes from the 2023 OHS survey, which revealed

advancements in certain areas like pre-deployment training, as well as a noticeable lag in implementing comprehensive OHS systems within organizations. While 31% of organizations had fully implemented the system, 33% had not initiated any steps.

Options were presented for an OHS management system with a focus on two of the options: an inter-agency mechanism with OHS expertise, managed by an OHS Coordinator with a lean secretariat, and with limited decision-making authority; and the establishment of a dedicated OHS coordinating entity with OHS expertise and decision-making authority over the UN system on OHS matters. The importance of adequate structures for OHS was accentuated by data revealing that fatalities and injuries attributed to OHS outstripped those related to security concerns. Drawing a parallel to the UN system's approach to security funding, the Chair of the OHS Forum made an argument for the imperative of channeling adequate resources towards OHS initiatives. The dual importance of sufficient OHS measures, both from an ethical standpoint and a business perspective, was underscored. In addition, HLCM Members were asked to consider the implementation of an OHS focal point with expertise at headquarters level for each entity.

The HLCM adopted in principle an Inter-agency mechanism with OHS expertise, managed by an UN-wide OHS Coordinator reporting to the HLCM, responsible for advice and policy and with limited decision-making authority, reviewing experience with the mechanism after three years of operating. It also requested the OHS Forum to propose a cost sharing arrangement for the OHS mechanism to the 47th meeting of the HLCM, which would subsequently be reviewed for its financial soundness by the Finance and Budget Network. The HLCM further requested the OHS Forum to propose by the HLCM's 47th session in spring 2024 a pooled approach for OHS focal points for interested entities, including a cost-sharing arrangement. See section 4.3.7 for a full report on the work of the OHS Forum.

Mental Health and Wellbeing: The HLCM Chair introduced the item on the [UN System Workplace Mental Health and Well-being Strategy](#) underlining the importance of the topic considering the recent Covid pandemic, adding that the recent [review by the JIU](#) and respective Management Letter also addressed the issue. The Committee received a high-level overview of the pillars and elements of the proposed 2024 and beyond Mental Health Strategy. The Chair of the Implementation Board emphasized that the Strategy was guided by: data derived from system-wide reporting using the Mental Health scorecard; the recent review by the JIU: the [WHO Workplace Mental Health Guidelines](#); and, the [WHO/ILO Workplace Mental Health Policy Brief](#).

The 2024 and beyond Mental Health Strategy was shared with the members of the Committee in advance, together with an Implementation Guide and an updated Scorecard. HLCM was asked to adopt the three deliverables. In line with the HLCM request at its 44th session, the Implementation Board presented a staffing structure to sustain and carry on the work already completed, while emphasizing the time-bound nature of the proposed secretariat and respective staffing.

HLCM was presented with three budget proposals for 2024 and was asked to decide on the location of the proposed new secretariat. Budget projections were presented for Vienna, Geneva, and Bonn, which had been favored due to their proximity to headquarters and to efficiency in travel costs.

The HLCM endorsed the 2024 and beyond Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Scorecard as the basis for annual reporting to HLCM through the HR Network, starting 2025. The Committee also approved the proposed time-bound staffing structure and resources of the secretariat and requested the FB Network to review and agree on the cost-sharing mechanism for the overall budget. It was agreed to locate the secretariat in the OneHR Center in Bonn, Germany.

Comprehensive Review of the Compensation Package: The ICSC Vice-Chair briefed the HLCM on the scope, objectives and approach of the comprehensive review of the compensation and allowances system, emphasizing that the review would focus only on Professional and higher categories and that issues related to the post adjustment system would be addressed separately by the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ). The need for data and cooperation from organizations was stressed. It was noted that the ICSC intended to recommend to the General Assembly a review every ten years.

The Co-Chairs of the HR Network underlined that the Network had created an internal Working Group to ensure a timely and constructive collaboration with the ICSC and its Secretariat, and to contribute practical insights on the rationale and objectives behind individual compensation elements, supported by data and case studies. Gratitude was expressed for the collaborative spirit of the ICSC and Staff Federations.

The Co-Chair highlighted that the upcoming HR Network meeting in Turin (see 4.3.1 below) provided an opportunity for the organizations to align their positions, taking into account the diversity of their respective mandates as well as the need to continue to attract and retain staff with the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity, in accordance with article 101 of the [UN Charter](#).

The HLCM decided to establish a Contact Group comprised of the HRN Co-Chairs and select HLCM members (WFP, UN-DOS, ILO) to act as a first point of entry for guidance for organizations and asked the HR Network to develop a brief background document for alignment of positioning and messaging.

Addressing Sexual Harassment in the UN Organizations: The HLCM was provided an update on all of the workstreams related to the work of the CEB Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment in the UN System. The Chair of the Task Force shared some vital statistic from the annual survey, noting that there had been a welcome increase in reporting of cases of harassment since the establishment of the Task Force, with one in every 912 individuals in 2022 reporting an incident, up from one in 2400 in 2017. She cautioned however, that considerable underreporting most likely remained.

The data from the survey underscored the urgency and the necessity of continuing efforts through the UN Executive Group to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment (Executive Group), which would take up its functions in 2024. During discussions, it was acknowledged that sexual harassment was a gender issue and one of abuse of power.

The responsibility of leadership to demonstrate exemplary behaviour, to continually engage in conversation about the issue, and to advance trust in organizations was highlighted to increase the number of people willing to come forward, aiding the reduction of incidents over time. The issue of low reporting rates, the potential retaliation faced by those who do report, and the lengthy duration of investigations were identified as ongoing challenges. The importance of a victim-centred approach, including through engagement and transparent communication was stressed.

The HLCM approved the Terms of Reference of the UN Executive Group to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment; requested the new leadership of the Executive Group, to establish a workplan for the Group and commence work at the beginning of 2024; and requested a progress update from the Executive Group at the Committee's 47th session.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion: The HLCM-HR Network Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Working Group presented the last version of the [DEI Vision and Principles and Compilation of DEI Practices](#), for adoption by HLCM.

The DEI Working Group also presented the initial draft terms of reference for a newly established Disability Inclusion subgroup and solicited the Committee to provide any further feedback in writing. HLCM members were encouraged to nominate their respective experts for this subgroup under the relevant work streams. The DEI Working Group emphasized the need for continued system-wide collaboration to promote diversity and inclusion with the UN system's workforce and workplaces.

Building on the work done, it proposed that HLCM extended its mandate to (i) create an IT platform hosting the products, (ii) develop UN system-wide learning materials on DEI, (iii) define criteria or standards to assess practices against the DEI Vision and Principles and (iv) share the Compilation of DEI Practices through the IT platform.

The HLCM took note of the ToR (Terms of Reference) of the sub-group on Disability Inclusion and the proposal to extend the mandate of the Working Group until the end of 2025 covering new deliverables and agreed to provide feedback in writing following the session.

4.3.3 HLCM Task Team on Data Sharing

Following the Special Dialogue on Value-Based Data Management and Analytics in the UN System which took place at the 44th session of the High-Level Committee on Management in October 2022, a HLCM Task Team on Data Sharing was established to develop a common data sharing agreement, as a potential enabler of system-wide efficiency gains; and, to classify the different types of data based on risk and sensitivity, with a view to enable work on a category per category basis.

This work is consistent with, and will contribute to, recommendation #7 of the partnerships section of the UN Data Strategy which states: As a UN family, design model data sharing agreements to facilitate named or group access to organizational data, based on avail. best practice.

FICSA was represented by Irwan Mohd Razali, Information Officer.

The Task Team made recommendations on the licensing of public facing data using Creative Commons (CC) BY 4.0 licence, and a common data classification that organizations can use.

4.3.4 HLCM Task Force on the use of AI in the UN system

Throughout the common system, United Nations organizations recognize the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI). UN system organizations are employing AI technologies to support their efforts towards achieving sustainable development, promoting and protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian assistance, augmenting crisis management efforts, and enhancing their overall effectiveness in fulfilling their mission. According to the HLCM Task Force, these initiatives continually face novel challenges in a rapidly changing environment, necessitating a shared AI governance framework to ensure services align with UN values, obligations and commitments.

At the Joint Session of the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) held on 4 October 2023 in Copenhagen, members decided to develop a "system-wide normative and operational framework on the use of AI in the UN System, to establish appropriate knowledge sharing mechanisms for ideas and experiences, including the

possibility of developing a generative AI platform for the UN system, as well as to pool the necessary technical capacity, so that we move in an integrated and coherent manner as a system in this dynamic and evolving field.”

In response to this imperative, a Task Force was established to develop guidance that aligns with existing UN principles and standards on ethical AI use. Its mission is to facilitate the responsible adoption of AI technologies across UN entities, emphasizing adaptability to dynamic future needs. This initiative seeks to cultivate a capable and ethical AI ecosystem across the UN system that complies with existing norms and anticipates and responds to emerging technological advances and ethical considerations. The overall work of the Task Force aims to contribute towards the safe and ethical use of AI across the UN system.

Work is ongoing in the Task Force in two sub-groups looking into the following areas:

- **Subgroup 1:** to develop a normative guidance/model policy for the UN System on the use of AI, with the understanding that the guidance/model policy should be “operational”, i.e. that organizations could actually use it to concretely guide their internal use of AI. **FICSA is represented by Irwan Mohd Razali, Information Officer.**
- **Subgroup 2:** to identify and promote mechanisms for pooling technical capacity and knowledge sharing on AI, and to explore the feasibility of developing a UN Generative AI platform – the latter could, if judged “feasible” by the Task Force, become a separate, stand-alone project, following completion of the work of the Task Force. **FICSA is represented by Steven Eales, FICSA Executive Committee Member.**

The 2nd Meeting of the HLCM Task Force on AI occurred on Tuesday, 20 February, and discussion is ongoing on the normative guidance / model policy and the mechanism for a UN-AI platform.

4.3.5 HLCM UN Digital ID Project

According to the HLCM, The UN Digital ID is a transformative UN solution to provide its workforce with a universal, system wide identity. It leverages technologies to provide a service to organisations as well as to staff members alike. It has huge potential for time efficiency savings for the processes from on-boarding through to retirement with the Joint Staff Pension Fund and is currently being tested by the UN Digital Solutions Centre. This will give ownership of personal data back to employees and enable reliable, scalable and dependable HR data interaction that would be interoperable between organizations.

In addition, it is hoped that Digital ID will provide real-time, verified data for efficient decision-making at much lower costs. It has the ability to scale to as many use cases as feasible (vaccines, relocation, security etc.) all powered by the same underlying technology investment and “engine.” As a data exchange platform, the UN Digital ID will allow staff and consultants from participating organizations to share any of their HR and other personal information they are comfortable sharing with complete control and visibility on who is allowed to see it, with the need to provide their consent to ensure full security. As the project progresses, the scope of the workforce may also be further expanded, as appropriate, to include other categories of non-staff, such as meeting participants or vendors, provided their addition does not deter the agility of the project. This would be undertaken in a phased approach.

The importance the UN’s gives to increasing administrative efficiency and increasing coordination between Agencies is seen in the General Assembly (GA) resolutions 67/226 (2013) and 71/243 (2017),

which establish the goals of enhancing the cost efficiency of digital service provisioning through new technologies, integrating functions across UN entities, consolidating country support services and integrating support to further the UN's 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

FICSA is represented by Irwan Mohd Razali, Information Officer on this initiative. At the moment, the Digital ID is finalizing work on a UN digital wallet with verifiable credentials for the 6 sponsoring organizations. The Staff Federations have been invited for user testing on the application and discussion is ongoing.

4.3.6 *Human Resources Network*

The HR Network (HRN) brings together Directors of human resources departments from over thirty UN and related organizations at its biannual meetings. HRN provides strategic advice and leadership in the management of HR, focusing on specific strategic issues of interest to HR Directors, as well as preparing views and proposals to the HLCM and ICSC and liaises with the federations of staff associations. The HRN has two major roles: to provide strategic advice to the Chief Executives of the UN system on HR management developments, ensuring best practices across the system; and, to prepare, on behalf of the CEB, input and exchange with the ICSC. This role supports the management of its programme of work.

Since 2021, FICSA was not invited to participate in the formal session of the HRN, as it was deemed that the Federation's input should be at the higher, HLCM level. Since then, FICSA has participated in regular informal discussions with the Co-Chairs of the HRN on specific topics, either at the request of the HRN Co-Chairs or the Federations. In the last 12 months those discussions included: informal meetings on topics including: how the UN was supporting common system staff in conflict situations, including Gaza and Afghanistan;

Exceptionally, in October 2023, the HRN invited the three Federations to participate in some sessions of the HRN retreat as they related to the Comprehensive Review of the Compensation Package. This consisted of informal sessions with the Co-Chairs of the HRN and with the entire HRN group to understand the different perspectives of member states, organizations, staff and the ICSC commissioners and secretariat. Throughout the sessions, it became apparent that both the staff federations and the organizations held similar positions. It was noted that despite perceptions to the contrary by member states, there were no apparent overlaps in the current package and it therefore appeared that may be necessary to help member states to understand the package and the rationale for each benefit or allowance to ensure that they could develop and informed position, while of course remaining open minded to areas that may need to be addressed during the forthcoming meetings. It was further noted that while cost containment was a main objective from the perspective of the member states, all criteria (which remained the same as the previous comprehensive review) should carry equal weight. The need for clear and relevant data was agreed to be an essential tool to support discussions in all fora. Both HRN and staff Federations felt that discussions should be guided by the basic principles stated in Article 101 of the UN Charter.

4.3.7 *Occupational Health and Safety Forum*

Please also see the deliberations in the HLCM on this issue, reported under section 4.3.

The High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Forum was established by the HLCM at its 38th session in October 2019 as the successor of the Cross-functional

Task Force on Duty of Care. This forum stands as a critical platform where experts nominated by the HLCM members convene to prioritize health, safety, and environmental endeavours within the UN Common System (UNCS). **FICSA was represented in the work of the OHS Forum over the last 12 months by Tanya Quinn-Maguire (President) and Cosimo Melpignano (General Secretary).**

Its functions have defined the Forum as a cross-disciplinary technical entity spanning the United Nations system, aiming to aid UNCS organizations to fulfil their duty of care towards the safety and welfare of staff. This support evolves alongside the risks and environments in which each organization operates. The Forum builds on the work conducted over several years by the [HLCM Cross-functional Task Force on Duty of Care](#), and has distributed its work into different workstreams.

In 2023, the Forum embarked on strategic initiatives to enhance its effectiveness by dividing its work into four distinct workstreams. Each workstream was shaped to address specific aspects of occupational health and safety within the UN system. From establishing a Global OHS Repository to establishing OHS standards, from defining minimum skills for OHS focal points to specifying the governance framework, these workstreams represented a concerted effort to promote employee well-being and safety across UN entities. A summary of the work undertaken during 2023 per workstream follows.

Workstream 1 aimed at establishing a robust infrastructure to support occupational health and safety within the UN system through the creation of a Global OHS Repository, a centralized hub for housing pertinent documents, guidelines, and resources. In collaboration with UN Secretariat - in charge of the UN Policy Portal and the Knowledge Gateway - the team developed and published the repository, ensuring its relevance and utility. An additional task was administering the 2023 OHS Survey, an essential tool for gathering insights and driving evidence-based decision-making.

The role of **workstream 2** was to enhance the accessibility and applicability of occupational health and safety (OHS) standards within the UN system. Central to this task was the scrupulous collection and vetting of existing OHS standards to ascertain their relevance and suitability for UN entities. Through rigorous scrutiny, the team sought to identify standards that aligned with the UN's mission and values, ensuring consistency and efficacy in implementation. In parallel, efforts were directed towards designing a mechanism to assist OHS practitioners in selecting the most appropriate OHS standard whenever what developed by UN entities are inconsistent or incomplete.

Workstream 3 looked at fortifying the capacity and proficiency of OHS focal points within the UN system. At the forefront of their agenda was the definition of essential skills, competencies, and training requirements tailored to OHS focal points, ensuring alignment with the diverse needs of field duty stations and UN Country Teams (UNCTs). Further, it developed a harmonized OHS Hazards Nomenclature and Risk Assessment tools, aimed at standardizing risk assessment practices across UN agencies. By promoting consistency and comparability, these tools aimed to streamline OHS risk assessments, enhancing the UN's ability to identify and mitigate workplace hazards.

Finally, **workstream 4** looked at enhancing communication and support for the implementation of the Framework of accountability for Resident Coordinators (RCs) and UNCTs. Furthermore, it directed the development of a robust concept for the coordinating entity tasked with overseeing the UN-wide OHS management system. This entity would serve to guide and support OHS focal points and local OHS Committees, ensuring alignment with global standards and best practices. Finally, it endeavored to define a governance framework tailored to mission settings and High-risk duty stations, where Resident Coordinators may not be present.

Other key points from the OHS Forum 2023: The UN Knowledge Gateway now hosts [The Global OHS Repository](#) in one of the communities of practice. The Forum recommended that such a link should be included into each organization's OHS intranet and that staff be informed. The biennial OHS survey on

the implementation status of the recommendations of the former Cross-functional Task Force on Duty of Care in the UN system was conducted. The survey was addressed to the UNCS organizations, and aimed to assess the status of the implementation of the OHS management system.

The main topics which evolved during 2023 are related to the future of the Forum and its ability to foster the UNCS' capacity around workforce's health and well-being. The Forum has been re-shaped to cover five main workstreams, each one aiming to develop different aspect of its objectives during 2024:

- WS1 relates to the financial considerations and potential cost-sharing models for the new mechanism. Various scenarios will be contemplated, which will also include examining organization aspects and hosting arrangements.
- WS2 will develop ToRs (Terms of Reference) for the different functional units outlined under the Inter-Agency OHS Management Mechanism, including the role of OHS Coordinator, and the roles of the OHS Secretariat among others component of the Mechanism.
- WS3 will recommend a feasible structure, working mode, and ToR for pooled OHS specialists to potentially serve multiple small agencies that may not have the ability to hire an OHS expert.
- WS4 will evaluate synergies and interdependencies among networks that have similar functions, like mental health and the medical directors' ones. The goal is to analyse their goals and required expertise. OHS, being the overarching theme, suggests that integrating these mechanisms in the medium term can enhance delivery and efficiency.
- WS5 will deliberate on the governance and management of the OHS Repository – who/how and resourcing that should be considered.

4.3.8 Implementation Board for the UN Strategy on Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

While the Implementation Board for the UN Strategy on Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHW) now sits under OHS on the HLCM agenda for reporting purposes, FICSA considers this topic a priority action area for staff and will continue to report on it separately for the time being. **FICSA is currently represented on the Board by Tanya Quinn-Maguire, FICSA President, with Wadzi Garwe, Acting-Chair of the FICSA SOCSEC/OHS Standing Committee, nominated as alternate until the FICSA Council in February 2024, at which point Wadzi will become the official FICSA representative, and another alternate will be nominated.**

The 2018-2023 Strategy aimed to: a) Create a workplace that enhances mental and physical health and well-being; b) Develop, deliver, and evaluate high-quality psychosocial services everywhere that UN staff work; c) Welcome and support staff who live with mental health challenges; and d) Ensure sustainable funding for mental health and well-being services. A multi-agency, multi-disciplinary Implementation Board was established, and a Global Lead was appointed to support the implementation of the strategy.

In 2023, the Board finalized the “2024 and Beyond” Strategy, during its retreat in May 2023. While the FICSA President continued to represent the Federation at the Board level, FICSA was represented on the working group for the development of the new strategy by Dr Jazmine Vergara.

The [2024 and Beyond Strategy](#) was endorsed by the HLCM during its 46th Session in October 2023 (see section 4.3). The 2024 and Beyond Strategy is built on gains made in the implementation of the first Strategy (2018–2023) and takes into account the latest evidence-based data collected from various United Nations surveys and the 2023 [Joint Inspection Unit report on mental health and well-being policies and practices within the United Nations](#). The Strategy is guided by the [WHO/International Labour Organization \(ILO\) policy brief on mental health at work](#), in which organizations are called upon to act by: Preventing risks to mental health at work; Promoting well-being and protecting mental

health at work; Supporting personnel with mental health conditions. Throughout discussions, FICSA loudly and consistently promoted the interests of its members and highlighted the fact that un-supportive organizational culture including bullying and harassment, as well as toxic workplaces, continue to be areas which contribute towards potential ill-health of UN staff members and as such those areas needed to be addressed.

The FICSA President was honoured to be invited to speak at the launch of the 2024 and Beyond Strategy, bringing full circle FICSA's involvement in the development of the original Strategy, including at the launch by the Secretary General in 2018. You can read the statement [here](#).

4.3.9 Inter-Agency Security Management Network

The Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN) supports HLCM in its comprehensive review of policies and resource-related issues pertaining to the entire UN security management system. The Network reviews existing and proposed policies, procedures and practices of the UN Security Management System and reports and makes recommendations on these to the HLCM. The Network meets twice a year, is chaired by the Under-Secretary General for Safety and Security, and is comprised of senior managers from UN organizations who have oversight of the security function. In 2023, FICSA was represented at the meeting of the IASMN by our sister Federation, UNISERV.

What follows is a list of topics that were discussed during the session.

- It was anticipated that following the Sudan experience, an upcoming review and lessons learned will be conducted by an external entity and the Federations emphasized the need for input from Staff.
- A proposal to survey staff about the UN Security Management System was made to capture experiences regarding security incidents and evacuations, with potential involvement from the federations. Data collected from the survey can inform a SWOT analysis for security-related issues globally, emphasizing a people-centered approach.
- Presentations were given on UNDSS (United Nations Department of Safety and Security) (United Nations Department of Safety and Security) planning for Security Operations and the need for better integration of the Security Workforce, including opportunities for FS staff.
- Discussions were held regarding family restrictions and duty station classifications, with plans for further engagement with relevant bodies like HLCM and ICSC.
- Occupational safety and health (OSH) considerations were highlighted as integral to duty station designations.

4.4 International Civil Service Commission

The International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), established by the UN General Assembly², is the body charged with the regulation and coordination of the conditions of service for staff members of the UN Common System. The Commission consists of fifteen members appointed by the GA, of whom two (the Chairman and Vice-Chairman) serve full-time. The Commission meets twice a year for two-to-three weeks, alternating between New York and the headquarters of one of the common system

² Resolution 3357 (XXIX) of 18 December 1974

organizations. It is supported by the ICSC Secretariat, which carries out analysis of the conditions of service, their impact, and their implementation.

Staff Federations (FICSA, CISSUA and UNISERV) and the HRN (Directors of HR from Common System Organizations) act as observers with the right to make statements and comment on discussions at these meetings. Conclusions and recommendations of the ICSC Committee are presented to the UNGA Fifth Committee, which has the ultimate authority to accept the recommendations of the ICSC, before implementation by the UN Common-System Organizations.

FICSA participated in the 95th session of the ICSC Session, held in New York in March 2023, and the 96th session, held in Montreal in August 2023. **The FICSA delegation to the 95th ICSC session comprised of Tanya Quinn-Maguire (FICSA President), and Line Kaspersen (FICSA ExCom member for Compensations Issues and Vice Chair of the PSA (Professional Salaries and Allowances) standing committee. The delegation to the 96th ICSC session comprised of Tanya Quinn-Maguire (FICSA President) and Véronique Allain (FICSA Executive Committee Member for Compensation).**

In her opening statement to the **95th Session of the ICSC**, the FICSA President noted the challenges faced by all stakeholders in recent times and stressed the importance of ensuring a compensation package that: is fit for purpose; will continue to attract and retain the most competent staff members for generations to come; and, which supports a strong, independent, international civil service which is rules-based and reflective of the values which have not changed since the UN Charter was signed in 1945.

The following were among the issues discussed during the 95th Session of particular interest to FICSA members:

Amendments to the statute of the Commission: The General Assembly, in its resolution [77/256 A-B](#), adopted amendments to the Statutes of the ICSC. Articles 10(b) and 11(c) of the statute were amended, which reaffirmed the authority and competence of ICSC to establish post adjustment multipliers for duty stations of the United Nations common system. It was expected that all the common system organizations would have adopted the amendments of the Statutes by November 2023 as all governing bodies would have met by that time. While initially uncertain about the proposed amendments, FICSA recognized that the amendments agreed to by the General Assembly were a positive step and therefore hoped that, therefore, the Geneva-based organizations in would take urgent steps to resolve the situation of dual post adjustments in that duty station. FICSA informed its membership of this development during the meeting of the FICSA Heads of Delegations in September 2023.

Issues related to post adjustment (also refer to section 4.4.2 ACPAQ): In accordance with the provisions of article 11 of its statute, the Commission continued to keep under review the operation of the post adjustment system (PAS) and, in that context, considered a status report on the rollout of the **2021 round of cost-of-living surveys**.

The status report covered details regarding progress made for the 2021 round of cost-of-living surveys to non-headquarters group I duty stations, as well as preparations for the rollout of the 2021 round of surveys to group II duty stations. In particular, ICSC Secretariat reported on the schedule, planning and execution of the surveys, activities performed to develop, update and maintain the ICSC secretariat's overall information technology (IT) infrastructure, specifically, the integrated data processing and management system (IDMS), improvements made to the questionnaire for surveying housing and household expenditures, and information about the next steps in the organization of the 2021 round of cost-of-living surveys.

The status report also included lessons learned during the conduct of the cost-of-living surveys in the first group of non-headquarters group I duty stations. The secretariat indicated that more work would be needed to develop the IDMS to accommodate the significant differences in the statistical methodology applicable to group II duty stations. Furthermore, implementing the required changes to the housing and household expenditure questionnaire and other survey instruments was more complex and required more resources, though the work benefitted significantly from feedback provided by stakeholders and the lessons learned during the conduct of the baseline surveys at headquarters duty stations.

FICSA acknowledged and appreciated the work of the secretariat in engaging all stakeholders and in particular staff representative bodies, which, as an immediate positive impact, had led to high staff response rates. Despite those efforts, the initial results of baseline surveys at headquarters duty stations implied decreases for several duty stations, which was of concern to staff despite the increases in measured cost-of-living levels upon implementation, largely due to inflation. FICSA added that the ICSC must respond to the many questions from staff about survey results, especially regarding changes in measured relative price levels of the housing component.

Introduction of the **comprehensive review of the compensation package**: [General Assembly resolutions 76/240](#) of 24 December 2021 and 77/256 of 30 December 2022 requested the Commission “to provide for the Assembly’s consideration at its seventy-eighth session a detailed outline of its approach for the next comprehensive review, including its structure, parameters and timelines”. This referred to the Assembly’s earlier resolution in which the Commission was invited to “undertake a comprehensive assessment and review of the compensation package for the United Nations common system on a five-year cycle, taking into due consideration the previously agreed objectives of the exercise, as well as the context both in Member States and in the United Nations common system”.

During the meeting, the Commission approved an outline of the proposed way forward and agreed to discuss in further detail during the 96th ICSC session. FICSA supported an integrated approach to the review and noted that the General Assembly’s stated positions on diversity, including gender, multilingualism, age, as well as respect for the organizations’ duty of care to staff, particularly around mental health and wellbeing should be kept in mind throughout the review.

FICSA agreed with the need for the timely provision by the organizations of accurate and relevant data and noted that such data could be used to highlight concerns about attraction and retention of suitably qualified staff, for example. FICSA also repeated their call for the ICSC Secretariat to take a proactive approach to keeping staff informed about the ongoing review. This issue will be ongoing. It has already been on the agenda of meetings with the FICSA heads of delegations and will be an overarching issue on the federation’s agenda for the coming two to three years.

Review of the level of both danger pay and the security evacuation allowance:

- **Danger pay** was introduced from 1 April 2012 as a special allowance for internationally and locally recruited staff required to work in locations where dangerous conditions prevail. It has historically been paid as a set global amount for all internationally recruited staff and as a country-specific amount for locally recruited staff based on applicable salary scales, which serve as the basis for establishing the levels of danger pay. Following the same approach as the prior review in 2020, a proposal to adjust the level by 3.22 per cent was presented for

consideration by the Commission which would update the level of danger pay for **internationally recruited staff** from \$1,645 to \$1,698 per month. Regarding **locally recruited staff**, the proposal for consideration by the Commission was an adjustment of the level of danger pay for locally recruited staff based on updating the reference year of the applicable General Service salary scales from 2019 to those in effect in 2022 and applying 30 per cent to the midpoint of those salary scales. FICSA fully supported the proposed adjustments. **Security Evacuation Allowance:** The security evacuation allowance was established in 2012 to help offset the expenses of staff members and eligible family members who had been evacuated from their official duty stations. In accordance with the current review cycle, the level of the security evacuation allowance is to be reviewed every three years. The last review of the level was conducted in 2020. The presentation from the ICSC Secretariat on this topic covered issues such as: duration of the special allowance, for both family and non-family duty stations; the role of UNDSS (United Nations Department of Safety and Security) (United Nations Department of Safety and Security); the lump sum amount for shipment applicable at the time of evacuation; and duty stations designated by the field-based organizations as safe-havens. The Commission decided to maintain the allowance at its current level of \$200 per day for staff and \$100 per day for each eligible family member for up to 30 days and thereafter \$150 and \$75, respectively, for a maximum period of six months. It also agreed to maintain the single lump sum of \$500 for shipment, applicable when staff members or their families were evacuated. The Commission also agreed to review the allowance in the context of the forthcoming comprehensive compensation review.

Review of the jurisdictional set up of the UN common system (please also refer to section 5.1): The Commission was briefed on the topic by the Principal Legal Officer in the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance of the United Nations leading the review of the jurisdictional set-up together with the Legal Adviser and Director of the Office of Legal Services of ILO.

The presentation gave an overview of the process's status since the adoption of UNGA resolution 74/255 B. The Commission was also informed of the timeline towards the review's conclusion by 31 December 2023. During the long discussion in session, it was clear that the Commission considered that there was the real possibility of conflicting judgments in the future and highlighted the need to have one avenue to address conflicts, or potential conflicts, in decisions related to the implementation of ICSC decisions.

In principle, the Commission supported the proposal to designate only one tribunal, preferably the UNAT, which could be conferred exclusive appellate authority to hear cases related to the implementation of the Commission's recommendations and decisions. FICSA firmly repeated their position in support of the status quo and noted that recent amendments to the ICSC Statutes was a positive step forward. FICSA further noted with concern that the General Assembly approved 500,000 USD to investigate the feasibility of establishing a joint chamber, at a time when staff were told cost containment was paramount, and they are requested to do more with less. FICSA finally noted with concern that there appeared to be a bias in the presentation and documentation towards the option to establish a joint chamber, which seemed premature considering that consultations were still ongoing.

In her opening statement to the Commission, the FICSA President took the occasion of the **96th Session of the ICSC** being held in Montréal to congratulate the Secretary General of ICAO on his organization's implementation of the unified parental leave policy with an effective date of 1 January. She noted with regret the ongoing state of global financial and political perma-crisis, which had resulted in the

consistent lack of adequate financial resources to the organizations. She said this situation had added to the ever-increasing pressure on staff and directly impacted their mental health and well-being.

FICSA called on all present to acknowledge this and the financial cost of loss of productivity, motivation and trust, as well as days lost to long-term sick leave. Regarding the **ongoing comprehensive review of the compensation package**, FICSA agreed that the attraction of the next generation of international civil servants was an imperative to ensure the sustainability of the international civil service for generations to come. This, however, should not be at the expense of the retention of currently serving staff who had already given many years of loyal service and sacrifices to deliver on the mandates of their organizations.

The following were among the issues discussed during the 95th session of particular interest to FICSA members:

Review of the Standards of Conduct: (please also refer to section 4.4.1). The standards of conduct for the international civil service were first issued by the International Civil Service Advisory Board in 1954 and reissued by the ICSC in 1986. In its resolution [67/257](#), the General Assembly approved, with effect from 1 January 2013, [the revised ICSC standards](#). The working group on the review of the ICSC Standards of Conduct was established by the Commission at its ninety-fourth session in 2022.

The working group agreed at its first meeting to a grouping and sequencing of identified issues for the review. The working group held its second meeting in May 2023 and continued its work in accordance with the above-mentioned grouping and sequencing of issues, focusing mainly on the articles related to external interactions and conflicts of interest, including politicization of the international civil service/relations with Member States, external activities and employment, public expression and political engagement of staff, conflicts of interest, and post-employment provisions.

The working group also considered the proposed revisions to the standards presented by the representative of the [UN Ethics Panel](#), and the related commentary proposed, noting that at its first meeting the idea of explanatory notes accompanying the ICSC standards of conduct had been raised.

FICSA noted that the issue of misinformation was of utmost importance and the work of the working group could help the organizations develop cohesive policies in that regard. FICSA was of the view that there was a need to ensure consistency in implementation and interpretation of the Standards among the organizations to ensure that the Standards were applicable to all in the organizations; from the Executive Head down. FICSA recognized the ongoing nature of the work within the working group but would appreciate the opportunity to share final revisions to the text of the Standards with its membership for internal consultation before the final recommendation to the Commission.

Global staff survey on conditions of service: The General Assembly, in its resolution [77/256 B](#), requested the Commission to conduct a system-wide survey to assess factors affecting workplace retention and to submit the results and analysis of the survey to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session. At its 95th session, in March 2023, the Commission initiated the preparations for the comprehensive review of the compensation package and approved a timeline. As part of that process, the 2023 global staff survey would be launched in the latter part of 2023; the results of which would serve as an important data source and ensure that the review would be both comprehensive and holistic.

The results would be presented to the Commission at its 98th session in 2024. The presentation from the ICSC Secretariat on this item focused on: consultation with organizations and staff representatives; the need to compare data between previous global staff surveys; and, communication, outreach and technical support. The survey target launch date was end of September 2023. A progress report would be made to the Commission at its ninety-seventh session in spring 2024. Following a period of analysis of results and reports, the results of the survey would be presented to the Commission at 98th session (summer 2024) and to the General Assembly at its 79th session (autumn 2024), as requested by the General Assembly.

FICSA stressed the importance of genuine consultation with staff and appreciated that there would be further consultation with staff, through the federations, on the questionnaire. FICSA emphasized the importance of building trust in the system, and noted that effectively communicating the results back to staff and how the data would be used in the context of the upcoming compensation review was an imperative and an opportunity not to be missed. FICSA also encouraged the ICSC secretariat to consult with organizations, and local staff associations to include the results of staff surveys already carried out at the organizational level which could be a valuable source of complementary data and could provide additional insight into staff perceptions at the individual organization level. FICSA also encouraged the ICSC to consider all responses, particularly negative views which might not fit into some views of how staff should perceive their compensation package. Rather, the survey responses should be seen as a reality check of perceptions and reflecting different perspectives in the upcoming review of the compensation package. FICSA supported the proposed approach and roadmap outlined.

Use of external data for staff expenditure surveys: The Commission considered a note by its secretariat containing a report of the ACPAQ in response to the request by the General Assembly, in its [resolution 76/240](#), for the Commission to investigate the feasibility of using external data, in lieu of staff expenditure surveys, as a source of expenditure weights used in post adjustment index calculations. In that note, the ACPAQ recommended to the Commission that the secretariat maintain the use of staff expenditure surveys for collecting the data necessary for the estimation of expenditure weights used in post adjustment index calculations.

FICSA concurred with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. The Commission decided to inform the General Assembly that after due consideration of the views expressed during the deliberations at the 44th session of the Advisory Committee, and noting that the expenditures reported by staff were used mainly for weights, except for the housing component, for which they are used for both weights and indices for group II duty stations, it had decided to endorse the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

Feasibility of a separate post adjustment index in Bern: The General Assembly in its resolution 76/240 requested the Commission to study the feasibility and impact of establishing a separate post adjustment for Bern. On its 44th, the ACPAQ reviewed the results of the study conducted by the secretariat on the issue. The study included a comparative analysis of the current approach for determining the post adjustment for Bern, setting it equal to that of Geneva, versus that based on the results of a cost-of-living survey in Bern, as well as on the establishment of a cost-of-living differential based on external data from two reputable sources: the living quarters A/78/30 23-16009 27/69 expenditure survey data of the United States Department of State and the cost-of-living survey data of the Economic Research Institute. A fourth approach, based on Mercer data, was considered but not used, as it was found not to include data for the rental cost of houses.

The Commission decided that while it was technically feasible to establish a separate post adjustment for Bern, the costs of doing so outweighed the benefits and therefore the current arrangements (status quo) regarding the post adjustment for Bern should be maintained. FICSA expressed appreciation to the secretariat for its engagement with the local staff association in Bern for the conduct of the survey as staff had been initially skeptical about the objective of the survey, since they had not been involved in previous surveys conducted in Geneva in which they were eligible to participate. FICSA expressed support for maintaining the status quo, as recommended by the Advisory Committee.

Comprehensive Review of the Compensation Package: Following discussions during the 95th session, at its 96th session, the Commission was presented with a document containing a summary of the feedback received from stakeholders, with proposals for the Commission’s approach to the present comprehensive review, including its scope, parameters, and timeline.

Reacting to the stakeholders’ position that they would not support any reduction in the compensation package, the Commission stressed that the outcome of the review should not be prejudged and that elements of the compensation package should be analyzed on their merits and maintained or adjusted based on the conclusions reached.

Regarding the scope of the review, the Commission agreed that it should focus on the Professional and higher categories, given that the salary survey methodologies for the General Service and other locally recruited staff had just been revised. However, items spanning the categories could also be examined. In addition, the Commission agreed to continue to channel the methodological issues of the post adjustment system through the ACPAQ.

The Commission decided to propose to the General Assembly that future reviews should be conducted every 10 years. The timeline agreed to by the Commission, for consideration by the UNGA is in Annex II.

Children’s and secondary dependants’ allowances: Since its inception in 1946, the child allowance has been defined and maintained as a universal social benefit. The philosophy of the allowance has always been to make up for the loss of a national child benefit that would normally be due to staff members from their home country. Acting as a State rather than an employer, the United Nations established the allowance as a symbolic replacement of this loss.

The General Assembly, in its [resolution 77/256 B](#), requested the Commission to further refine the structure of the children’s and secondary dependents’ allowances and to review the feasibility of applying a means-tested methodology. It also approved, as a compensation measure, the allowance for children with disabilities of \$6,645 per annum until the children’s and secondary dependents’ allowances were further adjusted.

The Commission reviewed the feasibility of the following three approaches, which were based on the analysis of practices used by various Member States that use means testing to establish the child allowance. FICSA recalled that, despite numerous efforts by all stakeholders to find a compromise, earlier proposals over the past 12 years had been repeatedly rejected by the General Assembly. FICSA added that the child allowance was one of the very few social security benefits on which staff relied when they accepted an international position with the United Nations, away from the support of their families and their national social security schemes. Regarding the use of a mean’s tested approach,

FICSA doubted that using the level of income as an indicator fulfilled the common understanding of means testing, which implied an assessment of the entire household income and wealth, including savings, capital and assets, and that the concept of means assessment was based on the understanding that income did not equal need. FICSA did not endorse any of the means-tested approaches presented.

The Commission concluded that the present methodology for establishing the allowance, as approved by it in 2022, should be maintained. It therefore decided to reiterate that recommendation to the General Assembly.

Feasibility of a separate GS salary scale for Bern: In its [resolution 76/240](#), the General Assembly requested the Commission to conduct a study on the feasibility and impact of establishing a separate salary scale for the General Service category in Bern. In response to this request, the Commission analyzed the level of salaries in jobs in Bern that were comparable with those in the General Service category at the primary duty station in Switzerland, Geneva. The impact of implementing a separate salary scale for Bern was also considered.

To evaluate the differences in the local labour markets in Geneva and Bern, salary data from three diverse sources were reviewed: employers who have offices in Geneva and in Bern, external salary data from the approved vendors and wage data from the Federal Statistical Office in Switzerland.

The Commission recalled that the established practice was to maintain a single salary scale for staff in the General Service category in each country. In exceptional cases, however, when significant measurable differences in the labour markets at the primary and a second duty station existed and when the number of staff at the second duty station was significant, the United Nations Secretariat, in its capacity as the responsible agency for salary survey purposes, might decide to establish an additional salary scale. The Commission decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it maintain a single salary scale for the General Service category in Switzerland.

Review of the levels of hardship allowance and the mobility incentive:

Hardship allowance: In accordance with the approved three-year review cycle, the Commission reviewed the level of the hardship allowance at its ninety-third session, in 2022, and decided to grant a 3.1 per cent increase for the hardship allowance, effective 1 January 2023, in accordance with article 11 (b) of its statute ([A/77/30, para. 219](#)). The General Assembly, in [its resolution 77/256 B](#), invited the Commission to reconsider its decisions on the hardship allowance level and to assess the calculation methodology based on the outcome of the next comprehensive compensation review. The Commission reconsidered its previous decision of 2022 and reached a consensus to confirm its decision to increase the hardship allowance by 3.1 per cent, but with an effective date of 1 January 2024. The Commission also agreed to review the hardship allowance in the forthcoming review of the compensation package.

Mobility incentive: In 2022, the Commission reviewed the level of the mobility incentive in accordance with the approved review cycle and decided to revise the level, effective 1 January 2023 ([A/77/30, para. 228](#)). The General Assembly, in its [resolution 77/256 B](#), invited the Commission to reconsider its decisions on the mobility incentive level and to assess the calculation methodology based on the next comprehensive compensation review's outcome. In the same resolution, recalling section E, paragraph 3, of its resolution 74/255 B, the Assembly reiterated its encouragement to the

organizations of the United Nations common system to consider the application of alternative administrative measures, including non-financial incentives, to promote staff mobility, and the linking of mobility to staff development and career progression, to the extent possible. FICSA fully concurred with the proposed recommendation to update the level of the mobility incentive.

The Commission decided to reaffirm its decision to confirm the amounts in the mobility incentive matrix, with effect from 1 January 2024, and to review the mobility incentive in the context of the ongoing comprehensive review of the compensation package, including non-financial incentives to promote staff mobility, and the linking of mobility to staff development and career progression, to the extent possible.

4.4.1 Working Group on ICSC Standards of Conduct



At its 94th session the ICSC decided to undertake a revision of the current ICSC standards of conduct for the international civil service to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the organizations. In addition, the Commission decided to form a WG, composed of members of the Commission, along with representatives of the organizations and staff federations, to examine the current ICSC standards of conduct and make proposals for their revision. The Commission also approved a proposed framework for the review, which foresees the submission of a revised draft Standards of Conduct for consideration by the Commission at its 97th session in 2024. The conclusions of the Working Group on the Standards will be reported to the FICSA membership in the 2024 Report of the FICSA Executive Committee. In 2023, **FICSA was represented by Steven Eales, FICSA Executive Committee Member without portfolio and Tanya Quinn-Maguire, FICSA President.**

4.4.2 Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ)

The ACPAQ is a subsidiary body to the ICSC, which advises on methodological and technical questions related to the Post Adjustment for staff in Professional and Higher categories. It is chaired by the ICSC Vice Chair. Five members are appointed from various member states, and they serve as statisticians and provide technical expertise. In addition, representatives from the organizations and staff federations are invited as observers.

FICSA was represented at the 44th Session of the ACPAQ in Warsaw in May 2023 by Line Kaspersen (FICSA ExCom member for Compensation issues).

At this session, the Advisory Committee reviewed the ICSC secretariat’s proposals for the adaptation of the approved methodology for application to field duty stations for the 2021 round of surveys, as

well as some methodological issues emanating from the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys at headquarters duty stations, including a review of web scraping and other big data sources in the context of post adjustment index calculations; measures to mitigate or neutralize the effects of pure methodological change in post adjustment index calculations; and a report on an investigation into the source of shocks in post adjustment index calculations.

The Committee also reviewed the results of the secretariat’s investigations, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 76/240, namely: the feasibility, and impact, of establishing a separate post adjustment index for Bern, Switzerland; and a pilot study on the use of external data, in lieu of staff expenditure surveys, as a source of expenditure weights used in post adjustment index calculations. Another item reviewed by the Committee was a report on proposals for the re-design of the ICSC secretariat's infrastructure for the processing and management of cost-of-living survey data.

A provisional agenda for the Committee’s forty-fifth session was submitted for the Commission’s consideration at its 96th session.



4.4.3 Hardship Classification

The ICSC called its regular two meetings of the Tripartite Working Group (TWG) to review the level of hardship classification of duty stations. **FICSA was represented in the hybrid session of this body by Oleksandr (Sasha) Martynenko, FICSA ExCom member for Field issues.**

FICSA participated in the annual review of field duty stations according to the conditions of life and work that took place on 14-17 November 2023. The review focused on duty stations of the Africa region as well as on the duty stations that were ‘out of cycle’ or under ‘temporary classification’. FICSA contributed its expertise to the review, engaged with the working group members and advocated for revision of the current methodology so that classifications reflect hardship and diversity of duty stations. The Chair of ICSC considered all the recommendations of the Tripartite Working Group (TWG) and promulgated the effective results as of 01 January 2024. The consolidated list of the approved classifications can be found [here](#). FICSA will continue attending the meetings of TWG and advocate for accurate classification of each duty station. More information about the work of FICSA on hardship classification, including support materials, can be found [here](#).

[The United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund \(UNJSPF\)](#) was established in 1949 pursuant to a General Assembly resolution to provide retirement, death, disability, and related benefits for staff upon cessation of their services with the United Nations and such other organizations as might be admitted to membership, under regulations that, since then, have been amended at various times. As an independent inter-agency entity, the Fund operates under its own regulations as approved by the General Assembly.

In accordance with its governance structure, it is administered by the [United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board \(UNJSPB\)](#), which currently consists of 33 members, representing the 24 member organizations. One third of the Pension Board members are chosen by the UN General Assembly and the corresponding governing bodies of the other member organizations, one third by the executive heads of those organizations and one third by the participants in the Fund.

The Pension Board reports to the UN General Assembly on the Fund's operations and on matters related to its investments management. When necessary, it recommends amendments to the Regulations of the Fund and to its pension adjustment system, which govern, inter alia, the rates of contribution by the participants (currently, 7.9 per cent of their pensionable remuneration) and by the organizations (currently 15.8 per cent), eligibility for participation and the benefits to which participants and their dependents may become entitled.

FICSA is an observer to the Pension Board and traditionally makes a [statement](#) on behalf of its membership. In 2023, the session was held at IMO premises in London from 24 to 28 July. Cosimo Melpignano , General Secretary, addressed the Board virtually. In his statement, the FICSA General Secretary underscored, among others, the increased engagement and consultation with the Federation, the importance of a sustainable and adequate pension scheme, and the importance of pension portability for a mobile workforce. Emphasis was placed on concerns that FICSA has about representation on the Board and a need for equitable solutions.

A summary of the Board's deliberations follows, while the [75th Pension Board Report](#) can also be a full source of reference.

One of the main topics under discussion was the **representation on the Board for new members**. FICSA provided the board with our membership's concerns about the representation on the Board and the risk of losing seats when new organizations may join the fund. It was underlined as the Federation looks forward to the outcome of the governance review and hopes that an equitable and fair solution can be identified to further strengthen the tripartite nature of the Board. Following a prolonged discussion, the Board established an ad hoc working group that would be tasked with further defining and elaborating the criteria by which the Board could consider admitting new participants into the Fund in the future and to report to the Board in this regard during the next session scheduled in February 2024.

On the topic of **the impact of key investment and solvency-related decisions** (such as the funding policy) on the long-term financial condition and performance of the UNJSPF, the Board presented the Asset-Liability Management (ALM) study which recurs every four years. The goals of the study were a) to assess the impact of key investment strategies; b) to understand the impact of solvency-related decisions on the long-term sustainability and performance of the Fund; c) to recommend long-term strategic asset allocation(s) that would optimize the Fund's asset return in the context of its liability, risk appetite and risk budget. Additional info can be found in the official report.

On the Funding Policy, whose purpose is to assist in ensuring that the Fund's obligations to beneficiaries can be met over the long-term, and that establishes methods to monitor funding position

and associated risks, the Board approved a funding target of maintaining the required contribution rate within a range of 21.7 per cent to 25.7 per cent of pensionable remuneration.

About **actuarial matters**, the Board endorsed, in accordance with article 11 of the Regulations, the recommendation of the Committee of Actuaries regarding the assumptions for the next actuarial valuation as at 31 December 2023. Regarding the real rate of return on investments, the Board agreed with the recommendation of the Committee of Actuaries that, based on the concurrence of the Investments Committee and the Fund Solvency and Assets and Liabilities Monitoring Committee, the expected asset return based on the revised capital market assumptions, strategic asset allocation and the Fund's historical longer-term investment performance, a 3.4 per cent real rate of return assumption should be used. This is a change from recent actuarial valuations that used an assumption of 3.5 per cent. This change reflects the growing evidence that various global factors, such as climate change, evolving demographics, and the future economic outlook, will lead to lower future long-term investment returns than have been observed in the past.

Ms. Rosemarie McClean, the Chief Executive of Pension Administration, highlighted that pension payments have continued to be issued on time. For the year 2022 and the first half of the year 2023, over 90 per cent of pension cases have continued to be processed within 15 business days of the reception of relevant documents by the Fund. Continuous improvement is being made in client service, with client queries by telephone answered in less than a minute. Ms. McClean stressed that the success of the Digital Certificate of Entitlement continues, with more than 36% of the eligible population of retirees and beneficiaries using this option. Ms. McClean presented the main strategic objectives of Pension Administration for 2024 and beyond. A strong focus will be placed on a systems upgrade, which is a necessity as systems are aging. The intention is to adopt a gradual, phased approach over the six-year horizon. Mr. Pedro Guazo, Representative of the Secretary-General (RSG) for the investment of the assets of the Fund (RSG), reported that the investment portfolio was valued at USD 85.5 billion as of 20 July 2023. The RSG informed the Pension Board that an independent study found that the Pension Fund compared favorably against other pension funds in terms of cost and return of the assets (as disclosed [here](#)).

The UNGA requested in its resolution [77/258](#), para. 23 that the Board provide the UNGA with the framework for the **extension of the guidelines to determine eligibility for spousal benefits** under articles 34 and 35 of the Regulations (Rev.1). The idea was to allow retrospective recognition of beneficiaries arising from marriages, in cases where changes under national legislation occurred after the time of the former participants' separation from service and they separated prior to the adoption of the revised guidelines in 2016. The Board approved principles and conditions of eligibility.

On Governance matters, recalling the previous recommendations of the UNGA concerning the governance of the Board and the 2021 decision of the Board to conduct a full review of all adopted reform proposals, the Board also agreed to establish the governance working group in February 2024 so that it can present its recommendations by the Board's session scheduled in July 2025.

Finally, the Board a) approved the audited financial statements and it was noted that the Board of Auditors issued an unqualified audit opinion on the Fund's financial statements and were pleased to note that 83% of its previous audit recommendations had been implemented; b) approved the Fund's 2024 budget, which would be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly for final approval.

5. Cross-cutting topics

5.1 Review of the jurisdictional set-up of the UN Common System

In its [resolution 77/257](#), the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to “complete the work on the outstanding legal and practical aspects pertaining to the jurisdictional set-up of the United Nations common system.” The General Assembly also decided that the Secretary-General “shall conclude the review of the jurisdictional set-up of the United Nations common system by 31 December 2023”.

In 2023, FICSA and its sister Federations’ request to participate in the meetings of the working group as an observer continued to be denied. FICSA received briefings in March, April and July from the Secretariat, and was invited to comment on draft proposals. It should also be noted that while the Federations were not allowed to participate in the review, per se, the request to ensure staff consultation was ensured when the organizations’ legal advisors were requested to consult internally with both HR and staff representative bodies. FICSA continued to hold the position that

Following the consideration by the Fifth Committee of the Report of the Secretary General ([A/78/154](#)) during the main part of the General Assembly’s seventy-eighth session, the Fifth Committee decided to take no action on the report. This brings the review of the jurisdictional set-up to a conclusion.

5.2 ILOAT Meeting with “stakeholders”

The meeting, convened on 4 May 2023, by the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) was presided over by the President of the Tribunal, Judge Michael F. Moore, with Mr. Drazen Petrovic serving as the registrar and Vice President Patrick Frydman in attendance, among other distinguished judges.

FICSA, represented by Cosimo Melpignano (General Secretary) and Steven Eales (ExCom Member without Portfolio) joined the meeting together with the representatives of legal services and of several staff associations of organisations that recognize the Tribunal’s authority, as well as several lawyers who often represent parties before it.

The assembly reflected a diverse composition, representing various nationalities and legal traditions, underscoring the Tribunal's commitment to impartial resolution. President Moore emphasized the Tribunal's role in delivering equitable justice, highlighting the meticulous process of case handling, from assignment to reporting judges to collective decision-making by a plenary of judges. While acknowledging the circumstances that lead to significant delays in addressing cases, the judges understood that this delay in justice can lead to justice being denied.

Discussions during the meeting centered on key agenda items, notably remedies awarded by the Tribunal and procedural enhancements. Concerns were raised regarding the adequacy of damages awarded, especially in cases of delayed internal appeal procedures, prompting a thoughtful exchange on the factors influencing compensation decisions. Participants explored the complexities of cost allocations, costing tables, legal representation expenses, and the need for balanced approaches that consider both claimant and organizational perspectives. The dialogue also delved into procedural matters, including the filing of mass claims, electronic submission practices, and strategies to expedite case processing while maintaining due diligence.

The role of the Resident Judge, introduced in 2022 to bolster the Tribunal's operational efficiency, emerged as a focal point of discussion. The Resident Judge's mandate to facilitate procedural requests,

expedite document production, and harmonize case law underscored the Tribunal's commitment to streamlining processes and reducing case backlogs. Participants exchanged views on disclosure practices, the handling of privileged documents, and the evolving dynamics of interactions between judges and parties, emphasizing the Tribunal's dedication to transparency, fairness, and the protection of stakeholders' rights.

Proposed rule changes aimed to refine procedural guidelines and enhance the quality of submissions, including limitations on submission lengths, guidance for parties, and the inclusion of amicus curiae to enrich legal proceedings. The meeting culminated in a dynamic Q&A session, addressing issues ranging from settlement deadlines to GDPR compliance and the Tribunal's statistical reporting mechanisms. The impending retirement of Registrar Drazen Petrovic was acknowledged with gratitude for his indispensable contributions to the Tribunal's effective functioning, underscoring the spirit of collaboration and appreciation among the Tribunal's members.

6. Meetings with the FICSA Membership

6.1 Meeting with FICSA Members

Table on Meeting with FICSA Members during 2023

FICSA Member	Date
AP-in-FAO	18 October
FAO/WFP UGSS	
IFAD	7 June, 17 October
PAHO/WHO	17 October
IARC	19 October
SCBD	20 July 2023
ICAO	20 July 2023
IAEA	
UNRWA/ASA	
IMO	14 February
ILO TC	13 March, 12 October
ITLOS	
OSCE	
UNAIDS	16 October
UNESCO STU	4 May, 3 July, 17 November
UNFCCC	
UNICTF Valencia	
UNIDO	4 May
UNWTO	22 May
UPU	
UNGSC	22 March, 3 November
WIPO	
WMO	10 May, 31 May
WHO/AFRO	16 August
WHO/SEARO	
WHO/GSC	22 March, 16 August
WHO/EMRO	14 August
WHO/WPRO	20 April, 17 August
WHO/EURO	15 August
WHO/HQ	2 May, 8 August, 30 November

Associate members

CTBTO	7 November
IOM	22 March, 20 July, 22 August, 31 August
IFRC	2 October
The Global Fund	14 March, 15 June
OPCW	5 October
WTO/OMC	2 November
WIPO Staff Council	28 June

6.2 [Meeting with the FICSA Heads of Delegations](#)

FICSA ExCom has continued to engage actively with the FICSA Heads of Delegations (HODs), who are the Presidents or Chairs of FICSA Full Members, to keep them abreast of major developments and for decision-making in critical matters. Those meetings were as follows:

- 12 January 2023
- 6 June 2023.
- 5 September 2023
- 29 November 2023

6.3 [Meeting of the FICSA Executive Committee](#)

25 Meetings of the FICSA Executive Committee were held in 2023. The meetings are scheduled to take place every second Wednesday, from 2.30pm to 4.30pm Geneva time. The minutes are stored in the FICSA SharePoint and available to the membership upon request.

6.4 [Meeting of the FICSA Secretariat](#)

The meeting takes place every Monday and Thursday, from 10.30am to 11.30am Geneva time.

6.5 [Ask the FICSA Expert Sessions](#)

The well-received "Ask the FICSA Expert" series, a platform designed to offer insight, advice, and guidance to membership, successfully hosted six informative sessions. Each session delved into critical topics as follows:

16 May 2023	Recognizing and managing microaggression in the workplace
27 June 2023	Hardship classification of duty stations (French)
6 July 2023	Hardship classification of duty stations (English)
28 September 2023	Understanding unconscious bias and its impact on the workplace
10 October 2023	Racism in the workplace
4 December 2023	Professional Salaries

7. Strategic relationships, partnerships, and Memoranda of Understanding

7.1 [Relationship with Sister Federations](#)

FICSA continued to work in the spirit of the Tri-Federation Agreement with our sister Federations CCISUA and UNISERV. Where possible, we coordinated our work and positions to compliment and support each other and to present a united front at high-level fora. This included preparation meetings before the high-level meetings and informal consultations on the sidelines. In addition, the FICSA President was invited to make a statement at the annual meetings of both CCISUA and UNISERV. The same courtesy has been extended to our sister federations and both will address the 77th Council in Bern.

7.2 [Relationship with other entities](#)

- [Memorandum of Understanding between FICSA and UNICC](#)
- [Tri Federations agreement \(FICSA - UNISERV - CCISUA\)](#)
- [FICSA CCISUA Cooperation Agreement](#)
- [FICSA UNISERV Cooperation Agreement](#)
- [Memorandum of Understanding between FICSA and UNGLOBE](#)
- [Memorandum of Understanding between FICSA and ITC/ILO](#)
- [Memorandum of Understanding with FICSA Lawyers](#)
- [Regional MOU for Americas between FICSA and Public Services International \(PSI\)](#)

8. Report of the Regional Representatives

8.1 Regional Representative for Africa – Harris Benito Koubemba Mona (WHO/AFRO SA)

Timeline	Activity	Focus
16 - 24 January	Participation to the Virtual Standing Committees sessions for the 76th FICSA Council	All FICSA members
5 – 10 February	Participation to the 76 th FICSA Council in Valencia	All FICSA members
24 January - 8 June	Follow-up for the colleagues from FUNSA Rwanda to join FICSA	Rwanda
9 May	Sharing of the message from the CEB Secretariat: of the UN System on administrative Guidelines in response to the situation in Sudan	Sudan
6 June	Sharing information on the FICSA training sessions on hardship classification	All FICSA members
25 July	Sharing information on the ICSC Regional Workshop on the United Nations Compensation System, Nairobi, Kenya, 11 to 15 September 2023	All FICSA members
8 August	Virtual meeting with FICSA	WHO FICSA membership status
August - October	Meetings with FUNSA Congo on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the situation of local staff salaries;- training workshop request on the ICSC methodology for local salary survey In-person meeting with the ICSC mission in Brazzaville, Congo on the local general service staff and related categories	Congo

8.2 Regional Representative for Americas

No regional representative nominated for 2023

8.3 Regional Representative for Asia

No activities were reported as of 21 February 2024 November

8.4 Regional Representative for Europe – Susan Murray (FAO/WFP-UGSS)

2023 Regional Representative Report - Europe		
Timeline	Activity	Focus
Mar 2023	Prepared a concept note for an Annual FICSA Ball which could be held with the FICSA Council each year.	Fund as well as awareness raising for both FICSA and the Council host organization
Feb-Mar 2023	Facilitated Working Group of Italy-based agencies staff representatives on local salary survey in Rome scheduled for November 2023 - discussing the methodology I, past practices, local job market trend etc., in preparation of the formation of the Local Salary Survey Committee.	Information sharing and strategizing
April 2023 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of the Local Salary Survey Committee for Rome. 	
June 2023	Co-chaired the Italian Inter-agency Meeting, held in FAO HQs – co-hosted by AP-in-FAO, IFAD SA and UGSS.	Information sharing amongst Italy-based agencies and funds.

9. FICSA Secretariat

9.1 Current functions and services carried out by the FICSA Secretariat

Effective management of the Federation is a crucial for the successful completion of FICSA's yearly mandate. It would be impossible for the Federation to accomplish its objectives without the dedicated support of its Secretariat staff who has delivered on time, every time. From project management to governance, from policy to administration and finance, the FICSA Secretariat is the frontline of the Federation's work. The following are the principal areas of work carried out by the FICSA Secretariat:

Administration:

- Meeting support, including development of provisional agendas, background papers, and minutes as well as coordination, including identifying and booking meeting venues, and organizing travel and accommodation in accordance with FICSA's travel policy and financial rules.
- Management of all correspondence, which includes: several thousand monthly messages, telephone enquiries, and official communications with FICSA members.
- Management of FICSA files and document management system.
- Maintenance of FICSA's online presence – FICSA website, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter.

Project Management:

- Supporting the development of FICSA workplan, as mandated by the 75th Council, establishing and maintaining a calendar of events and ensuring that deadlines are respected, and objectives reached.
- Monitoring of the work programme and regular liaison with the SCs to discuss the status of FICSA Council decisions.
- Building and maintaining relationships with FICSA stakeholders.
- Preparation and management of Annual Reports.

Governance:

- Development of terms of reference to be used by the SCs
- Management of the ExCom, including elections, resignations, and nominations.

Finance:

- Management of the Federation's budget and preparation of monthly and annual accounts
- Processing of grants, fees, allowances, expenses, and any other payments
- Preparation of papers on the Federation's financial activity
- Management of the Federation's different back accounts

Policy:

- Advice on policy issues, including research and data analysis and preparation of related communications
- Coordination with legal advisers on policy and legal matters
- Implementation of FICSA Council recommendations

The significant workload and countless hours dedicated to the Federation's operational agenda, play an undeniable toll on the individuals comprising the Secretariat and Executive Committee team. While financial constraints challenge our activities, it is essential that the membership becomes aware of the persistent pressure and the increasingly limited opportunities for a break or a leave that have characterized the yearly Secretariat's activities. While we navigate the escalating organizational demands, we also should not forget the impact that such a workload might have on the physical and

mental well-being of the Secretariat’s staff, who are often required to “offer” their own and familiar time to the Federation. Reflection and renewed focus on prioritizing the health and welfare of our workforce is welcome.

9.2 [Communications to FICSA Members and beyond](#)

FICSA has continued its communications with members; and continues to use a mix of bulletins, communications, through both the website and emails, as well as social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, and X). A full overview of the communications can be found on the [FICSA website](#).

9.2.1 [List of FICSA Communications:](#)

- 29 Jan 2024 - [FICSA Magazine 2023 - FICSA Comm 03-24](#)
- 18 Jan 2024 - [Overtime Compensation and Duty Travel DSA - FICSA Comm 02-24](#)
- 17 Jan 2024 - [Lead and Learn UN System Workplace Mental Health - FICSA Comm 01-24](#)
- 06 Dec 2023 - [UN Disability Inclusion Strategy](#)
- 29 Nov 2023 - [Survey on Flexible Working Arrangements - FICSA Comm 34-23](#)
- 28 Nov 2023 - [Legal Tip of the Month for November - FICSA Comm 33-23](#)
- 23 Nov 2023 - [Survey on Staff Association/Union provisions, arrangements, support at their organizations - FICSA Comm 32-23](#)
- 22 Nov 2023 - [Ask the FICSA Expert on Professional Salaries and Allowances - FICSA Comm 31-23](#)
- 16 Nov 2023 - [UN Plus Survey - FICSA Comm 30-23](#)
- 16 Nov 2023 - [Launch of UN System Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy - FICSA Comm 29-23](#)
- 02 Nov 2023 - [JIU/REP/2023/2 - Report on the internal pre-tribunal stage appeal mechanisms available to staff of the United Nations system - FICSA Comm 28-23](#)
- 18 Oct 2023 - [Adoption of the JIU Report - Recommendations on ombudsperson services - FICSA Comm 27-23](#)
- 09 Oct 2023 - [FICSA Information session on the ICSC Global Staff Survey - FICSA Comm 26-23](#)
- 05 Oct 2023 - [World Mental Health Day - FICSA Comm 25-23](#)
- 04 Oct 2023 - [2023 ICSC Global Staff Survey - FICSA Comm 23-23](#) Add Important information
- 02 Oct 2023 - [Ask the FICSA Expert: Racism in the workplace - FICSA Comm 24-23](#)
- 02 Oct 2023 - [2023 ICSC Global Staff Survey - FICSA Comm 23-23](#)
- 11 Sep 2023 - [Legal Tip of the Month for September 2023 - FICSA Comm 22-23](#)
- 05 Sep 2023 - [Ask the FICSA Expert Session - FICSA Comm 21-23](#)
- 05 Sep 2023 - [Report of the JIU on the Review of Mental Health and Well Being Policies - FICSA Comm 20-23](#)
- 22 Aug 2023 - [Surveys from Legal and Social Security/OHS Standing Committees - FICSA Comm 19-23](#)
- 09 Aug 2023 - [Legal Tip of the Month for August - FICSA Comm 18-23](#)
- 06 Jul 2023 - [2023 Annual Review of Hardship Duty Stations - FICSA Comm 17-23](#)
- 04 Jul 2023 - [New Special Magazine July August 2023 - FICSA Comm 16-23](#)

- 03 Jul 2023 - [Upcoming Local Salary Surveys - FICSA Comm 15-23](#)
- 06 Jun 2023 - [Ask the FICSA Expert sessions on Classification of Hardship Duty Stations away from HQ - FICSA Comm 14-23](#)
- 31 May 2023 - [Staff representation on the Staff Pension Committee \(SPC\) on the UNJSPF - FICSA Comm 13-23](#)
- 24 May 2023 - [FICSA Memorandum of Understanding with the ILO Training Center - FICSA Comm 12-23](#)
- 23 May 2023 - [Legal Tip of the Month for May - FICSA Comm 11-23](#)
- 18 May 2023 - [Workshop on Meditation and Mindfulness for Wellbeing at work - FICSA Comm 10-23](#)
- 11 May 2023 - [JIU Survey on the service quality of their organization funded health insurance scheme\(s\)- FICSA Comm 09-23](#)
- 04 May 2023 - [New Special Magazine - May 2023 - FICSA Comm 08-23](#)
- 01 May 2023 - [Ask the FICSA Expert session on microaggression in the workplace - FICSA Comm 07-23](#)
- 19 Apr 2023 - [ICSC Questions on Compensation Package - FICSA Comm 06-23](#)
- 03 Apr 2023 - [New Special Magazine - April 2023 - FICSA Comm 05-23](#)
- 24 Mar 2023 - [76th FICSA Council - Documents available on the FICSA Website - FICSA Comm 04-23](#)
- 08 Mar 2023 - [New Special Magazine - March 2023 - FICSA Comm 03-23](#)
- 25 Jan 2023 - [Implementation Guide for the UN Strategy on Mental Health and Wellbeing - FICSA Comm 02-23](#)
- 05 Jan 2023 - [77th Session of the Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly - Resolution 77/256 on UN Common System - FICSA Comm 01-23](#)

9.2.2 *List of FICSA Circulars:*

- [FICSA Statement on the occasion of the launch of the UN System-Wide strategy on Mental Health - FICSA Circular 1376](#)
- [FICSA Statement to the UN General Assembly - FICSA Circular 1375](#)
- [FICSA Statement to the 75th Pension Board Session - FICSA Circular 1372](#)
- [FICSA Statement to the 96th ICSC Session - FICSA Circular 1371](#)
- [Postal vote on the application of FUNSA Rwanda - FICSA Circular 1370](#)
- [FICSA Statement to the 95th ICSC Session - FICSA Circular 1369](#)
- [FICSA Council Decisions and Work Plan for 2023 - FICSA Circular 1368](#)

10. Annex I: Timeline and structure of the current comprehensive review of the compensation package as agreed to by the 96th session of the ICSC

<i>Commission sessions and activities between sessions</i>	<i>Submission to General Assembly</i>
<p>96th ICSC session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of stakeholders' feedback Determination of scope, parameters and timeline of the review Establishment of working groups 	<p>78th GA session, 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensation costs (CEB) Detailed outline of the review
<p>Between the 96th and 97th sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group (1) meeting: overall structural review of the package – cohesion, flexibility, performance management, including non-financial incentives, remote work arrangements and multilingualism Research on best practices among other entities 	
<p>97th ICSC session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the progress based on reports of working group (1) Reflection of feedback from the Assembly Guidance to working groups (2) and (3), and to working group (1) if needed 	<p>79th – 80th GA sessions, 2024 – 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensation costs (CEB) Progress reports
<p>Between the 97th and 98th sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group (2) meeting on the elements related to dependent family members Working group (3) meeting on the field package 	
<p>98th to 100th ICSC sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the global staff survey results Working group (1) meeting: cost-effectiveness, simplification, and attractiveness Review the progress based on reports of working groups (2) and (3) Reflection of feedback from the Assembly Provision of guidance to further study by working groups 	
<p>Between the 98th and 100th sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued analysis by respective working groups Development of possible revisions to the package 	
<p>101st ICSC session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of proposed revisions to the compensation package 	<p>81st GA session, 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensation costs (CEB) Final recommendations
<p>Between the 101st and 102nd sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups to collect views on proposed revisions Assessment of anticipated impact Calculation of financial implications 	
<p>102nd Session:</p> <p>Finalization of the review and a roll-out plan</p>	

11. Annex II - Index of Decision for 2023

The Index of Decisions (IOD) represents the workplan of the Federation. Decisions are made by the FICSA Council, the Federation's governing body, which shapes the direction, priorities, and activities outlined in the workplan.

The 76th FICSA Council indicated 33 priorities which have been - in their large part - finalized. A brief description of the actions taken follows.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/1
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>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.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>As reported below</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Finalized</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>Be informed and share related information with their membership.</i>

To address the recommendation, it was determined that the FICSA Secretariat would organize an "Ask the FICSA Expert" session. The sessions were held in French and English to provide as much information as possible to the membership. In particular:

- 27 June 2023: **Ask the FICSA Expert French Version**
- 06 July 2023: **Ask the FICSA Expert English Version**

Following the two sessions held, a double version of FAQ can be found on the FICSA website:

- **ICSC Questionnaire for the Hardship Classification of Duty Stations According to Conditions of Life and Work**
- **Questionnaire de la CFPI1 pour évaluer le niveau de difficulté des conditions de vie et de travail d'un lieu d'affectation pour les fonctionnaires de l'ONU.**

Finally, FICSA ExCom addressed a **Communication on Annual Review of Hardship Classification** on 6 Jul 2023.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/2
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should: a. engage with members to ensure that issues related to staff health and well-being are considered when establishing any new policies and regulations for returning to the office; and b. 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.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>As reported below</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Finalized</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>Remain in contact with the FICSA ExCom and inform them about any related implementation policy.</i>

The discussion held during the SC session has clarified as the existing recommendation may no longer be applicable considering the evolving landscape surrounding the return-to-office paradigm. The issue at hand has significantly escalated since the 76th FICSA Council, assuming different dimensions, with organizations adopting disparate strategies, and the responses of staff representatives varying accordingly.

In view of this complex and dynamic context, the SC determined that, prior to disseminating any communication to the membership at large, it would be of paramount importance to undertake a systematic assessment of the global landscape. Such an assessment aims to discern the prevailing trends and decisions adopted by a multitude of organizations. This course of action is imperative to formulate a well-informed, comprehensive, and equitable approach that is responsive to the diverse range of circumstances and strategies that exist within the global UN community.

The SC drafted a brief survey aiming at assessing what policies the different organizations have adopted and how they are implementing them. **Survey on FWA** was sent as of 29 Nov 2023 and findings will be discussed during the 77th FICSA Council.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/3
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should respond to members' requests for training in salary survey methodologies by ensuring the availability of trainers in accordance with the guidelines of the FICSA Training Fund. To do so, it should: carry the funds allocated for the training-of-trainers plan in 2021 forward to 2023–2024; and request FICSA members interested in becoming trainers to send brief resumés as soon as possible to the FICSA Secretariat for review and consideration.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>ToT delivered from 19 to 23 June Refresher sessions during Dec23/Jan24</i>
Output	<i>Completed</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members	<i>For planning purposes, training session requests should be submitted to the FICSA Secretariat well in advance, during the 77th Council.</i>

Following the directive issued by the 76th FICSA Council, the FICSA Executive Committee meticulously executed the outlined steps to fulfill the request for training on salary survey methodologies. Initially, the funds allocated for the training-of-trainers plan in 2021 were carried forward to the period spanning 2023–2024 as per the Council's instructions.

Subsequently, a call was made to FICSA members interested in becoming trainers, urging them to submit brief resumes to the FICSA Secretariat for review and consideration. This step aimed to identify suitable candidates for the training program.

Upon receiving applications, the FICSA Secretariat diligently reviewed the submitted resumes to assess the qualifications and suitability of potential trainers. Following a comprehensive evaluation process, trainers were identified and selected based on their expertise, experience, and commitment to the objectives of the training program.

Selected trainers underwent a rigorous training regimen, which included comprehensive instruction on salary survey methodologies and effective training techniques. Additionally, refresher sessions were organized periodically to ensure trainers remained updated on evolving methodologies and best practices in the field.

However, it is important to note that the process for becoming a certified trainer entails further steps beyond initial training. Future trainers are required to serve as support-trainers alongside senior trainers, gaining valuable hands-on experience and mentorship. Subsequently, they progress to the role of co-trainers, where they actively contribute to training sessions under the guidance of experienced mentors.

This structured approach ensures that future trainers acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, and practical experience to effectively deliver training on salary survey methodologies. By adhering to this process, FICSA maintains the quality and consistency of its training programs while nurturing a cadre of proficient trainers capable of supporting member organizations effectively.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/4
Original Decision of the 76th Council	The FICSA Executive Committee and regional representatives should review the current model statutes for a Federations of UN Staff Associations (FUNSA) and present a draft revision of the statutes for approval to the 77th session of the FICSA Council.
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Initial review by the FICSA ExCom and Regional Representatives. Preparation of TOR for a Consultant Engagement of a Consultant for final review and proposals Presentation of the final document to the 77th FICSA Council
Output / deliverable / outcome	Postponed to 2024 workplan
Recommendation	N/A

The matter, raised during a joint session of the GSQ/FIELD, garnered significant consensus, and was formalized in decision FICSA/C/76/D/4, mandating a concerted focus and expertise on the review of FUNSA’s modality, function, and statutes.

Subsequent discussions on this significant initiative delineated a two-step process. The initial step entailed the review of the current model statutes for the Federations of UN Staff Associations (FUNSA) by the FICSA Executive Committee and regional representatives. Their contributions were deemed pivotal in shaping the future of FUNSA and ensuring alignment of our statutes with the evolving needs and aspirations of our member associations.

The subsequent phase was to involve active participation from a consultant. In pursuit of this critical task, the FICSA Secretariat meticulously prepared Terms of Reference (TOR) for engaging a consultant. The consultant was tasked with reviewing our current model statutes, identifying areas requiring improvement, and formulating actionable recommendations for approval at the 77th session of the FICSA Council.

Regrettably, the consultant identified by the FICSA Secretariat had to withdraw from the project due to unforeseen personal reasons. Given the time constraints and the complexity of the required analysis, it was deemed unfeasible to identify and onboard a replacement consultant at such a late stage. Consequently, the FICSA Secretariat proposed deferring the project to next year's workplan.

While acknowledging the importance and urgency of the review, we believe rescheduling will enable us to allocate the necessary resources and ensure a thorough and comprehensive assessment. The project remains a priority, and we are committed to its diligent and professional execution in the upcoming year. We will keep you informed of progress and any developments related to the rescheduled timeline.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/5
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should assist the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management to complete the terms of reference for and establish a technical committee on issues related to contracts falling outside of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) contractual framework, which would operate on a pilot basis until the 77th session of the FICSA Council, with a view to converting it to a permanent technical committee should its value be sustainable.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Draft TOR
Output / deliverable / outcome	Decision deferred to 2024
Recommendation	<i>Due to the importance of the topic, it would be advisable for staff representatives to consider being part of the technical committee.</i>

The prolonged absence of the former Co-Chairs has significantly affected the deliberation on the decision and posed various challenges for the Standing Committee, prompting the consideration of deferring the decision to the upcoming year's work plan. Consequently, it is envisaged that the FICSA ExCom member, serving as the focal point for the Standing Committee, will compile a succinct one-page summary based on the discussions held on this matter during the previous year. Moreover, the forthcoming deliberations are expected to encompass the concept of contracts characterized as "with no duty-station." For the 2024 workplan.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/6
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>Bearing in mind the need for a sound work-life balance for staff, the FICSA Executive Committee should evaluate the input provided by FICSA members through the survey on overtime worked by staff in the Professional and National Professional Officer categories, address any concerns identified from the survey and raise them in all relevant fora, including during the upcoming review of the compensation package for UN staff by ICSC.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Survey was administered to FICSA membership Survey results assessed and summarized in a report
Output / deliverable / outcome	Completed
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>To be aware of the overtime practices among FICSA membership and of related raised concerns.</i>

[Link to the report will be available after the virtual session, when published on the FICSA website](#)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/7
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>FICSA ExCom should communicate and inform to all staff representative bodies regarding guidance on overtime for locally recruited staff contained in the ICSC review of categories of staff, and the terms of the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA), which is not designed to cover overtime for staff on missions or official travel.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>FICSA Comm finalized on 18 Jan 24</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Completed</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>For information</i>

During the 76th FICSA Council, a joint session of the HRM/PSA/SMR Standing Committees was convened. The session focused on overtime remuneration within the UN system, exploring two primary areas: (i) the treatment of GS-category staff on mission, and (ii) general overtime compensation for P-category staff. Regarding GS-staff on mission, it was highlighted as there are diverse policy approaches across the UN System, emphasizing pre-approval as a common requirement for overtime compensation during missions. The meeting emphasized that Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) cannot replace proper remuneration for additional services rendered.

On overtime compensation for professional staff (P-category), the discussion underscored concerns about potential exploitation of staff beyond regular working hours. While the ICSC guidelines exempt P-staff from overtime compensation, discussions highlighted instances of Compensatory Time Off (CTO) accumulation as a mitigation measure. Notably, the FAO's practice of granting 5 CTO days for every 10 weekend days traveled was acknowledged as commendable.

Additional viewpoints expressed during the meeting underscored conflicts between new flexible working arrangements and overtime compensation frameworks. Recognizing the impact of overworking on mental and physical health, participants agreed on the necessity for a modern approach to overtime compensation. The subsequent recommendations required the FICSA ExCom to send a communication on the two topics:

FICSA Comm 02-24 Overtime and DSA

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/8
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should support ICAO's negotiations as necessary for accession to the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT), with the assistance of the Standing Committee on Legal Questions, by sharing best practices in the process of jurisdictional transition from the ILO (International Labour Organization) Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) to that of the UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT) with ICAO staff representatives.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>Continuous dialogue with ICAO SA during the year. Best practices on transitional period collected. Conference Room Paper on Advice for Staff Associations has been prepared for the 77th FICSA Council.</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Decision completed</i>
Recommendation	<i>Members remain vigilant, be informed, stay updated, inform FICSA ExCom if their own organization is moving from ILOAT to UNAT authority and take note of others' best practices.</i>

During the 76th Council, the issue of jurisdictional transition from the ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) to that of the UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT) for certain organizations was discussed. Among other instances, it was highlighted the ICAO's case, where - although they had never utilized ILOAT's services - the administration of justice framework had an internal first appeals instance and the UNAT as the second/final appeals instance.

ICAO recently introduced significant changes to its appeals mechanism, primarily focusing on the first appeals instance. It replaced the Administrative Joint Appeals Board (AJAB) with a new Appeals Board presided over by a consultant, such as a retired judge or jurist. Notably, the Appeals Board's rulings are now binding, contrasting with AJAB's non-binding recommendations.

The recommendations from LEGAL SC were for staff representatives to advocate for access to comprehensive assistance, including the Ombudsman for infra-judicial phases and the Office of Staff Legal Assistance (OSLA) for litigation phases, at no additional cost. Additionally, collaboration with agencies that have undergone similar transitions was encouraged to share best practices.

While the details on the conversation and the collaboration' efforts can be further shared with any interested member, for the sake of this decision, it is important to observe that a Conference Room Paper was prepared on the lessons learned from organizations that are moving or have moved from ILOAT to UNAT as an advice to staff associations:

FICSA /C/77/LEGAL/CRP.2 Moving from the jurisdiction of the ILOAT to the UNAT - Advice for Staff Associations.

In any case, the evolution of ICAO's legal appeals system underscores the importance of adapting access to justice mechanisms to meet evolving needs. While financial considerations play a significant role, it is imperative to prioritize equitable access to legal assistance and explore collaborative opportunities to enhance organizational justice frameworks.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/9
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should assess the usefulness of the legal protection agreement for staff with Fortuna, in consultation with the membership and after consideration of the cost–benefit ratio.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>Meetings with members Meetings with Fortuna Insurance Assessment of the status of the agreement</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Completed</i>
Recommendation	<i>Members to take note that the agreement the Federation had with Fortuna was terminated.</i>

The assessment of the cost-benefit ratio pertaining to the legal protection measures has yielded the determination that such measures are not deemed advantageous or beneficial for FICSA members. The legal protection agreement with Fortuna was terminated and its mention on the FICSA website removed.

The decision to terminate the agreement stemmed from a comprehensive assessment of the cost-benefit ratio associated with the legal protection measures provided by Fortuna Insurance. FICSA meticulously evaluated the advantages and benefits conferred to our members through the legal protection agreement. Regrettably, our assessment determined that the prevailing measures are not deemed advantageous or beneficial for FICSA members.

The backdrop leading to this decision originated from one of the distinguished members of FICSA, diligently providing legal expenses insurance to their dues-paying staff. This insurance coverage encompassed matters concerning employment law, thereby facilitating staff access to legal assistance and justice. For many years, the Staff Association has maintained a symbiotic relationship with Fortuna Insurance, a Swiss-based insurance company, to fulfill this crucial need within their organization.

Until December 2022, the SA faithfully remitted an amount equivalent to CHF 100 per staff member covered to Fortuna Insurance, amounting to half of the SA's income from its members. However, in October 2022, Fortuna Insurance expressed discontent regarding the volume of cases presented for coverage, citing that they exceeded the scope of the current premiums paid. Consequently, Fortuna proposed higher premium rates - doubling the former fee - should the SA wish to sustain the legal expense insurance contract.

Despite diligent efforts by FICSA to engage Fortuna in productive dialogue, our attempts were regrettably met with resistance. Fortuna remained steadfast in their stance, adamantly refusing to explore feasible solutions, contending that the increasing number of cases was the root cause of their concern. It is noteworthy that the escalating caseload was precisely the purpose for the Staff Association's procurement of legal insurance coverage.

In these circumstances, FICSA cannot justify continuing our partnership with Fortuna Insurance. The decision to terminate the agreement was made in the best interest of our members, ensuring that their legal protection needs are met effectively and judiciously. Consequently, all references to the legal protection agreement with Fortuna Insurance have been expunged from FICSA's official platforms and communication channels, including our website.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/10
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should establish a working group to review the diverse types of legal insurance coverage available for FICSA members and identify options for legal support for all staff associations.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>FICSA Secretariat conducted a survey of membership, aiming to determine which legal arrangements – if any - are in place for the different SA/Unions. Where available, the survey required the members to provide a copy of the legal insurance contract.</i> • <i>In a second phase, the Legal SC and the FICSA ExCom reviewed and assessed the survey’s results, which were summarized in a Conference Room Paper (see link below).</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Completed</i>
Recommendation	<i>Members to remain informed on the legal coverage options available for Staff Associations and identify the one which best suits their needs.</i>

FICSA/C/77/LEGAL/CRP.1 Survey on Legal Insurance Coverage

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/11
Original Decision of the 76th Council	The FICSA Executive Committee should request the ICSC Secretariat to propose an amicable solution to the definition of admissibility of school expenses as per the March 2022 judgement of the UN Administrative Tribunal (2022-UNAT-1221) at ICSC's 2023 summer session to be held in Montréal, or at any time when that issue would be put on the agenda.
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Discussions with the local Provincial Québec; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Foreign Relations; para-statal entity called Montréal International (a public/private partnership which focuses on attracting of foreign direct investment, international organizations, entrepreneurs, talented workers, and international students to the region); with the Principals/Directors of the private schools concerned; exchanges of emails and letters with the ICSC.
Output / deliverable / outcome	Matter is solved
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	Concerned staff to ensure to get consistent treatment and share with their SA/Unions any issue they might face.

Regarding the implementation of decision FICSA/C/76/D/11:

- There was no further need for recent interventions of the ICSC, even during its summer session in July 2023 in Montréal. During a Townhall meeting held on 19 July 2023 with the ICSC Secretariat, staff would have raised it, but it was not the case, concluding that the matter is solved.
- The EG requests submitted by SCBD (SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY) P-staff in 2022 and for the current school year 2023 have been settled according to the terms of the 2022 UNAT judgment (2022-UNAT-1221). These expenses must be based on the purpose of the expenses and not on the name given to the expense, such as expenses related to activities and resources that are mandatory (admissible) or optional (inadmissible). A previous UNDT judgment (UNDT-2020-215) relating to technology-related expenses, (including laptop fees, expenses relating to sports, technology, and supplies), concluded that these expenses should be explicitly considered admissible.
- It seems clear that the March 2022 UNAT judgement (2022-UNAT-1221) was not considered when the second amendment to ST/AI/2018/1/Rev.1, relating to the admissibility of school expenses, was issued in May 2022. The revision of the Administrative Instructions 2018/1 was in pure contradiction with the ruling of the Tribunal but nevertheless, for 2 schooolyears now, for SCBD colleagues, the chapter can be considered closed. Finally, paragraph 3.1 (b) spells out that it is considered as admissible expenses "tuition for full time attendance that is paid directly to and certified by the education institution for the provision of teaching at the academic institution in which the child has enrolled. Tuition may include fees required for a specific course."
- In the list of different steps, from March 2020 to February 2023, discussions with the local Provincial Québec Ministry of Education and Ministry of Foreign Relations, with a para-statal entity called MONTRÉAL INTERNATIONAL (a public/private partnership which focuses on attracting of foreign direct investment, international organizations, entrepreneurs, talented workers and international students to the region), with the Principals/Directors of the private schools concerned with this odd breakdown of school fees, exchanges of emails and letters with the ICSC in 2021 and 2022.

- A reasonable way forward for other P-staff concerned would be to have staff members share how their claims are settled and talk to their HR partners to ensure that they get the same treatment as the most favorably treated colleagues with children in the same school. Any inconsistency should be reported to their SA/Union for further follow up with FICSA, if needed.
- A very last observation is related to the reimbursements the organizations grant for children attending other private schools in Montréal, where the school invoicing system lumps together the full amount of the education fees, without any breakdown, amounting to CAD 20,000-30,000 and plus per year. In such cases, there are no issues in settling the EG grant meaning that the organizations end up settling exceptionally substantial amounts of reimbursements, which confirms as that there does not seem to be any incentive for UN staff members in choosing less expensive schools.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/12
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<p>The FICSA Executive Committee should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. continue to request that the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) trains local survey committees (LSCs) in preparation for the cost-of-living (COL) surveys planned for 2023–2024. b. continue to encourage ICSC to organize hybrid training sessions on the new COL methodology and operational rules for Professional staff prior to any COL survey round. c. monitor the rollout of future COL surveys and continue to encourage staff association representation, including sharing of relevant information via the relevant FICSA regional representatives; and d. request ICSC to share examples of the terms of reference for LSCs used in the previous COL surveys, revise them with the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances and post the result on the website as a baseline to ensure that minimum standards are applied at all duty stations.
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<p>(a) and (b) are ongoing tasks and based on the requests received from the LSC (Local Survey Committees) on training.</p> <p>(c) FICSA monitors the situation during ACPAQ (Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions), ICSC sessions and members to inform FICSA of any related issues.</p> <p>(d) Request to ICSC to share general TOR sent; the reply received confirmed that they have no template for LSC TOR - see details below.</p>
Output / deliverable / outcome	Part of the annual FICSA workplan, and of the constantly ongoing activities.
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	

Regarding the implementation of decision FICSA/C/76/D/12:

- a) Ongoing Task
- b) Ongoing Task
- c) FICSA ExCom keeps its constant presence at ICSC Sessions and Working Groups, including ACPAQ sessions.
- d) On the request for examples of Terms of Reference for LSCs, as the LSC is not a formally constituted standing body, such as the LSSC (Local Salary Survey Committee) (for purposes of local salary surveys), the ICSC informed the Federation that no such formal document was available. However, the Commission provided us with informative notes, providing general guidelines to the duty stations on the establishment of an LSC.

A Local Survey Committee (LSC) is formed by stakeholders at a specific duty station as needed to facilitate local coordination and decision-making for a cost-of-living survey. The International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) asserts that stakeholders at the duty station are best suited to determine the composition and functioning of the LSC. The LSC has autonomy to establish its own operational procedures and rules, tailored to the complexity and coordination requirements of the duty station.

Additionally, the LSC overseeing a survey may opt to define more structured terms of reference for its activities, should it choose to do so.

When establishing a Local Survey Committee (LSC), certain principles should be observed. Firstly, the LSC must uphold confidentiality in its discussions and proceedings. Although no highly classified matters are involved, it is expected that members maintain discretion by not disclosing internal deliberations or information, such as staff lists and outlet details, to parties outside the LSC. Similarly, the Survey Coordinator is bound to keep price data collected from outlets confidential. These sensitive aspects can be formalized by the LSC if deemed necessary to enhance its efficiency.

In terms of composition, the LSC should include representatives from administrations and local staff associations of various UN organizations at the duty station. It is essential for the LSC to facilitate effective coordination of activities required for the successful conduct of cost-of-living surveys. Typically, the Survey Coordinator, appointed by the lead agency's administration at the duty station, chairs the LSC, serving as the primary link between the ICSC secretariat and the duty station for all survey-related matters and activities.

Before launching the survey, the LSC supports the Survey Coordinator by:

- i. Providing inputs as to updating the list of outlets for the price survey.
- ii. Providing the lists of eligible staff of their agencies to the Survey Coordinator in time, so that he or she can consolidate them and send the list for the entire duty station to the ICSC.
- iii. Providing feedback to the Survey Coordinator on any other matter regarding the survey's conduct.

During the survey month, the LSC supports the Survey Coordinator by:

- i. Conveying to respective organizations or staff association the progress of the survey, especially if the response rate is too low, overall, or by specific grades.
- ii. Mobilizing staff participation in the survey, by organizing appropriate information for their constituencies, such as via intranets, fliers, displays in shared areas in the office.
- iii. Providing feedback to the Survey Coordinator on any other matter regarding the survey's conduct.

The tasks of the LSC normally end after the survey's administration, but the LSC can reconvene itself to evaluate the survey report or discuss any other matters related to the survey process.

In response to the Commission's communication, the FICSA ExCom, acknowledged the usefulness of the guidelines provided for setting up Local Survey Committees (LSCs) and appreciated the emphasized flexibility for each station to tailor the LSC according to their needs. However, they also expressed concerns raised by FICSA membership regarding the perception that LSCs are not formally constituted bodies like the LSSC.

It was noted that in some instances, like in Manila, major agencies felt excluded from the process. Consequently, FICSA ExCom sought clarity on how disputes or concerns should be addressed, whether through the UNRC, directly to the ICSC, or through escalation. In a further attempt and desire for improved transparency and inclusivity in the process, the ExCom anticipated that they would share the information with the Standing Committee for Professional Salaries and Allowances and may propose suggestions for improvement after the FICSA Council meeting.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/13
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<p>The FICSA Executive Committee should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. continue closely to monitor the development of the ICSC review of the compensation package for UN staff, and promptly inform the FICSA membership of any major events; and b. ensure that a FICSA representative and/or expert is physically present at the meetings of all the UN bodies and/or ICSC working groups doing work related to that review.
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<p>FICSA continues to monitor and keep HODs (Heads of Delegations) updated - Comm 06/23 FICSA represented in all related WGs</p>
Output / deliverable / outcome	Ongoing task - Review started on Jan 24 and FICSA is present in all relevant working groups.
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	N/A

The Review of the Compensation Package has seen the first Working Group work taking place on Jan 24. The Federation was present and will keep its participation during the next phases. This will be an ongoing task for the next 3-year period.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/14
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee, in collaboration and coordination with the Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances, should continue the successful “Ask the FICSA Expert” training sessions for staff representatives on all topics related to Professional salaries and allowances, with a particular focus on COL surveys, seeking the most effective way for staff to fill out the survey form and to increase their understanding of the operational rules. FICSA staff representatives attending those sessions should share their new knowledge with their colleagues, to develop staff capacity and to improve the understanding of COL surveys to increase participation.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	First session held on 4 Dec 2023 Second session planned during the next 77th Council
Output / deliverable / outcome	Completed
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>Be informed, vigilant and tuned in to the next revision of the Compensation Package.</i>

The first session, held on 4 Dec 2023, had the following agenda:

- What is Post Adjustment and what it is not:
 - Noblemaire Principle
 - Base Salary and PA (Post Adjustment)
 - Concept of Purchasing Power
 - Application to the UN Salary Structure
 - Post Adjustment Index (PAI) versus Post Adjustment Multiplier (PAM)

The second session, like what was held during the 76th FICSA Council in Valencia, should take place during the 77th Council in Bern and will be focused on Operational Rules.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/15
Original Decision of the 76th Council	Staff associations/unions should pursue the establishment of concrete release time for staff representatives through memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or other formal agreements with their managements. The FICSA Executive Committee should continue collecting such MOUs from its membership, as well as monitoring developments related to the amendments of UN Secretariat administrative instruction ST/AI/293 related to Staff Representatives' release time, as discussed by the UN Secretary General (A/67/136/Add.1).
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Survey released on 23 Nov 2023 - FICSA Comm 32/23 • Survey's findings published on FICSA Website
Output / deliverable / outcome	Completed
Recommendation	Be informed, proactive and follow up on any outstanding issue related to their still to be signed MOU (Memorandum of Understanding).

This decision builds upon past efforts and acknowledges the importance of establishing formal agreements, such as memoranda of understanding (MOUs), between staff associations/unions and management. Similarly to what was done during the past years, this decision has been a component of the FICSA Executive Committee's workplan, reflecting the collective understanding of the necessity for a structured framework for staff representation.

The decision underscores the significance of providing release time for staff representatives, recognizing their essential role in advocating for the rights and concerns of employees. By formalizing agreements through MOUs or other mechanisms, staff associations can ensure adequate time and resources are allocated to representatives to fulfill their duties effectively.

In pursuing the decision, the SMR SC and the FICSA ExCom decided to conduct a comprehensive survey among staff associations and unions to understand the current landscape of arrangements between staff representatives and their administrations. This survey aimed to shed light on the diverse situations faced by staff associations by gathering data and insights from a wide range of replies. The idea is that the gathered information will provide a deeper understanding of the challenges, successes, and best practices in negotiating release time arrangements with management. This information will not only inform future advocacy efforts but also provide valuable resources and guidance to staff associations navigating similar negotiations.

Furthermore, while the Federation keeps its attention to discussions regarding amendments to UN Secretariat administrative instruction ST/AI/293 related to Staff Representatives' release time, the survey results will serve as a critical resource for monitoring developments and advocating for meaningful reforms.

Annual Survey - FICSA Comm 32/23

2023 Annual Survey on Staff Associations/Unions Arrangements

Survey's findings:

Survey on Staff Associations Arrangements

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/16
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should issue a communication to all members that urges staff-association representatives to become familiar with the Joint Inspection Unit Report on review of the organizational ombudsman services across the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2015/6) and advocate the adoption of its recommendations by their managements.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	FICSA Comm 27/23 released on 18 Oct 2023
Output / deliverable / outcome	Completed
Recommendation	Members to be informed and to advocate adoption of JIU's recommendations.

At the heart of effective organizational governance lies the commitment to uphold the rights and well-being of staff members. The decision taken at the FICSA Council to urge staff-association representatives to become familiar with the Joint Inspection Unit Report (JIU/REP/2015/6) on the review of organizational ombudsman services across the United Nations system underscores the paramount importance of fostering a supportive and equitable work environment.

The report serves as a critical resource, offering insights and recommendations aimed at enhancing the functionality and accessibility of ombudsman services within the UN system. By advocating for the adoption of its recommendations, staff associations play a pivotal role in promoting transparency, accountability, and fairness within their respective organizations.

Ombudsman services serve as a cornerstone for addressing grievances, resolving conflicts, and upholding the principles of justice and equality. Ensuring that these services are robust, impartial, and responsive to the needs of staff members is essential for nurturing a culture of trust and collaboration. By championing the implementation of its recommendations, organizations reaffirm their dedication to fostering inclusive and harmonious work environments where the voices of all employees are heard and respected.

As per FICSA Comm 27/23, It is worth highlighting that the JIU (Joint Inspection Unit) Report underlined the collective responsibility of the ombudsperson, management, and staff associations/unions in promoting the essential role played by the organization's ombudsperson. It is in our mutual interest to ensure that this vital resource is fully supported and used effectively to address our staff members' needs and concerns. With this in mind, and where ombudsman services are yet to be fully implemented, staff representatives are encouraged to discuss adopting these recommendations with their management to enhance and strengthen ombudsperson services within our organizations.

FICSA Comm 27/23
JIU Report

Adoption of JIU Report on Ombudsman Services
JIU_REP_2015

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/17
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<p>The FICSA Executive Committee should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage staff representatives to ensure that their administrations are implementing the CEB Disability guidelines - UN Disability Inclusion Strategy - within their agencies/organizations. b. advocate in all fora the need to ensure reasonable accommodation and the necessary support for staff with disabilities incurred before or during their service.
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<p>Developed a survey Communication to membership Topic included in FICSA workplan</p>
Output / deliverable / outcome	Finalized
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	To follow policy implementation in their own organization.

The **UN Disability Inclusion Strategy**, adopted by the CEB in 2019, provides the foundation for sustainable and transformative progress on disability inclusion through all pillars of the work done in the UN, and all organizations should implement it.

To provide the FICSA Secretariat with an understanding of the extent to which administrations have implemented this strategy, the SOCSEC/OHS Standing Committee developed a **Survey on the Implementation of the DIS (Disability Inclusion Strategy)**.

By supporting the goal of this survey, member associations have provided the FICSA Executive Committee with an indication of the level of effort that may be required to ensure the Strategy's implementation.

In addition to the survey, the FICSA Secretariat addressed a **communication to membership** related to the UN DIS with a view to increase awareness among Staff Representatives about the concerted efforts to integrate the DIS throughout the UN Common System.

Finally, the FICSA ExCom keeps the topic of reasonable accommodation and necessary support for staff living with disabilities as one of the Federation's priorities when discussions occur at high-level fora.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/18
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should continue to raise in all fora the concerns identified by members about discrepancies in or inequitable access to benefits offered to staff with children living with disabilities.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>As reported below</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Ongoing Task</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>N/A</i>

FICSA Officers keep raising the topic and will continue doing so in any fora. Meaningful statements could be foreseen during the incoming review of the compensation package.

The UNGA (UN General Assembly) updated the allowance for children with disabilities of US\$ 6,645 per annum for international professional staff. For locally recruited staff, it depends on local practice.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/19
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The SMR and SOCSEC SCs recommended that the FICSA Secretariat should contact core group members of both Standing Committees to request participation in the Joint Working Group.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>Joint Working Group met Advocacy tool kit created</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Finalized</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>Depending on how the tool kit is developed, members may be asked to act during 2024.</i>

The decision refers to the recommendation raised during the joint standing committee meeting held with the Standing Committee on Staff–Management Relations. Both SCs proposed forming a new joint working group that would address a) misconduct, harassment and abuse of authority and b) ways to improve staff mental health and well-being.

It was suggested that, for example, the working group could produce a matrix for staff representatives or “well-being ambassadors” to use when approached by staff seeking advice, as well as an advocacy toolkit on how to address those issues in their organizations. Further, the working group could meet with the FICSA ExCom after developing the matrix/tool and discuss supplementary steps to be taken. SMR and SOCSEC convened and engaged in the development of a matrix and advocacy toolkit. They agreed that the topic would be taken onboard by the SMR SC. And that the outcomes shall be communicated to the ExCom once ready, thus facilitating further decision on how the toolkit will be presented to the 77th FICSA Council. Recommendation is considered completed.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/20
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA ExCom should send a reminder to staff-representative bodies to send their list of best practices (including implementation and monitoring), lessons learned and challenges in the context of the return-to-work following COVID-19, with a view to evaluating benchmarks for policies on flexible working arrangements (FWA).</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Survey on FWA addressed to Membership
Output / deliverable / outcome	Finalized
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	Remain in contact with the FICSA ExCom and inform them about any related implementation policy.

See decision FICSA/C/76/D/2

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/21
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Secretariat should recall Staff Representatives that they should seek election to the boards of their organization's staff pension fund, to participate in and report on their work.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	FICSA Com 13/23
Output / deliverable / outcome	Finalized
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>To ensure their members' voices are adequately represented and that the staff association/ union is aware of the discussions surrounding the topic.</i>

FICSA Communication 13/23 was addressed to members on 31 May 2023.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/22
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should make every effort to regain access to the participants' representatives' group of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Access regained FICSA joined the 75th Session of the Board.
Output / deliverable / outcome	Finalized
Recommendation	N/A

FICSA is an observer to the Pension Board and traditionally makes a statement on behalf of its membership. In 2023, the session was held at IMO premises in London from 24 to 28 July. FICSA addressed the Board virtually and in its statement, the Federation underscored, among others, the Board increased engagement and consultation with the Federation, the importance of a sustainable and adequate pension scheme, and the importance of pension portability for a mobile workforce. Emphasis was posed on the concerns that FICSA has about representation on the Board and the need for equitable solutions. Refer to the FICSA ExCom Report for a detailed summary of the 75th Session of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund Board.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/23
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The Joint Committee recommended that FICSA Secretariat should recall Staff Association Representatives that they should familiarize themselves with the ICSC guidelines on overtime for General Service Staff* and the terms of the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) which is not designed to cover overtime for staff on missions or official travel. *Note: As per Annex 1, point 2 of the ICSC guidelines "The GS staff required to work overtime may receive compensatory time off or additional non-pensionable payments according to conditions established by the organisations".</i> <u>ICSC Appointment Types and Staff Categories.pdf (ficsa.org)</u>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<u>FICSA Comm 02-24 Overtime and DSA</u>
Output / deliverable / outcome	Finalized
Recommendation	N/A

The decision refers to the recommendation raised during the joint standing committee HRM/PSA/SMR. See also FICSA/C/76/D/7. Both decisions called for the FICSA ExCom to ensure that staff representatives are familiar with ICSC guidelines on overtime, and with the purpose of Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) which is to cover the travel-related costs and not excess hours worked.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/24
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>Due to its importance and direct impact to the well-being, motivation, and quality of work to be delivered by “P” staffs’ members, to achieve a satisfactory level of balanced professional and personal lifestyle, it is recommended that FICSA continues to provide a forum where staff associations can discuss this subject and encourage members to adopt best practices to encourage a healthy and sustainable work/life balance.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Ongoing Commitment by the Federation Generally discussed in SOCSEC SC
Output / deliverable / outcome	Ongoing
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>To take advantage of the FICSA Forum and enhance further the work/life balance.</i>

FICSA consistently prioritizes the well-being and productivity of its staff members by maintaining a dedicated forum for staff associations to address the crucial topic of work-life balance. FICSA dedicate debate is normally taken at the SOCSEC SC, which typically focuses on topics involving best practices that foster a healthy and sustainable equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal life. In general terms, this is an ongoing commitment for the Federation to supporting its members' overall wellness and fulfillment in both their professional and personal endeavors.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/25
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee, particularly the FICSA General Secretary, should continue to monitor the implementation of the HLCM Cost-Sharing Agreement, and to alert the membership to act in case of problems.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Continuous contact with the CEB (Chief Executives Board) Secretariat
Output / deliverable / outcome	Ongoing
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>Be aware of the cost sharing agreement and inform FICSA if they are contacted by their Administration.</i>

*This is an ongoing effort by the Federation and a fundamental step to maintain FICSA sustainability in the long-term period - not only from a financial point of view.
Extended reference material can be found on FICSA website: **Cost-Sharing for FICSA elected Officials***

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/26
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee and the Secretariat should complete the outstanding work to implement the consultant’s recommendations and referred document FICSA/C/76/PBAS/CRP.01 to the Standing Committee on Legal Questions for consideration of the legal aspects.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>See below</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Completed</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>N/A</i>

The recommendations provided by the reviewer have been duly considered, and all feasible tasks have been addressed accordingly. The remaining items requiring attention are pending completion due to constraints related to either time or available workforce (see CRP.01).

The FICSA Secretariat has also analyzed that none of the recommendations require consideration by the Legal Standing Committee.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/27
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should review the proposals for capacity building made by heads of delegations in meetings of the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy, and prepare a concept paper on capacity building for discussion by heads of delegations by the end of May 2023.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>Concept Paper ready for discussion</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Completed</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>N/A</i>

PBAS (Programme, Budget Administrative and Strategy) is invited to review, discuss, and adopt the concept paper in CRP (Conference Room Paper) 2 -PBAS.CRP.02. Concept Paper on Capacity Building of FICSA Elected Officers

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information		<input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/28		
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should seek a new independent financial reviewer, discuss its nomination with the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration and Strategy and submit the nominee's name for approval to the 77th Council session.</i>		
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	New reviewer has been selected		
Output / deliverable / outcome	Finalized		
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	N/A		

The selection process for the new independent financial reviewer by the FICSA Executive Committee involved identification of potential candidates based on qualifications and experience and subsequent discussion with the Standing Committee on Programme Budget, Administration, and Strategy to ensure alignment of nominee with FICSA objectives and standards. Finally, the selected person was deemed to represent the best fit for the role.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information		<input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/29		
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should explore the possibility of including all the costs related to the relocation of FICSA officers in the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) cost-sharing agreement.</i>		
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	Discussion FICSA / UNGSC		
Output / deliverable / outcome	Completed		
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	N/A		

Upon request by the FICSA President, UNGSC confirmed that no relocation would be granted to the General Secretary.

Negative reply received from UNGSC. However, as the 76th FICSA Council adopted the FICSA ExCom proposal to the addition of CHF 34,000 to the installation funds for the position of General Secretary, in the case that the releasing organization is not able to cover the cost of relocation to Geneva, regardless of the incumbent's personal grade and appointment type, since the General Secretary is an elected post and not by selection, these funds were utilized for the installation.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/30
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should contact previous recipients of funds from the Legal Defense Fund to collect reimbursement as per the document (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/5) and the terms of reference of the Fund.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>Contacts established with previous recipients and relevant replies received.</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>The amount of CHF9,230 from Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) SA is written off as unrecoverable. The amount of CHF8,000 from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) SA is written off as unrecoverable.</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>N/A</i>

The amount of CHF 8,000 was written off as being unrecoverable by WIPO SA. The funds were originally advanced in 2018 for a staff member's appeal against the DG's decision regarding her reinstatement. In addition, CHF 9,230 (USD 10,000) advanced to PAHO in 2018 has been written off as being unrecoverable. The legal appeals case for PAHO staff compensation was successful, however the appeal to ILOAT for the refund of legal costs was unsuccessful.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/31
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The 76th FICSA Council should approve the draft Programme Budget for 2023 (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/4) in the amount of CHF 550,000.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>Discussion during the 76th Council</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Finalized</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>N/A</i>

Programme Budget for 2023 was approved.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/32
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The 76th session of the FICSA Council should approve the Scale of Contributions for 2023 (FICSA/C/76/PBAS/6).</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>Discussion during the 76th Council</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Finalized</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>N/A</i>

Scale of Contributions for 2023 was approved.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Action by Members	
Decision	FICSA/C/76/D/33
Original Decision of the 76th Council	<i>The FICSA Executive Committee should identify and assign to a focal point from within FICSA membership the task of fundraising and identifying alternative sources of income, and to report on the progress made to the 77th session of the FICSA Council.</i>
Brief description of efforts taken to address the decision	<i>See below</i>
Output / deliverable / outcome	<i>Postponed to 2024 if decision is re-confirmed by the 77th Council.</i>
Recommendation(s) to FICSA Members (if applicable)	<i>To support ideas/proposal.</i>

Due to resource constraints and overwhelming commitments faced by all members of the FICSA Executive Committee, the same acknowledges its inability to immediately address the task at hand. With each member deeply engrossed in their respective responsibilities, the committee currently lacks the capacity to designate a focal point for fundraising and exploring alternative sources of income within the FICSA membership.

As such, the ExCom recognizes the importance of this endeavor and pledges to revisit the matter once the workload permits. It remains committed to fulfilling its mandate and will provide a comprehensive report on progress made - if the 77th Council reconfirms the decision - during the 78th session of the FICSA Council.