

STAFF UNION BULLETIN
BULLETIN DU SYNDICAT
BOLETIN DEL SINDICATO



3 June 2009

The Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA) Signs Partnership with UN Plus

29 April 2009, Addis Ababa - The Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA) has entered into an historic partnership agreement with UN Plus, a global group of UN staff who are living with HIV and who are actively working to raise the voice of HIV positive staff.

“With this partnership, we are recognizing the importance of fighting HIV/AIDS in the UN Workplace,” said CCISUA President Christopher Land-Kazlauskas. “This will enable us to promote solidarity among staff, to fight discrimination, and to more effectively address issues faced by HIV-positive UN staff”.

The Agreement was signed during the XXIV CCISUA General Assembly, 27-29 April 2009, hosted by the Staff Union of the Economic Commission for Africa.

Bhatupe Mhango, Global Coordinator for UN-Plus highlighted the importance of the partnership saying, “This partnership agreement is a great sign of solidarity for People living with HIV (PLHIV). It shows that all are responsible for HIV prevention and for helping UN staff to cope with the epidemic, not just PLHIV”.

Reflecting on the global reach of CCISUA’s 15 member unions and associations, representing over 30,000 staff across the common system, Bhatupe Mhango said, “CCISUA has a voice in all the regional and country offices. We hope that this partnership will lead to the growth of UN Plus groups at country level”.

Christopher Land-Kazlauskas said the aim of the agreement was to facilitate collaboration and strengthen the Organisation's response to the AIDS epidemic. The main aims are:

- Promotion of a more supportive environment for staff living with HIV.
- Close collaboration to bring the views of staff to HR Network and UN Cares.
- Sharing information on UN Plus with the membership of CCISUA.

“For CCISUA, this is the next step in a process of collaboration which began in 2008,” said Land- Kazlauskas, recalling that a delegation from UN Plus had then addressed the XXIII CCISUA General Assembly at the ILO in Geneva. Since that time, a number of CCISUA

members have been increasing their activities on HIV/AIDS within their own workplaces. Christopher Land-Kazlauskas, who is also Chairperson of the ILO Staff Union Committee, called the agreement “an essential building block” for addressing issues related to HIV/AIDS in the world of work.

“We recognize the common cause which exists between the membership of CCISUA and the staff who are represented by UN Plus,” he said. “HIV positive or negative, this struggle is our struggle. The fight against stigmatization, the fight to ensure that staff have adequate access to health insurance, and can carry out their duties in a safe and healthy working environment, free from discrimination - this is the role of any union worldwide. It is a role that our membership is pleased to concretize in this partnership agreement”.

In acknowledgement of the closer collaboration, the Federation granted observer status to UN Plus. This will see UN Plus regularly participating in CCISUA General Assemblies and other relevant activities.

“CCISUA is proud to be part of this important initiative and looks forward to dynamic and fruitful interaction with UN Plus in the future”, said Christopher Land-Kazlauskas. “We are also exploring possibilities for building a similar partnership with UN Cares, the UN system-wide workplace programme on HIV, so that all staff affected by HIV/AIDS can be reached”.

For more information, please contact the HIV/AIDS focal point at the ILO Staff Union Committee, Christian Jacquier (jacquier@ilo.org).

CCISUA is a Federation of Staff Unions and Associations representing over 33,000 staff in 15 organizations across the UN Common System. These include: ECA Staff Union, ECLAC Staff Council, ESCAP Staff Council, ESCWA Staff Council, International Staff Association of UNESCO, Staff Union of the ICC, Staff Union of the ILO, Staff Union of UNIDO, UNHCR Staff Council, UNICEF Global Staff Association, UN-ICTR Staff Association, UN-ICTY Staff Union, UN Nairobi Staff Union, UN Staff Union – Vienna, UNU Staff Council