

# unión

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- **UNITY IS STRENGTH!**
- **L'UNION FAIT LA FORCE!**
- **¡LA UNIÓN HACE LA FUERZA!**

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Boletín del Sindicato  
Staff Union Bulletin  
Bulletin du Syndicat

*Participants in the First Global Meeting for Field Staff Representatives, Geneva, August 2001  
(photo: M. Crozet/ILO)*



## EDITORIAL

### Come together!

Never afraid to blaze a trail in the UN system, the ILO Staff Union once again led the way last month by bringing together elected representatives from ILO offices worldwide for the First Global Meeting for Field Staff Representatives.

With 50 participants from 42 duty stations including the Turin Centre, the week-long meeting successfully reinforced communication not only between field and headquarters staff but also between the staff of the four ILO regions.

For too long, our Union has – albeit unintentionally – operated a two-tier system.

True, the elected members of our Staff Union Committee, unlike almost all others in the UN system, come not only from headquarters but also from external offices. The four regional titulars are full Committee members with full voting rights.

It has to be admitted, however, that, in practice, they have more often than not been the poor relations: for obvious reasons, the Committee itself is based at headquarters, with the result that, usually by default, their substitutes have in effect acted as the true representatives of the region.

That may be changing. Shifting the African regional meeting to headquarters last year, making it easier for delegates to bring their concerns to the attention of both Union and management, seems to have set the ball rolling.

The Global Meeting represents further progress towards the goal of full equality for all Union members, wherever their duty station. From what we saw, this was Active Participation in the fullest sense.

There are of course cost considerations: half the Union's annual budget went on making the meeting happen. That would seem to prohibit its becoming an annual fixture.

But if, as seems the case, it serves to advance the most fundamental of union principles – solidarity – the experiment must certainly be repeated.

The editors  
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## EDITORIAL

### Tous ensemble!

Une fois de plus le Syndicat du BIT, n'ayant pas peur de faire œuvre de pionnier dans le système commun., a montré l'exemple en rassemblant tous ses représentants syndicaux de par le monde à l'occasion de la première Réunion mondiale des représentants du Syndicat du personnel du BIT des bureaux extérieurs.

Comptant 50 participants issus de plus de 42 lieux d'affectation dont le Centre de Turin, la réunion a sans conteste permis de renforcer la communication et les liens entre le terrain et le Siège, mais également entre les quatre régions concernées.

Pendant trop longtemps, même si c'est involontairement, notre Syndicat a fonctionné de manière un peu bancal.

Il est vrai que, contrairement à presque toutes les autres organisations du système commun, les membres élus de notre Comité viennent aussi en partie des bureaux extérieurs, puisque les quatre membres titulaires des régions sont des membres du Comité à part entière avec les mêmes droits de vote que les 16 autres membres.

Pendant, pour des raisons géographiques évidentes, la pratique admettait que ce soit leurs suppléants basés au Siège qui règlent et décident en leurs noms des affaires à régler.

Ceci pourrait bien changer. Le fait d'avoir délibérément déplacé la dernière Réunion régionale africaine à Genève l'année passée fut une première, qui a permis aux délégués non seulement de se faire mieux entendre par leurs collègues syndicalistes mais aussi de pouvoir régler plus facilement leurs problèmes avec l'administration.

Cette Réunion mondiale représente une nouvelle avancée dans la recherche d'une complète égalité entre tous les membres syndiqués du BIT, et quel que soit leur lieu de travail. D'après ce que nous avons pu voir, ce fut un bel exemple de participation active!

Reste à considérer la réunion sous son angle le moins sympathique, celui des finances. Quand on sait que celle-ci a englouti la moitié du budget annuel du Syndicat, il s'agira alors de déterminer si un tel événement, aussi bénéfique soit-il, doit avoir lieu fréquemment.

Mais si, comme cela semble avoir été définitivement le cas, ce grand rassemblement a au moins permis de servir un principe fondamental du syndicalisme, à savoir la solidarité, l'expérience doit alors se renouveler.

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# union

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# Union organizes first Global Meeting

(Geneva, 13-17 August 2001)

Jean-Yves Legouas was elected chairperson and Amorn Kumar (Bangkok) and Alexandra Simaga (Dakar) vice-chairpersons of the First Global Meeting for Field Staff Representatives.

## Historic

Bernardo Bello (Titular Member for the Americas) underlined the importance of this historic meeting for the development of Union strategy. He called for better information and consultation in Union decision-making, as well as greater use of Spanish as an official language.

Charles Kameni (Titular Member for Africa) declared that the meeting would help define problems of common interest to ILO staff. He underlined the concerns of the African region: personal security, educational expenses, lack of arrangements for medical evacuation, and loss of purchasing power due to currency fluctuations and inflation.

Basharat Ahmad (Titular Member for Asia and the Pacific) noted that the meeting simultaneously offered the opportunity for four regional meetings. He welcomed the progress made by the Staff Union Committee (SUC) in formulating collective agreements and procedures. With their knowledge of local conditions, he said, field staff are in the front line.

## Une première au BIT: la réunion mondiale du Syndicat

Cette réunion extraordinaire (comportant une cinquantaine de représentants de nos bureaux en Asie, Afrique, Amériques, Europe et Moyen-Orient), sans compter les membres du Comité à Genève, s'est tenue du 13 au 17 août.

Pour que l'organisation de cette manifestation soit aussi parfaite que possible, nous avons pu compter sur l'aide indéfectible des services internes de la maison, tels que Telecoms, Helpdesk, interprétariat, photographes, salles de réunions, sécurité et bien sûr le secrétariat du Syndicat. La liste de toutes les "abeilles laborieuses" qui ont participé au succès de cette réunion serait trop longue à citer ici. Quoi qu'il en soit, qu'ils en soient tous et toutes chaleureusement remerciés.

Les participants ont été accueillis à l'aéroport et conduits à leurs hôtels respectifs par les membres du Comité de Genève. Les réunions se sont déroulées selon l'agenda prévu et il a été vraiment intéressant de constater combien il était important de se rencontrer et de se parler, afin de mieux se connaître.

M. le Directeur général nous a fait l'honneur d'un discours à la fin de cette conférence, qui a été vivement apprécié par tous les participants. Des photos ont été prises et c'est dans la bonne humeur que cette réunion mondiale s'est achevée le vendredi 17 août dans l'après-midi.

Je termine cet article en vos remerciant tout particulièrement, vous frères et sœurs du monde entier, qui nous avez manifesté votre amitié par les petites attentions rapportées de vos pays respectifs, sans oublier vos emails élogieux dès que vous êtes rentrés chez vous.

A quand la prochaine conférence mondiale du Syndicat ?

Viviane

Walid Hamdan (Titular Member for Europe and the Middle East) expressed his appreciation for the unprecedented attempt to promote Union solidarity and internal democracy. There was a need for the inclusion of field staff in change within the context of "decent work for all" throughout the regions.

The session gave participants the chance to fire questions at both the SUC and the Director of HRD about the implementation of the new HR procedures and how and when they would work in the field.

Items covered included management of change; grading and classification; grievance procedures; assessment and develop-

ment centres for recruitment; National Professional Officers (NPOs); mobility policy; staff training; titularization; precarious contracts; compensation; security of field staff; local salaries and allowances; and accidents at the workplace.

## Union structure and functioning

The panel was composed of Fernando Peral (Convenor of the Staff Union Working Group on Union Rules), Abdoulaye Diallo and Mary Hamouda (Committee members) and the four regional Titular Members.

Fernando explained that amendments to Staff Union Rules will be proposed to reflect the new collective bargaining arrangements, review SUC functions, improve representation and voting rights of all members (especially from the field), and promote effective communication. Aspects still in need of improvement include limited participation and voting rights for field staff at general meetings, the lack of an institutional role for regional and local staff representatives within the definition of Union policies in the field, and the undefined responsibilities of Union stewards. Following wider consultation both at headquarters and in the field, the SUC will submit proposals to a general meeting in October 2001.



Charles Kameni (Yaoundé), SUC Titular Member for Africa (photo: M. Crozet/ILO)

Abdoulaye invited field staff to contribute to the working group's reflections.



The African Regional Meeting (photo: M. Crozet/ILO)

Charles Kameni referred to several shortcomings in the existing Rules such as the absence of provisions on training and support to the field structure, and guidelines for the implementation of the Rules at local level. There was a need for an implementation manual on the Union Rules, training for Union representatives, help in organizing elections, and guidance on financial operations and managing a budget. Regional directors should allocate funds for training Staff Union representatives.

Bernardo Bello stated that problems in the American region are similar. At present, there are no uniform procedures, and a handbook would be most helpful. The Americas consider it appropriate to have a substitute representative in the region in addition to the one at headquarters. A specific budget item should be allocated for training staff representatives in the Field, to which the Office should also contribute. He asked for funds to be set aside to ensure that all documents were translated into Spanish.

Basharat Ahmad expressed the view that Union representatives in the field are not always consulted on staff matters and asked how collective bargaining can be enforced. Insufficient funds (75 per cent of local staff's Union dues) were allocated to local unions. The SUC tended to be out of touch with the needs of the field; it was essential to ensure that field staff were not excluded. He proposed that a position of officer be created for a field representative.

Walid Hamdan highlighted the importance of improving the capacity of field staff representation in the regions. The Staff Union at headquarters should urge the Administration to find ways of

implementing all agreements in field offices. He saw no point in having an extra field representative in the Committee: everyone should work towards consolidating unity and solidarity.

Fernando provided figures showing that in 1999 half of the Union's budget was devoted to field expenses, while in 2001 these expenses had increased fivefold.

SUC Chair David Dror underlined unity. The budget from members' contributions was heavily in favour of the field and every staff representative had to be strictly accountable for the use of Union funds; the needs of the Union were many and resources scarce. All documents issued by the Committee had previously been submitted for comments to the Titular Members, who could then consult the representatives in their regions. All regional structures should also recognize the role of regional substitutes at headquarters and should ensure that candidates for election were identified.

On behalf of the Staff Union in Manila, please accept my warmest congratulations to all the Staff Union Committee members for successfully conducting the First Staff Union Global Meeting at ILO headquarters in Geneva.

The ILO Staff Union under the present leadership of Mr. David Dror has achieved significant milestones in promoting staff rights through the collective bargaining agreement, which is unprecedented and a historic first in the UN system. We know the ILO Staff Union will not rest on its laurels. We are convinced that it will remain steadfast in its noble mission to defend the underprivileged sector of the ILO working staff, that is the GS staff. Otherwise, the ILO Staff Union Committee may use its moral ascendancy to find alternative solutions to the very difficult and serious problem of the GS not only in Manila but also elsewhere.

On behalf of my colleagues in Manila, I appeal therefore to the Staff Union Committee to help in bridging the economic gaps between the local staff and the professionals by way of reviewing the irrelevant practice of local salary surveys, which are no longer realistic and attuned to the prevailing economic realities, particularly in the field, taking into account the prevailing local situation.

We shall be guided and inspired by your splendid leadership!

We would like also to thank Director General Juan Somavia whose presence during the closing ceremony indicates his commitment to improved staff-management relations.

I wish to thank all the Staff Union Committee for the wonderful support that you have given to all the participants in the meeting. God speed and *Mabuhay!*

**Julita Yap**

**Staff Union representative, Manila**

In the discussion, a number of issues were raised: the definition of the role of the regional Titular Members; provision for training of Staff Union field representatives; the question of whether senior management should be eligible for Staff Union membership; and the circulation of information within regions, and the need to channel comments through regional Titular Members.

The meeting chair summed up by reaffirming the mission, solidarity and structural unity of the ILO Staff Union. He enunciated certain principles to guide members in their work: trade union work was official; training for Staff Union representatives was of utmost importance; a budget should be set aside for the provision of translation services to the Union; various forms of communications between the regions and headquarters, and between field offices and the regions, should be examined; and the necessary facilities (office space, etc.) should be provided to Staff Union representatives in the field.

**Ongoing developments**

*Recognition and Procedural Agreement*

SUC Chair David Dror explained the significance of the Agreement, unique in the UN system and endorsed by the Governing Body, whereby the ILO Staff Union and the ILO recognize each other as bargaining agents over ILO terms and condi-



*Bernardo Bello (Lima),  
SUC Titular Member for the Americas  
(photo: M. Crozet/ILO)*

tions of employment not covered by the UN Common System, and can also interpret Common System provisions (as with the Generic Job Descriptions). Not surprisingly, he said, there is opposition outside the ILO. However, the ILO Staff Union and Administration together should now be in a stronger position vis-à-vis the Common System.

**Recruitment and selection**

The new Collective Agreement on a Procedure for Recruitment and Selection was presented by Fernando Peral, Union representative on the

Joint Working Group on Resourcing. He explained the workings of the Assessment Centres and of selection procedures at headquarters and indicated that, with some adaptations, field offices would follow the same principles and objectives.



*The Regional Meeting for the Americas  
(photo: M. Crozet/ILO)*

**Grading**

Presenting the results of the baseline matching and grading exercise at headquarters, SUC Chair David Dror said the regrading process was to begin in the field before the November session of the Governing Body.

**Personal Development Plan (PDP)**

Colleen McGarry (Union representative on the Joint Working Group on PDP) reported on the plan, a new function jointly supported by the Staff Union and HRD to enhance career development through training. An easy-to-use manual will be issued shortly in the three working languages. Officials are individually or collectively encouraged to propose creative solutions for their own training.

A lively discussion ensued in which participants pressed both HRD and the SUC on matters of concern.

**Grievances**

*Facilitation process*

Participants asked about plans for training facilitators in the field.

Of 104 candidates for facilitator (60 at headquarters, 44 in the field), 24 have already been trained in Geneva (one group in English and one in French). The response from the field has been mixed, with a low number of candidates in all regions except Africa. Training at headquarters was carried out over nine days, spread over several weeks. Facilitators can also work in teams. Staff may be accompanied by a Union representative at all stages. Two or three cases are ongoing under the new procedures.

Joint Panel members have been chosen at headquarters and in the field with gender and regional balance in mind. The Staff Union will provide assistance to any staff member in any case of harassment. Natural justice, due process and fairness are the key principles of the procedure.

The ILO staff continental barriers were broken with the first ever holding of the Staff Union Global Meeting. Thanks to the Staff Union Committee for the insightful thinking. Global village be it!

An issue that compels the Union's members with all the more reason to remain resolutely united and express concerns with one solid voice!

As was noted, the continents' local staff problems are similar, varied and many; differing though from continent to continent, and Area Office to Area Office.

Irrespective of cultural diversities, the meeting proved beyond reasonable doubt that ethnic, regional and colour divides do not matter when people are determined to press for what they believe should be accorded to them.

The substantial achievements of the last 18 months are noted with appreciation and should be guarded jealously.

I pray the "common system" excuse will come to pass away so that innovative paradigms can become realities in the new millennium.

Long live the ILO Staff Union!!!

Long live the camaraderie spirit of sharing ideas for the common good!!!

**Oswald Makombeshamu**

**Staff Union representative, Pretoria**

**The future**

*Collective agreements in the pipeline*

SUC Chair David Dror summed up the Union's agenda for the future: agreement on dealing with rewards policy, and a new performance appraisal delinked from titularization, merit increments and personal promotion. By the beginning of 2002, it expects to finalize all pending issues relating to signed agreements such as the reform of the Administrative Tribunal, the definition of the functions and appointment of the HR Committee and appointments to the Joint Training Council and negotiations on Article 4.2 of the Staff Regulations (direct selection). Discussions will also be initiated on the possibility of a unified salary scale to provide the same career path for both GS and P staff.

*FICSA membership*

After a full and frank discussion, SUC Chair David Dror summed up the debate and indicated that the Titular Members for the Americas, Africa, and Europe and the Middle East are of the opinion that this issue should be left to the Committee to deal with and that General Meeting decisions are to be upheld by all Staff Union representatives. The Titular Member for Asia and the Pacific had clearly indicated that in his opinion the Union should immediately rejoin FICSA or another body representing UN staff worldwide, unless the Staff Union is able to deal with common system issues directly. All participants wishing to do so were encouraged to deal with this issue in their regional meetings and to come up with proposals.

**Regional Meetings**

A full day was devoted to individual regional meetings. SUC Chair David Dror thanked all participants for their significant contributions that had created for our Union a "one-world" situation and had brought out the views of half the Union membership. This will, he emphasized, help the Committee address specific issues of policy and will remind all Union members of the importance of field-headquarters solidarity.

**Other discussions**

*Social security*

Participants voiced questions on group life insurance, golden handshakes, and access to the MEC (Mutuelle d'épargne et crédit). The representative of the Beijing Office requested support from the Staff Union to have previous service in this Office as government employees validated for ILO pension purposes.



Walid Hamdan (Beirut)  
SUC Titular Member for Europe and the Middle East  
(photo: M. Crozet/ILO)

SUC Chair David Dror summarized the debate and indicated some issues for reflection. He suggested that, since the ILO was the only agency in the UN Common System with social security specialists, it should take the lead in proposing changes, and the Union should encourage members to stand for election to the Pension Board bodies.

*Staff security*

Fernando Peral reaffirmed the position of the Staff Union Committee on issues such as security, safety and health, education grant: the Union did not and will never recognize any difference of treatment between GS or P, local or international staff, since these are issues related to the most basic human rights that have to be fully recognized for all ILO officials and for anyone in a paid relationship with the Office.



The Regional Meeting for Europe and the Middle East  
(photo: M. Crozet/ILO)

*Health matters*

SUC Chair David Dror indicated that the Union did not recognize any difference in health matters between local and international staff, and that medical evacuation should be based on need rather than on category of staff. Health care for domestic partners should be recognized. He stated that the method of calculating premiums could be discussed (i.e. flat-rate or percentage of salary). The threshold for supplementary benefits should be calculated taking into account salaries rather than applying a flat-rate to all field offices. Finally, he reiterated the positions of the Committee on the urgent need to establish adequate representation in the Management Committee (titulars representing staff should always include retirees, field staff and active staff at headquarters).

**Rich and varied**

Walid Hamdan made a statement on behalf of the staff in the Regional Office for Arab States. Beirut staff, he said, fear for the future, with a negative effect on the morale and well-being of the staff as well as their families. He hoped the Union would play a full role in finding a solution in the prevailing spirit of partnership.

Charles Kameni referred to a rich and varied week of work. Training in Union issues was especially important for staff representatives in the field. The African region counted on good sense and good will in resolving grievances.

For the Americas, Bernardo Bello considered that the Global Meeting had been excellent, and the cost justified. The regional debate, as well as the chance to show solidarity with other



Basharat Ahmad (Islamabad)  
SUC Titular Member for Asia and the Pacific  
(photo: M. Crozet/ILO)

regions, had been extremely valuable.

Basharat Ahmad congratulated the Staff Union on a highly successful meeting and assured the full support and cooperation of the Asia and Pacific region.

On behalf of Europe and the Middle East, Walid Hamdan said the Global Meeting had proved most valuable in promoting internal democracy and improving field-headquarters communication.

From the chair, Jean-Yves Legouas thanked all those who had ensured the success of the Global Meeting and referred to the forthcoming retirement of Abdoulaye Diallo, who had devoted his life to the defence of workers in Africa and elsewhere. He offered the sincere and grateful thanks of all present.



The Asian Regional Meeting (photo: M. Crozet/ILO)

SUC Chair David Dror stated that the cost of the Global Meeting had amounted to half the Union's annual budget; the decision now appeared to have been fully justified. He praised participants for their faith in a united and coherent Union, the high level of debate and the friendly atmosphere that had prevailed, declaring that no one should feel excluded from this unity and nobody should be excluded from the Union. He felt humbled by expressions that the value base of the ILO is a source of rights, but a guideline for individual and collective conduct. Above all, the Global Meeting had opened up channels of communication. He expressed gratitude to all participants for their respect and support, and thanked all those concerned in organizing the meeting.

*Freely adapted by MG from the official report by Fernando Peral and Jean-Yves Legouas*

"The main message that we as Union representatives can bring to our colleagues is that none of us alone can bargain over our working conditions, our grade, or even our job security. Alone, each of us is much weaker than our employer. The ILO is in many ways a good employer, and the system provides some protections for all of us. Yet, let's be honest about it: the ILO has real power over us, its employees; and each of us individually is less powerful than the Office. We can only offer our work, but the ILO 'owns' the jobs. And we are all replaceable. Our main power is thus not as individuals, but as a group. "Strength In Numbers" "L'Union fait la Force", "La Unión Hace La Fuerza" is a self-explanatory expression. And if our numbers are to become our force, we need many members, and we need to give everyone a voice in what we do, in the positions we defend collectively."

**SUC Chair David Dror's opening address to the meeting**

**Conclusions of the Staff Union Global Meeting**

1. The Global Meeting commends the Staff Union Committee and its representatives on the Joint Negotiating Committee for having achieved significant progress in conditions and terms of employment and for its determinant role in shaping the new human resources strategy based on collective agreements. The Global Meeting expresses its trust in, and support for, the Committee.

2. The Global Meeting emphasizes that the collective agreements should be implemented in the Field in the same manner as at Headquarters. Field staff and their Union representatives should be involved in this process, with the active guidance and support of the Staff Union Committee.

3. The Global Meeting supports the Staff Union Committee's priorities for further agreements on reform of the Statutes of the ILO Administrative Tribunal, on new rewards, on reform of performance appraisal, as well as on reform of the GS/NO/P/D grades into a unified grading system.

4. The Global Meeting reiterates that the structure and function of the Union should reflect the general and firm conviction that we are, and shall remain, one Union for all ILO staff, regardless of duty station, grade or contract type.

5. The Global Meeting invites the Staff Union Committee to examine ways to provide staff representatives, as well as the Regional Titular Members, with appropriate training for this role.

6. The Global Meeting suggests that the Working Group on Reform of the Rules should examine the issue of conflict of interest between staff representation and other roles, both within and outside the Office;

7. The Global Meeting emphasizes the importance of good communications between all members of the Union, and particularly between members of the Committee and representatives in the Field; for this purpose, meetings should be organized from time to time, resources permitting.

8. The Global Meeting fully endorses the positions of the Staff Union Committee publicly stated on the issue of FICSA membership. The Global Meeting invites the Staff Union Committee to continue its contacts with other staff unions/associations/federations of UN agencies; however, affiliation to FICSA should wait until FICSA supports collective bargaining agreements fully and publicly, both in the ILO, in other UN organizations and at the level of the Common System and ICSC, and the issues that led the Union to withdraw are satisfactorily resolved.

9. The Global Meeting requests the Staff Union Committee to ensure that all staff representatives in the Field keep proper accounts, under the guidance of the Staff Union Treasurer, in order to ensure accountability to the members and transparency in the use of Union money. The Treasurer of the Staff Union Committee will receive written reports on a regular basis with the support of, and preferably the coordination of, the regional Titular Member.

10. The Global Meeting expresses its sincere thanks to the Chairperson and members of the Staff Union Committee, the Officers of the First Global Meeting, and all those who contributed to the successful and friendly unfolding of the First Global Meeting of Staff Union Representatives.

*Geneva, 17 August 2001*



Global Meeting vice-chairs Alexandra Simaga (Dakar) and Amorn Kumar (Bangkok) with (left) Global Meeting chair Jean-Yves Legouas and (2nd from right) SUC Chair David Dror, August 2001  
(photo: M. Crozet/ILO)

## Roger Beattie

Roger Beattie died at his desk on 24 August at the age of 52.

Even written down, these words are no easier to comprehend.

Seeing the knots of colleagues gathered in offices, in corridors, in the cafeteria, quietly sharing their memories on the day we received the awful news, only added to the sense that a vital part of us had been ripped out.

Roger was one of the ILO's (and, before that, the ISSA's) foremost social protection experts, a Union and staff representative at every level, a committed political activist. He was a family man, a talented musician, an enthusiast for the great outdoors. But there was much more to him than that.

It may sound quaint in today's cynical world, but Roger was a decent human being. The ILO has many but he was possibly the best of them all. Not that you could have said so to the man's face, of course. He would have given you that inimitable piercing sideways look, half smile, half frown, that let you know you were talking utter nonsense as usual but that he was far too polite to say so.

Unlike the rest of us, Roger did not do things by half, or at the last minute, or to get them out of the way. Nor did he waste energy on things that do not matter, or pretend to understand why others do so. Yet you always felt he had time for you and your concerns.

Roger spoke your language. Not only English, with that elegant Scots inflection (some say it was once impenetrably Glaswegian) but also fluent French, Spanish, Russian and German.

His passions were many and varied.

When he bought his house in France, he set to turning his garden to productive use. He soon became an unofficial office supplier of home-grown courgettes, tomatoes and lettuces as well as being something of a gourmet – lunch with Roger was usually at the Red Cross, whose cuisine he even imported into

the ILO when he organized a farewell party before departing for Bangkok.

He played the clarinet to concert standard and was often to be heard humming a favourite aria down the corridor. Music seemed to represent his interior world, allowing him to put his other worries aside.

As his wiry frame testified, he kept himself fit. He went climbing in the Alps and the Jura (and profited from his time in Asia to go trekking in Nepal), for aesthetic reasons as much as anything. He practised yoga. And he still regularly cycled to work.

Perhaps above all, there was his family: his wife – our colleague Rosemary – and their daughters Hannah and Vanessa. Although Roger was always very discreet about his feelings, it was clear that he was as proud of them as they were devoted to him. He gave the girls many assets for life, but also the freedom to choose, as well as a character that was rock solid like his own.

For social security in general and the ILO in particular, Roger's death is an enormous loss. He was a man of integrity, conviction and clear vision. In the words of a close colleague, "social security has lost one of its last believers and a moral lighthouse". He lived through one of the most difficult periods for the defence of social security, and recent political developments must have shaken him to the core. As another colleague put it, "It is up to us to see to it that his last two major achievements – steering through the World Labour Report 2000 and the Social Security Report to the 2001 Conference – mark the beginning of a new era in which social security regains the place it should never have lost."

Besides SECSOC and, latterly, Sector 3, Roger also worked in TRAVINT, on the safety, health and working conditions of journalists, firefighters and performers, among others.

But for many of us Roger was, above all, a Union man. Shrugging off the hostility and veiled threats about contract renewal from his head of department, he was elected to the Staff Union Committee in 1985. He worked tirelessly to obtain results, serving as SUC General Secretary, and then as General



*The way we remember him...  
Roger Beattie (right) rallying the troops with Jean Victor Gruat and Ita Marguet.  
May 1990*

Secretary of FICSA in 1987-88 (and giving his name to Judgment No. 825 of 5 June 1987 by volunteering to serve as a complainant for the ILO in FICSA's "legal defence strategy" to protect salaries and pensions). In the years since, he remained a very active rank-and-file Union member.

He was an inspiration to many trade unionists at the ILO and in other UN agencies, because of the strong commitment to equality, solidarity and fairness that characterized not only his union activity but also his work and his life in general.

He spoke forcefully and with a great sense of humour on many subjects at many AGMs, on the security and independence of international civil servants, gender equality, collective bargaining in the UN system, conditions of service of field staff, ways of reinforcing the Union and resolving conflicts within it, and other issues. He was always willing to help out on Union business, whether providing advice, chairing meetings or finding the right wording for a resolution. He was also a member of *Union's* Editorial Board from 1985 and a frequent contributor over the years, on a very wide variety of subjects (readers will recall his contribution in last month's issue to the FICSA debate).

In the 1990s, Roger staunchly defended participants' interests as an elected member of the SHIF Management Committee. As always, he was there to serve, mastering the issues, defending those with the weakest voice, ensuring that the ILO practised the social security principles it preached, and simply working hard.

Upon his return from Bangkok, he was elected to the Staff Pension Committee (topping the poll). True to form, Roger began studying the files and talking to colleagues about their practical problems. After only ten minutes in his first Pension Committee meeting earlier this year, he was unanimously elected chair. In the words of one who worked alongside him, Roger's expertise in the field of social security, his goodwill, his sense of teamwork, his modesty, and his warm personality will be sorely missed by representatives of the Participants, the Administration and the Governing Body alike.

Throughout his career, Roger exemplified the best of the international civil service and the best of trade unionism – and proved that the two are perfectly compatible. It was clear to anyone who knew him that his commitment was founded on the support of a close and loving family. For all of us, but most especially for Rosie, Hannah and Vanessa, his is a tragic loss – a life lived to the full, with many great achievements. While we are immensely sad, it is with no small amount of pride that we honour his memory and recall that he was one of us.

**MG.** *Thanks to Michael Cichon, André Heitz, Colleen McGarry, John Myers and Roland Sigg*

#### Roger

Abasourdi... Le choc englué encore lorsque j'écris ces lignes. Par quel bout peut-on prendre cet adieu, cet hommage, ce salut au camarade, dont on sait qu'ils doivent être et refuse qu'ils soient?

Dire, quelle dérision en ces heures de deuil, les qualités de l'homme, saluer le collègue, humaniste, militant, ce citoyen du monde, d'Europe, d'Ecosse et de nos cœurs, évoquer la force de conviction, le courage, le dévouement d'un fonctionnaire ô combien exemplaire – certes cela se doit, mais n'apaisera guère.

Le sentiment premier, après consternation, n'est-il pas de révolte? Pourquoi lui, pourquoi si tôt, pourquoi alors, pourquoi ainsi? Mais le gémir est vain s'il ne porte mémoire, cette mémoire, Roger, non de thuriféraire, d'abord de compagnons sur la route trop courte, celle qui se prolonge, que nous avons trouvée, et continué d'ouvrir.

Compagnons de route. L'expression, tout naturellement, s'impose. Car tu m'étais trop proche, pour que ces quelques lignes, je les enrobe de convenu.

Tu t'en souviens, Roger, de notre entrée dans la carrière! Même âge, le bel âge, celui des grands espoirs, même lieu, même espace, tu m'avais précédé, de quoi, quelques semaines, toi l'ancien nouveau qui m'intronisas sur les fonts de l'AISS – milieu des années septante.

Tout pour nous rapprocher, et nous étions fort proches. La barbe avec les dents qui brillaient au travers, lunettes aux regards qui éclairaient la vie. Le goût du beau parler, du bien écrire, celui de bien savoir et savoir partager, le respect et l'honneur. Même le bien manger nous avait rapprochés, le moindre restaurant, tu le connaissais avant même d'y entrer, tu m'avais enseigné un peu aussi du boire, tu fréquentais alors les arcanes maltées avec, cela va sans dire, la modération d'Epicure. Le ski de fond, la luge des enfants. La bicyclette, avec les randonnées, nos filles sur porte-bagages respectifs, bien sûr tu t'en souviens! Et un air de musique pour emballer tout ça...

Les années quatre-vingt, lorsque je bifurquais vers l'Afrique, tu maintiens le cap, horizon élargi, tes azimuts embrassant désormais les destinations naturelles du servir solidaire, noblesse du terme, avec le Syndicat, la FICSA, les grandes causes communes, également celles, plus ingrates, de défendre les autres au quotidien, ce quotidien dont, pour toi, tu faisais comme abstraction – trop, beaucoup trop.

Nos pas se sont ensuite mêlés en bien des circonstances sur ces années qui ne seront pas tout à fait vingt-cinq, Roger. Chaque fois l'entrelacs nous semblait naturel, et faisait remonter le parfum de naguère. La tresse des rencontres ne se nattera plus. Alors, ce soir, je suis triste, très triste, de plus, j'ai peur un peu.

Pour conjurer la peur, c'est ton sourire que j'appelle. Sur moi, sur nous tous qui pleurons à nous ressouvenir. Rire pour tes enfants, que j'aurai connues grandes, et pour Rosie. Qu'elles puissent un peu s'attendrir au travers de leurs larmes – et sachent comme nous les aimons, comme nous t'aimons, comme je t'aime.

**JV Gruat** ■

Roger nous a quitté et nous avons perdu un collègue, un ami, et surtout quelqu'un de dévoué à tous. Son apport, en tant que représentant des Participants, Président de notre Comité de la Caisse des Pensions de l'OIT, cette année a été considérable. Son départ laisse un vide qu'il nous sera difficile de combler tant du point de vue amical que technique. Nos pensées vont vers Rosemary et leurs enfants.

**P. Barrett, C. Bègue, G. Bezou, A. Guastavi et P. Sayour**  
*Représentants des participants*

## Solidarity with people with AIDS in Ethiopia

HQ staff – make a note in your diary for a special lunch date on Friday, 21 September and help a good cause! The place: the Salon du personnel on R1. The time: 12 noon. The cuisine: exotic Ethiopian dishes. The price: SF30 per person (free for kids). The beneficiaries: Medical Missionaries of Mary (Counselling and Social Services Centre for HIV/AIDS) and Save Your Generation Ethiopia (working for Ethiopian Youth). The organizers: Solidarity Fund for Ethiopian Women (SFEW) and 1% for Development Fund. For details contact Seble Demeke on (022) 917 3070.