



TENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Reports of the Programme, Financial  
and Administrative Committee**

**Second report: Personnel questions**

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1. The Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee met on 12 and 13 November and was chaired by Lord Brett (Workers' group). Mr. Blondel (spokesperson, Workers' group) was the Reporter.

## **I. Statement by the staff representative**

2. The statement by the staff representative is appended to the present report.

## **II. Amendments to the Staff Regulations (Fourteenth item on the agenda)**

### **Amendments approved by the Director-General**

3. The Committee took note of a paper<sup>1</sup> on amendments to the Staff Regulations approved by the Director-General during the preceding 12 months under the authority delegated to him by the Governing Body.

## **III. Exceptions to the Staff Regulations (Fifteenth item on the agenda)**

4. The Committee noted that there was no business under this agenda item.

## **IV. ILO Human Resources Strategy: Update (Sixteenth item on the agenda)**

5. The Committee considered a report,<sup>2</sup> presented for information only, on developments in implementing the ILO Human Resources Strategy.
6. The representative of the Director-General (Mr. Ng, Director, Human Resources Development Department (HRD)), in his introductory remarks, informed the Committee that it had unfortunately not been possible to provide a detailed review of the impact of the Human Resources Strategy firstly because certain of the initiatives had not been operating long enough to reasonably evaluate their effectiveness, and secondly because the External Auditor's final report had not been available at the time of preparing the document, thus preventing the Office from providing a reasoned response.
7. He highlighted certain sections of the document: the reorganization of the Human Resources Development Department would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department in the task of successfully implementing the strategy; a number of difficulties encountered in the implementation of the collective agreements would be addressed in the course of the forthcoming reviews of the agreements; new initiatives had been launched, including a human resource management planning mechanism to improve efficiency and

<sup>1</sup> GB.285/PFA/14.

<sup>2</sup> GB.285/PFA/16.

delivery; the importance of improving communication with the staff both at headquarters and in the field.

8. He informed the Committee that the views of the Administrative Tribunal on the issues raised had been recently received by the Director-General and were now available to the Committee for comment. The other participating United Nations organizations would be informed of the Tribunal's views.
9. As regards mobility policy, he noted that mobility should serve as a vital instrument for enhancing service to constituents.
10. The Chairperson indicated that it might be appropriate for the Committee to consider, at the same time, document GB.285/PFA/16/2 which provided the response of the Administrative Tribunal to the points raised in the document: ILO Human Resources Strategy: Update.<sup>3</sup>
11. Mr. Botha, speaking on behalf of the Employer members, recognized the delays in implementing the Human Resources Strategy and the fact that it was having higher-than-expected financial implications. He expressed disappointment that the External Auditor's report on the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy was not available for comment but acknowledged that it would be discussed at the March session of the Governing Body. He also expressed disappointment at the suspension of the Young Professional Career Entrance Programme in 2003 and indicated that further details should be provided on the problems being faced by the Programme. Finally, he noted that the process of dialogue between the Office and Staff Union on issues surrounding the Administrative Tribunal was continuing.
12. Speaking on behalf of the Worker members, Mr. Blondel first of all recalled that it was his role to ensure that the Office operated well and not to represent the ILO staff. The Office could only operate well if the staff were happy. He therefore asked that the staff should receive the appropriate consideration, but it should practice trade union - employer relations as effectively as possible, bearing in mind that the class struggle was a thing of the past. Referring to the statement by the Chairperson of the Staff Union, the speaker wondered about the content of the staff's claims, given that collective bargaining had taken place and seven collective agreements had been signed; if the agreements signed were not applied two conclusions could be drawn: either they could not be applied – and in this case the Director of Human Resources would have exceeded his mandate – or they were poor agreements.
13. It would therefore be a good idea to start new negotiations to re-examine the matters in question. Concerning the Ombudsperson, who did not seem to have at her disposal the means necessary to fulfil her mission, Mr. Blondel asked that the appropriate means be put in place to calm and ease relations. As for the reorganization of HRD, the speaker expressed the hope that the results of what appears to be an auditing mission be made known to the Committee. Referring to occupational safety and health, the speaker felt that there were certainly some problems (he described an accident he had had in the ILO garage) and that the best approach would be to allow the staff representatives to express their views by including them in an occupational safety and health committee that should be set up. Furthermore, Mr. Blondel expressed his regret at the suspension of the Young Professional Career Entrance Programme. He hoped that the contract reforms would continue. Lastly, on the question of the reform of the Statute of the ILO Administrative

<sup>3</sup> GB.285/PFA/16.

Tribunal, the success of which he recalled, Mr. Blondel considered it only to be expected that the 40 organizations that use the services of the Tribunal should be involved in any possible reform. Concerning the Union's putting words into the mouth of the Tribunal, the speaker was surprised at the remarks made about the President of the Tribunal, who was very respectful of human rights, as he is Chairman of the National Committee for Information Technology and Freedoms in France. Noting that increased criticism would not help the reputation of the Tribunal, and therefore the ILO, he recommended proceeding with caution.

14. The representative of the Government of the Russian Federation reaffirmed his Government's position on the collective agreement on Personal Development Plans (PDPs), i.e. that the agreement be reviewed after a period of operation of two years. With regard to job grading, he requested the Office to provide information on the actual cost of the baseline classification exercise, as well as progress made in this context. He expressed his concern that no information had been provided by the External Auditor on the current state of implementation of the Human Resources Strategy and its financial implications, but noted that these would be discussed at the March 2003 session of the Governing Body. He reiterated his support for the administration's efforts regarding contract reform and the reform of the current performance management system. Finally, he reserved the right to comment on the issues surrounding the Administrative Tribunal at a later time.
15. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, reiterated the importance of human resources reform and expressed support for ongoing improvements in the ILO. She noted that the External Auditor's report on the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy would be discussed in March. She expressed concern over the difficulties in implementing the seven collective agreements and requested that the PFAC be included in the review process at the end of the two-year period of operation. She welcomed the progress on the job-grading exercise, but wondered whether any posts had been downgraded. On grievance procedures, she encouraged an early review of the definitions contained in the collective agreement. As regards issues surrounding the Administrative Tribunal (Appendix 2 of the paper), she felt it would be more appropriate to discuss this at the March session of the Governing Body, after due consideration of the Administrative Tribunal's response. She requested that information be provided on the financial implications of any reforms to the Tribunal's operations. Her group would also wish to be informed of reactions from other participating United Nations organizations. On resourcing, she welcomed the administration's efforts to reduce the time needed to process competitions but hoped to see further improvements by the March session of the Governing Body. She noted that the Young Professional Career Entrance Programme was currently being evaluated and revised and welcomed the opportunity to discuss this further in March. She also welcomed the administration's efforts to improve staff mobility and encouraged the Office to contribute to the deliberations of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) on this subject. Finally, she supported the administration's efforts to eliminate inappropriate use of temporary contracts and its review of security and safety issues. As regards progress made on the approach to benefits for domestic partners, the IMEC group looked forward to receiving further information at future sessions of the Governing Body.
16. The representative of the Government of Argentina, speaking on behalf of the group of Latin American countries, recalled that the ILO was the only United Nations system organization with a mechanism for collective bargaining and encouraged the process of dialogue to continue.
17. The representative of the Government of Germany supported the comments of the IMEC group. He requested further clarification on the issue of increased manager responsibility in the recruitment process, and hoped that such increased responsibility would not have

negative repercussions on mobility potential. As regards the future of the Young Professional Career Entrance Programme, he supported the statements of Worker and Employer members as well as of the IMEC group. He felt it would be regrettable if the Programme had to end because of cost considerations, but noted that the budget still had to operate on zero growth. On development appraisal, he requested that a report be submitted to the March session of the Governing Body on the pilot phase of the Personal Development Plan (PDP) initiative. Finally, he welcomed the progress which had been achieved on contract policy reform but regretted the delays occasioned by the ICSC's workplan.

- 18.** The representative of the Government of the Republic of Korea expressed appreciation of the present document, but regretted its late distribution. He welcomed the progress which had been made in the area of grievance handling, particularly by the Ombudsperson, but expressed his concern over the relatively high number of harassment-related grievances and encouraged the Office to give particular attention to this issue. On resourcing, he supported the new recruitment and selection procedures but expressed his concern at the length of those procedures. With regard to the Young Professional Career Entrance Programme, he expressed his disappointment at its suspension, particularly as the statistics to date had been so positive. He also encouraged the Office to continue in its efforts to recruit nationals of under-represented countries.
- 19.** The representative of the Government of China welcomed the opportunity to discuss the reform of the Administrative Tribunal at the March session of the Governing Body.
- 20.** The representative of the Government of Mexico supported the comments made on behalf of the group of Latin American countries. She expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the Office in its negotiations with the Staff Union and encouraged the process of dialogue to continue. She encouraged the Staff Union to have recourse to all mechanisms available to them in the context of negotiation and consultation.
- 21.** The representative of the Government of Japan supported the comments made on behalf of the IMEC group. He welcomed the directions to the efforts made by the Office in the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy to date, and supported the work of the Office in respect of the Young Professionals Career Entrance Programme and the various work-life initiatives to give enough considerations of their implications and consistency. Finally, he encouraged the Office to continue taking steps towards improving the geographic distribution of staff.
- 22.** The representative of the Director-General (Mr. Ng) thanked the delegates for their comments. On the issue of the Young Professional Career Entrance Programme, he noted that the Programme had great potential to contribute to the work of the Organization and would serve as a link to Office policy in dealing with age structure, grading structure, and other issues such as diversity in recruitment from under-represented countries. Costing around US\$1 million a year for one intake of ten for a period of four or five years, the Programme needed to be carefully reviewed in terms of financing and future integration of the Young Professionals concerned.
- 23.** As regards collective bargaining and collective agreements, Mr. Ng acknowledged the financial constraints and added that work in this area was not an end in itself, but a means to improve staff welfare and productivity in the Office. It went without saying that successful implementation of collective agreements was vital for a fruitful collective bargaining process. The design of the collective agreements themselves should therefore take account of financial resources and staff capacity.

24. On the issue of safety and health, he recalled that the Director-General had proposed to allocate US\$3.5 million of the cash surplus for the improvement of safety and security both at headquarters and in the field. The Office was working very closely with the United Nations system to improve its services on security in the field.
25. Turning to the resourcing process, some improvement had been achieved in the length of the recruitment period, while still paying attention to other requirements such as equity, transparency and other policy issues. He believed that by the middle of 2003, the Office should be able to further shorten the period needed for recruitment.
26. Mr. Ng presented some statistics on the job-grading exercise: out of 1,645 posts, 233 had been approved for upgrading and 44 downgraded, with 1,268 confirmations of grade. He took the opportunity to explain some of the difficulties in implementing collective agreements. All the collective agreements touched on important issues of human resources management, but it could not be assumed that everything would be implemented exactly according to plan. In this regard, HRD would be working closely with the Staff Union to render the collective agreements more feasible for implementation.
27. The representative of the Director-General (Mr. Picard, Deputy Legal Adviser), responding to the points raised concerning the Administrative Tribunal, wished to reassure the Committee that the procedure being undertaken as regards amendments to the Statute of the Administrative Tribunal was in line with the instructions of the Governing Body set out at its November 2000 session, i.e. that only the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference had the authority to bring about any modification to the Statute. The Tribunal was responsible for its own Rules and the Office could only give its opinion in this regard. For this reason a staff-management working group had been set up to identify a list of agreed points for submission to the Tribunal. The Tribunal had not been able to respond to these points sooner, as it had been in session at the beginning of November. Concerning the next steps, the other participating organizations would be contacted for their points of view, and their responses would hopefully be submitted to the March 2003 session of the Governing Body.
28. Mr. Blondel, speaking on behalf of the Worker members, hoped that the follow-up document would be drafted in such a way that the Committee would not be drawn into a legal debate of substance. Turning to the comments made by Mr. Ng, he proposed that addenda to collective agreements be negotiated to enable them to become fully functional. Alternatively, new negotiations should be entered into to replace those which had already taken place.
29. Mr. Lima Godoy, speaking on behalf of the Employer members, supported Mr. Blondel's comments, adding that a mutually respectful dialogue would certainly result in satisfactory solutions. He too supported the proposal for new negotiations.
30. In his closing remarks to the discussion on the document, the Director-General first supported the statements – particularly those of the Workers' and Employers' groups encouraging the Office to renegotiate all or part of any collective agreements which had so far proved to be unworkable. He then touched upon his experiences after his election, when he had consulted extensively with constituents as to their wishes for the future. The result was the Decent Work Agenda. He had gone through the same process as regards in-house issues. After in-depth consultations with the then Chairpersons of the Staff Union Committee, in 1998 and 1999, and many staff members, the Director-General had become convinced that his policy should be geared towards establishing collective bargaining and mutually respectful dialogue in the ILO, and improving the system of internal justice. The former, he said, was for reasons of principle, and the latter, for reasons of necessity.

31. He noted that it was with this conviction that the seven agreements had been signed. He acknowledged that errors had been made, but the Office would now move forward in rectifying them in the most appropriate way. Some issues had not been clear in terms of how to implement the collective agreements, as in the case of the two grievance agreements. One of the flaws was that not enough thought had been given to the complexity of a person being simultaneously a mediator and an investigator. Multiculturalism had to be taken more into account, as it was a different matter to mediate within the same cultures and between different cultures. These flaws, however, could and would be corrected. Other, more practical, issues concerned unrealistic deadlines. And overall, the additional workload created for the Human Resources Development Department had been underestimated, which detracted from regular activities. The financial implications of the agreements had not been properly assessed. For these and other reasons, the Office had asked the auditors to examine the collective agreements and present the Office with a fair evaluation of the cost of their effective implementation. This information would be available in March for further discussion.
32. Underlining the fact that the ILO was the only United Nations organization with a collective bargaining mechanism, the Director-General concluded by saying that progress should continue in full recognition of mutually respectful dialogue and in the same strong spirit of good faith as when the initiatives had been launched.
33. The Committee took note of the report.

## V. General Service Salary Survey, Geneva (Seventeenth item on the agenda)

34. The Committee considered a paper<sup>4</sup> on the results of the salary survey carried out in Geneva for General Service category staff, which would be applicable with effect from 1 January 2002.
35. On behalf of the Worker members, Mr. Blondel recalled that the revised salary scale resulted from an ICSC salary survey of best prevailing conditions in Geneva. He noted that the apparently good staff-management relations had not been reflected in salary levels comparable to the best in the Geneva market. However, the Workers' group agreed with the application, albeit belated, of the scale.
36. On behalf of the Employer members, Mr. Lima Godoy agreed with the comments made by the Workers' group, pointing out that in addition, the ILO had participated in the Local Salary Survey Committee (LSSC) and the ICSC's consideration of the survey results, and that the Director-General considered that the survey had been carried out in accordance with the methodology. He hoped that financing of the salary revision through savings in Part I of the budget would not have negative repercussions on the possibility of filling certain posts in the field. If this were to be the case, the Director-General should propose alternative means of financing.
37. *The Committee recommends to the Governing Body that, should it approve the increase in General Service salary scales and allowances and the amendments to the Staff Regulations as set out in Appendices I and II to GB.285/PFA/17, the cost estimated at some \$970,000 for the 2002-03 biennium be financed in the first*

<sup>4</sup> GB.285/PFA/17.

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*instance from savings under Part I of the budget and that should this not prove possible, the Director-General would propose alternative methods of financing at a later stage in the biennium.*

## **VI. Pensions questions** (Eighteenth item on the agenda)

38. The Committee noted that there was no business under this agenda item.

## **VII. Report of the International Civil Service Commission** (Nineteenth item on the agenda)

39. The Committee had before it a paper<sup>5</sup> informing the Governing Body of the recommendations of the ICSC, submitted to the United Nations General Assembly in its annual report for 2002. The recommendations had financial implications for the Office and were submitted to the Committee for early consideration so as to avoid the need for costly retroactive adjustments. The paper also provided information on the ICSC's examination of other issues.

40. Mr. Blondel, speaking on behalf of the Worker members, and noting that the point for decision was subject to United Nations General Assembly approval, indicated that the Workers' group approved the paragraph for decision.

41. Mr. Lima Godoy, speaking on behalf of the Employer members, supported Mr. Blondel's statement. However, he wished to reiterate his comments made under the General Service Salary Survey item, concerning the funding of any changes approved by the General Assembly.

42. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group of countries, expressed concern at the financial implications for the ILO of the ICSC's recommendations concerning salary scales for staff in the Professional and higher categories, particularly as the 2002-03 programme and budget did not include provision for implementing increases that could amount to over \$3 million in the current biennium. That group of countries considered that it would be premature for the Committee to agree to the proposed decision point, given the uncertainty about the current situation in New York, and recommended that the question be re-examined during the March 2003 session of the Governing Body.

43. The representative of the Government of the Russian Federation supported IMEC's statement.

44. Mr. Blondel, speaking on behalf of the Worker members, stressed the point that retroactive administrative action needed to be avoided and that an advance decision should therefore be taken.

45. The representative of the Government of Canada said that although his Government's position had been reflected by the statement made on behalf of the IMEC group, he did not

<sup>5</sup> GB.285/PFA/19.

see why the Committee could not postpone its decision until March 2003 when the financial implications would be much clearer.

46. The representative of the Director-General (Mr. Johnson, Director, Financial Services Department) responded to the concerns raised by explaining that the point for decision was in its traditional format; in other words, it was presented to the Committee for consideration prior to a decision being taken by the General Assembly. It was true that a more accurate figure would be available in March 2003, but a decision by the Governing Body in March would require costly retroactive adjustments with a correspondingly heavy administrative burden.
47. The representative of the Government of the Republic of Korea supported the statements made by the IMEC group and the Government representative of Canada.
48. Mr. Blondel, on behalf of the Worker members, reiterated that in any case nothing would be applied in the ILO which had not been approved by the United Nations General Assembly. In addition, he felt that delaying the decision would not improve staff-management relations within the Office.
49. The Chairperson noted the objections voiced, but felt that there was nevertheless a majority within the Committee in favour of approving the point for decision.
50. In an attempt to reach a consensus, Mr. Lima Godoy, on behalf of the Employer members, asked whether any representatives foresaw the possibility of adopting, next March, a decision contrary to that of the General Assembly
51. In response, the representative of the Government of the United Kingdom acknowledged that there was indeed a majority in favour of the point for decision and recognized the points made by the representative of the Director-General. However, she nevertheless felt that avoidance of retroactive adjustments was not sufficient justification for taking a precipitate decision at the present session.
52. The representative of the Government of the United States added that he recalled a slightly different approach to a similar issue in 1995. He was not aware of any other United Nations organizations that were intending to proceed on the same basis as that being proposed to the Committee.
53. The Chairperson decided that there was nevertheless a majority in the Committee in favour of the paragraph for decision.
54. ***The Committee recommends that the Governing Body, subject to the approval by the United Nations General Assembly –***
  - (a) ***accept the recommendations of the ICSC on the following entitlements:***
    - (i) ***an increase in the base/floor salary scale;***
    - (ii) ***consequential increases in the mobility and hardship allowance and separation payments, for staff in the Professional and higher categories, with effect from 1 March 2003;***
    - (iii) ***increases in the maximum education grant and maximum admissible expenses payable to eligible staff members at designated duty stations, with effect from the school year in progress on 1 January 2003;***

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- (b) *authorize the Director-General to give effect in the ILO, through amendments to the Staff Regulations (as necessary), to the measures referred to in subparagraph (a), subject to their approval by the General Assembly; and*
- (c) *approve the financing of the increase in the base/floor salary scales for the Professional staff estimated at some \$3,228,000 for the 2002-03 biennium, in the first instance from savings under Part I of the budget or failing that, through the use of Part II (Unforeseen expenditure).*

**VIII. Matters relating to the ILO  
Administrative Tribunal**  
(Twentieth item on the agenda)

55. The Committee noted that there was no business under this agenda item.

**IX. Other personnel questions**  
(Twenty-first item on the agenda)

56. The Committee noted that there was no business under this agenda item.

Geneva, 18 November 2002.

*Points for decision:* Paragraph 37;  
Paragraph 54.

## Appendix

### Statement by the Staff Union representative

The Staff Union of the ILO, now representing the great majority of all staff, has the chance to address the Governing Body only twice a year. We view this opportunity as very precious, because it allows us to express opinions and concerns that might otherwise remain unsaid.

As you know, all Union officers are democratically elected, and most of us serve as volunteers, doing Union work in addition to our “day job”. So, we have the special advantage of seeing the Office from an angle that no representative of the administration can provide you with. Since it is *you* who set the policy of the Organization, we believe you need to know the underlying reasons for the state of staff morale and the capacity to perform.

The documents submitted by the Human Resources Development (HRD) to the Governing Body portray a picture that differs somewhat both in substance and in detail from our vision. For the sake of brevity, however, I will dwell on three important issues only. All of them are interrelated, and all require much better understanding by the Governing Body.

The first is a call to improve social dialogue within the ILO. In the eyes of the Staff Union, what we have is simply not good enough because it does not sustain solutions to real issues.

The second is a call to the Governing Body to provide guidance and support so as to bring the ILO administration to a better process of rule-based decision-making, with more action, more equity and more efficiency in HRD matters.

The third is a call to the Governing Body to support the process of the reform of the ILO Administrative Tribunal as part of the commitment of the Office to the reform of the current internal system of justice, a system that at the present time is frankly in a very sorry state. So, let me start with the first point:

*1. The need to improve social dialogue.* The need for dialogue is what the ILO sells repeatedly to the entire world. So why is it that in the ILO we find so little of it? Why is it that Staff Union representatives have not, so far, been allowed to discuss, periodically with the Senior Management Team, issues of concern to officials?

The Office has been in an ongoing reorganization mode since March 2000, when the Governing Body approved the reform of HRD policy. This included the introduction of collective agreements that are the expression of the will of two equal partners, the ILO administration and the Staff Union. This HRD reform should actually have been completed by now, so that you, the Governing Body, could review the outcome at this very session. As you can see from the HRD document submitted, the reform agenda has not been completed within the time allowed, and, in addition, the document does not indicate to you any discussed or even proposed timelines.

We were told by the Director-General at the beginning of the year that 2002 was to be a year of “consolidation”. We regret to say that since April of this year, we have had no real dialogue, and no outcome from the few meetings of the Joint Negotiating Committee – in short, no consolidation at all. We have the distinct feeling that some highly placed people in this Organization would actually like to place obstacles in the way of dialogue, negotiations and collective agreements. We do not know what they seek to consolidate. And nobody has provided a clear agenda for this. But what we have seen, however, is repeated delaying tactics on virtually every item on the agenda. We do not believe that this so-called dialogue should be like this, especially in the ILO.

The Staff Union adamantly refuses to accept any statement implying that it is not working as much for the good of the Organization as for anyone else. We believe that the best interests of the ILO are served through the recognition of staff, both individually and collectively. The HRD report to the PFAC does not reflect the situation as we see it. Besides, we find it surprising that HRD can report on matters where there has been absolutely no negotiation with us and no information sharing at all.

For example, matters referred to in the HRD document included the Human Resources Strategy and the field security review. These are matters of fundamental concern to the staff and its elected representatives, especially since 11 September last year. Yet the HRD document does not

reflect the positions of staff. How could it, when the document was not the subject of dialogue with the Union?

Furthermore, the HRD document to the Governing Body contains unfortunate inaccuracies with respect to collective bargaining and grievance handling. There has been, as far as we know, no discussion about the revised timetable for 2002 and there is very little of 2002 left; and it is misleading to suggest that the Ombudsperson has received anything like adequate funding for the operations of her office. If the Governing Body wishes to be sure that the report of the PFAC is viewed as accurate by the staff, then decent dialogue is essential.

You, distinguished members of the Governing Body, can, of course have access to other forms of expression by the staff: for instance, our magazine, *Union*, and in particular the latest issue. This can give you some idea of what our members feel and worry about. Please help yourself to a copy – there are copies outside – and we hope that you enjoy the read, particularly of this issue, which focus on the Administrative Tribunal. Unfortunately, we are not allowed to place the journal in your pigeon holes so you will have to collect it for yourselves.

This periodical is the only one in which all ILO officials can exercise freedom of expression, and it includes opinions of individuals, as well as those of the Union as a whole. Committee opinions are always signed, and occasionally the magazine also carries opinions of persons who are part of management as well. No other ILO publication does as much to promote dialogue.

Recently, the administration made it known to us that it did not like the opinions published in *Union*. We can accept that some people do not like all that reaches the press. But we cannot accept censorship or any other pressures on our internal free press. Let us be clear that in an Organization that was created to encourage dialogue between opposing views we shall continue to uphold the right to free press, to freedom of expression, and particularly to achieve better dialogue. We regret that there is at the present time no real forum or timetable for us to engage effectively in real structured dialogue on a whole range of issues which affect our daily lives, and hence the life of the ILO.

We would like to explore possibilities of enabling you to be better and more accurately informed of the views of staff. Now is the time for the PFAC to see how to reform the current, rather token, communication practice of the Staff Union, the real voice of staff, and to promote a more relevant debate on staff-related PFAC documentation at future Governing Body meetings.

There also have to be better ways for staff to engage with management and for the Governing Body to be better informed about our version of ILO reality. This is, after all, the ILO, a great institution dedicated to promoting best practices in staff-management relations and to facilitating good union relations in management. Sadly, the current methods fall well short of the mark.

2. *Adopting rule-based decision-making practices – or the ILO practising what it preaches.* Earlier this month, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Louise Frechette, announced: “The United Nations is working to modernize its human relations management to build a results-oriented culture and to promote management excellence”. The new United Nations package would “facilitate mobility, strengthen leadership, encourage high performance, and address problems involving recruitment and retention”. How we would have liked to have seen the ILO actually taking the lead on these issues, as indeed it should have. Yet again, we see the ILO being left behind in the United Nations system when it comes to excellence and best practices in human relations and employment. Collective bargaining has been a great and wonderful start and we are working very hard to make it a total success. We would like to see it as a success both within the ILO and in all United Nations agencies. Like all of us, you, the Governing Body, have recognized that better staff-management relations are the key to transparency, better performance and efficiency. Since we have fewer opportunities to progress at the negotiating table, we, in the Union, call on the Governing Body to press for the ILO to regain and retain its leadership role in human resources management within the United Nations system.

We have the norms, we have the codes of conduct, we have the expertise. What we now need are the deeds. And we in the Union have the desire to be best in the United Nations class.

Just two months ago, the Union published a Bulletin entitled *Practice what you preach*. This made the simple point that the ILO should practice in-house what its leadership expects the staff to tell others to practise outside of the house. The management response (HRD 337) was instant: it tried to turn the whole debate away from issues and on to personalities. In case there is any doubt,

let me say that the Union has not indulged in personal attacks and will not do so. Nor will such tired tactics make the substantive issues we have raised disappear.

Just for the record, the main areas where there remain serious gaps between policy, Conventions and in-house practice that still worry us the most, are the following:

- (1) The provision of adequate funding for the operation of the office of the Ombudsperson as required and as agreed by the collective agreements.
- (2) The provision of minimum security standards, as recommended by the United Nations security system for ILO staff in the field in a number of important duty stations.
- (3) The provision of adequate occupational safety and health systems and management practices at ILO headquarters and in the field, in accordance with Conventions Nos. 155 and 161.
- (4) The reform of the statutes and practices of the ILO Administrative Tribunal to make them conform to international human rights Conventions.
- (5) The provision of full medical insurance assistance to ILO staff members afflicted with HIV/AIDS, as has already been offered by the Office but not acted on.
- (6) Applying the same rules to all staff, be it on retirement, on career opportunities or on any other matters.

Our solution to the widening gap between what the Office preaches as opposed to what it practises is to request this Governing Body to seek a formal commitment by the administration to redress these issues in 2003 in the context of a collective agreement, as far as is practicable.

3. *The need to improve the internal system of justice.* This third area of concern is an urgent one. It is the reform of the currently inadequate internal system of justice that short-changes all staff. We agreed on the overall reform of this system three years ago. There certainly have been some achievements but, in the case of the reform of the Administrative Tribunal, there is little to see. There is absolutely no doubt that the system of legal protection provided currently by the Office falls short of standards prevailing in most countries, it is weak and it defies the basic human rights of international officials as citizens. This is an appalling situation in an Organization promoting social justice, but you do not just have to take the views of the Union on this. Today, eminent jurists and human rights champions such as Geoffrey Robertson, QC, have explained publicly, in this very building, some of the serious shortcomings we face in access to justice through the Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT). The latest position of the Tribunal, incidentally communicated to the Union just last evening, continues to make a mockery of judicial disclosure, of fair procedures and of the right to be represented and of a number of other fundamental principles.

This is no longer a matter of a single union dealing with a single administration. In today's meeting, representatives from many of the 40 staff unions and associations of organizations with recourse to the Administrative Tribunal were present, after they had signed off a resolution that we refer to as the London Resolution, which supports the reform of the ILOAT so as to uphold our right to legal protection and to respect our human rights. Invitations were extended to all members of this Governing Body by the Union and we hope that those of you who were able to be present at today's very well-attended meeting are now much better informed on the issue. In fact, for those of you that could not make it, can I draw your attention to some very useful and relevant articles in the current *Union* journal.

The Governing Body will recall that the ILO administration made a firm and unambiguous commitment, first to the Union, then to the Governing Body, to submit to this session of the Governing Body, a reasoned decision paper containing proposed reforms for the Statute of the ILO Administrative Tribunal for consideration and decision by the International Labour Conference in June next year. The ILO administration has not, so far, been able to fulfil its commitment to this present Governing Body session.

The basic issue here is respect of human rights. In our meeting with the Director-General last month, we invited him to open our public meeting today and to engage in a win-win relationship on this issue. We repeat that call here. We have to be in a win-win situation, in the interests of the staff and in the interests of this Organization, and in the interests of the credibility of the Tribunal. So the basic issue here is a respect for human rights. We also affirm our resolve not to allow a reluctance for change to thwart the basic human rights of 35,000 international civil servants of the 40 organizations that have recourse to the Tribunal at the present time.

Now, you will be surprised to know that Public Services International (PSI), representing 20 million members, has already invited the Director-General in writing to support the reforms of the ILO, as proposed by this Union. The Federation of International Civil Servants (FICSA), likewise, is fully supportive of the proposed democratic reform and the process proposed by the Union. Even unions that do not have recourse to the ILO, such as the Council of Europe and United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), have expressed support for the reforms we seek. Those who refuse dialogue on this issue will have no choice other than to defend their position in the court of public opinion. We call upon the Governing Body to instruct the Office to move quickly with these reforms and to submit, without delay, even during this session of the Governing Body, the written proposals we discussed in order to keep to the agreed agenda.

On behalf of the staff of the ILO, I thank you for this opportunity to address you. Yes, we, in the staff of the ILO, do have problems, but we also offer solutions. It is those solutions that we bring to your attention in the hope that you can bring about change for the better. This will best serve the mission, the vision, the relevance and the reputation of this great Organization, to which the Staff Union and all of its members are fully committed.