



NINTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

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

**Second report: Personnel questions**

*Contents*

	<i>Page</i>
I. Statement by the Staff Union representative .....	1
II. Results-based strategies 2010–15: Human Resources Strategy .....	1
III. Amendments to the Staff Regulations .....	7
IV. Report of the International Civil Service Commission.....	8
V. Matters relating to the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO .....	8
VI. Other personnel questions: Special Payments Fund.....	10

*Appendix*

Statement by the Staff Union representative to the Programme Financial and Administrative Committee (November 2009) .....	13
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**I. Statement by the Staff Union representative**  
(Sixteenth item on the agenda)

1. The statement by the Staff Union representative is reproduced in the appendix to the present report.

**II. Results-based strategies 2010–15:  
Human Resources Strategy**  
(Twelfth item on the agenda)

2. The Committee had before it a paper<sup>1</sup> on the Human Resources Strategy (HR Strategy) and refocusing human resources.
3. Ms Viale, Director of the Human Resources Development Department (HRD), introduced the Strategy, stating that it was based on an analysis of the lessons learned from the implementation of the various HR strategies over the previous decade. She stated that the new Strategy was based on a forward-looking analysis of the needs of the Office for the period 2010–15, taking into account the critical role that the Organization was called on to play in confronting global challenges. The Strategy was designed to improve the skills and performance of the staff, the capacity of management, and the capacity of the Office based on the knowledge, talent and commitment of its human resources, in accordance with the objectives of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the Global Jobs Pact.
4. The Strategy proposed to refocus human resources management in four key areas, defined in the Strategy as outcomes, namely: talent and leadership; accountability; teamwork and collaboration; and an enabling working environment. It had been developed following a series of consultations with Governing Body members, the Staff Union and ILO management and was based on a result-based management (RBM) approach with indicators, targets and milestones identified for each of the four outcomes. The indicators would measure progress towards the achievement of the targets and the biennial milestones marked significant developments to be achieved in the following three bienniums. The final part of the Strategy identified a number of risks and assumptions which would have to be taken into account in the implementation of the Strategy.
5. Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, noted that the revised HR Strategy was under discussion at a time when the ILO was facing many challenges. After the adoption of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization in June 2008, the road map for its implementation, and the Global Jobs Pact in the light of the financial crisis, constituents were now turning to the ILO for assistance and advice. The Office was required to find additional financial resources to help its constituents and provide high-level technical advice on economic, social and labour issues. The G20 had also placed new demands on the ILO, calling on the Office to increase its advocacy role at the international level. The need for ILO expertise in a number of core areas (macroeconomists and wages specialists, social security, industrial relations and standards specialists) should be the guiding principle of the HR Strategy for the next six years.

<sup>1</sup> GB.306/PFA/12/2.

6. He welcomed the skills mapping exercise that had been undertaken in June 2009, but requested that the Committee should be provided with more details. He recognized that consultations on the Strategy had taken place, but felt that the consultative process should be strengthened with all participants. His group felt that the Office's ambitions in the area of the recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff could not be fully reconciled with an apparent increase in the number of short-term contracts and precarious employment. An attractive package of terms and conditions of employment would be needed to draw in the required new recruits. He suggested that possibilities of promoting internal staff should be examined, also in the context of job security and career development; that issue was not sufficiently addressed in the Strategy.
7. Another concern for the Workers' group was how to integrate ILO values such as freedom of association, collective bargaining and industrial relations into recruitment and training policies. The speaker recalled the unique capacity of the ILO to bring those values to the United Nations system. The HR Strategy was silent on the issue of a specific "ILO brand", and that should be rectified. In addition, new staff should spend time at the Turin Centre, to absorb those critical ILO values. The Turin Centre should also be used for staff training on capacity building for constituents, as mentioned in the Strategic Policy Framework for 2010–15.
8. The group felt that the document concentrated too much on the partnership with management, whereas it should also reach out to staff. In addition, the document focused mainly on professional and management-level staff, without sufficiently taking account of support staff. With regard to management training, the group requested information on previous training exercises, and the results of such capacity building.
9. Concerning mobility, the group wished to see more efforts targeted at career development for serving staff and increased opportunities for General Service staff members, the majority of whom were women.
10. The implementation of the field structure review would have an enormous impact on staff, and the HR Strategy should address that, as well as issues such as geographic relocation and managing career aspirations. The national coordinators foreseen for country assignments should be totally independent from national pressure and should respond fully and solely to the ILO.
11. Turning to the four outcomes, the speaker said that the first indicator seemed to be more of a tool than a real outcome. With regard to outcome 2, the group wondered what the impact of any revised performance recognition mechanism would be on the present provisions. As for outcome 3, the speaker queried how detachments to the private sector would affect the status of international civil servants. The group welcomed the priority accorded to staff security in outcome 4, but requested clarification on the use of formal and informal conflict resolution mechanisms.
12. The Workers' group was not yet prepared to endorse the HR Strategy, as it was of the view that the document needed further revision.
13. Mr Julien, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, stated that his group supported the four components of the Strategy. He regretted, however, that the paper did not provide enough information on the outcomes of previous strategies.
14. While highlighting the ILO's efforts to achieve coherence between its different strategies, the speaker stated that it would have been preferable for the Office to present its management strategies for 2010–15 in an integrated manner. He would also have wished to

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see more detailed information in the paper on expected outcomes, as well as an implementation plan.

15. Concerning staff competencies and skills, the speaker felt that these should serve as a global benchmark. While he supported the training initiatives by ILO management, he wondered whether the budget allocation for that purpose would be sufficient to meet the challenges and mandates of the ILO, whether it would be used only for training activities.
16. The speaker confirmed the relevance of the Office policies in regard to skills and safety and health but regretted that the information in the paper was not specific enough. He also considered that the target for MOSS compliance should be set at 100 per cent, not 95 per cent as indicated in the baseline.
17. With regard to the staff satisfaction survey planned for 2010, the Employers inquired whether it would be carried out by an independent body and what the frequency of future surveys would be, and requested that the Governing Body be informed of the results.
18. Concerning staff mobility and career development, the speaker pointed out that the increasing decentralization of the Office raised the issue of aligning HR policy in the field, as well as RBM and reporting policies. It was therefore important to have a transparent policy and a clear governance approach in that respect. The Employers' group supported the Field Structure Review for that reason.
19. While he was aware of the rigidity of the framework imposed by the United Nations in that regard, he considered that the proposals for merit recognition mechanisms remained vague, despite their importance for staff motivation. Lastly, he expressed the Employers' concern at the delay in IRIS roll-out in the regions.
20. The speaker concluded by saying that the point for decision in paragraph 38 of the document, recommending that the Governing Body endorse the Human Resources Strategy, should be amended by adding the following wording at the end: "taking into account the views expressed during the discussion". He said that his group remained at the Office's disposal to work on the implementation of the Strategy.
21. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC), acknowledged that the Human Resources Strategy was intended to be a high-level document and not to set out in detail the human resources activities over the following six years. The IMEC group welcomed the fact that the overall aim of the Strategy was to refocus the HR function and align it more to the ILO's strategic objectives and the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.
22. The speaker noted some disconnect under each outcome between the indicators, the targets for 2015 and the biennial milestones proposed. She expressed concern about the culture of conflict referred to in the Strategy and stated that overcoming that required a culture change in the Office. In particular, she sought clarification about indicator 4.2.
23. The speaker acknowledged the links between a system of rewards and recognition, and individual performance and increased accountability. She underlined in that connection that all managers in the ILO should be accountable for achieving the goals of the Office and therefore for the successful implementation of the changes that would arise from the Strategy. The IMEC group would like to receive more information about the new performance management system and its impact on the overall performance of the Organization.

24. Concerning the Office's commitment to the UN system-wide process of harmonizing business practices mentioned under outcome 3 only, the IMEC group expected the UN "Delivering as One" initiative to be an overarching issue in the implementation of the Strategy. She requested a report on the implementation of the 2006–09 Human Resources Strategy, to be presented at the next session of the Governing Body. She stated that the IMEC group stood ready to work with the Office to ensure that best-practice strategic human resources management was introduced across the ILO as quickly as possible.
25. The representative of the Government of France supported the statement made by the IMEC group and noted that the Strategy was a step in the right direction in terms of responding to the demands placed on the Organization. However, he stressed that, before presenting a new strategy, it was important to take stock of achievements and lessons learned from previous strategies. Results-based management was an important tool that needed to be used correctly and required everyone to assume their responsibilities. Performance management did not really seem to be developed or linked with any clear targets. Because of its mandate, the ILO should set an example within the UN system on best practice for performance-based recognition and rewards. The speaker indicated the need for an HR plan based on the future, as that would provide a forward-looking view of the skills required. While supporting the point for decision, the speaker requested more operational indicators regarding mobility, training and improved collaboration.
26. The representative of the Government of Australia supported the statement made by the IMEC group and stated that the Strategy represented an important shift in adopting HR best practices in management. He supported the alignment of the HR function with the strategic objectives of the Office and stressed that the outcomes of the HR Strategy could be better aligned with current indicators. He suggested that greater emphasis should be placed on collaboration across the Organization and requested clarification on the frequency of the staff survey as well as on the amount of resources available for conflict prevention and resolution.
27. The representative of the Government of Lebanon supported the statement made by the Workers' group regarding the capacity of the Office to attract the skills and competencies necessary to work in the ILO. Referring to the statement by the Staff Union representative, he underlined that the principles and values of the Office must be taken into account in the development of the Strategy.
28. The representative of the Government of Argentina stated that the Office was faced with two challenges: implementing the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the Global Jobs Pact, and performing the critical role of responding to the G20. He underlined that those challenges must be supported by an ambitious and forward-looking Strategy. He stressed the importance of attracting and retaining qualified technical cooperation staff and underlined that mobility needed to be examined in more detail. The speaker indicated that internal coordination and integration work must provide concrete results, to be understood by all parties involved, and underlined that coordination and cooperation in the UN system were essential. The speaker requested a further analysis of the number and type of staff required in the future and of the section on risks and assumptions. He reiterated his support for the point for decision and hoped that dialogue with the Governing Body would continue in the implementation of the Strategy.
29. The representative of the Government of South Africa, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, supported many of the points that had already been made. Problems surrounding dialogue with the staff must be taken very seriously to avoid demotivation. It was important to get back to the table as soon as possible. With regard to the document under discussion, he felt that information was lacking on succession planning mechanisms. He

also stressed the need for regional balance in the recruitment process, which did not always seem to be taken into account.

- 30.** The representative of the Government of India stressed the importance of the topics covered in the four outcomes and expressed support for the point for decision. He added that the Office should consider economy measures in recruitment procedures and decisions, that in order to ensure adequate representation from all the regions, more flexibility should be introduced into the Recruitment, Assignment and Placement System (RAPS), and that emphasis should be placed on training to improve interaction with the tripartite constituents.
- 31.** The representative of the Government of Japan, speaking on behalf of the Asia–Pacific group (ASPAG), considered that the document was a major step in the right direction and that its objectives were both ambitious and necessary. The Strategy also showed evidence of HR best practices. ASPAG strongly supported the strategic aim of linking the HR Strategy not only to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the Global Jobs Pact, but also to the other management strategies. The speaker supported the results-based framework, but felt that some of the indicators and milestones did not seem to reflect accurately the particular strategic objective they were intended to support.
- 32.** ASPAG welcomed the Office’s continued efforts to promote diversity in the composition of staff, and urged the Office to maintain its focus on geographic distribution. The group requested the Office to report on the regional representation of staff. In that context, it also requested the Office to review the linguistic requirements in vacancy announcements. ASPAG suggested that outcomes 2, 3 and 4 should be strengthened to assist further in promoting a shift towards a broader and more positive culture. Referring to paragraph 36 of the document, ASPAG requested clarification on the proportion of the budget to be allocated to support services, compared to the amount remaining for the implementation of the four strategic outcomes.
- 33.** The representative of the Government of Japan indicated that his Government supported the statements made by the IMEC group and ASPAG, particularly with regard to under-represented nationalities. In respect of paragraph 13 of the document, he supported efforts towards effective succession planning, which would allow for progress on rebalancing the grading structure, and requested statistical data in that regard, including on the evolution of the grading structure.
- 34.** In response to the Committee’s comments and questions, the Director of HRD indicated that human resources management was a complex field and that all comments and suggestions from the Committee were very welcome and would be taken into account.
- 35.** There were certain limitations to the amount of detail the Office could present in a high-level document. The Office had not only undertaken an analysis of the HR needs in the following six years, but also an assessment of the previous strategy and the lessons learned. The analysis had identified which tools had worked and which tools had not. On that basis, the HR practices and tools would need to be revisited to align them more closely with the ILO’s objectives. Work had already begun on the details of the activities that the Office had to undertake in the short term.
- 36.** The HR Strategy was a long-term strategy for six years. Some of the proposed measurements of its progress and impact might not be perfect but were starting points, reflected with the baseline indicators. Given the standard framework and the desired overall approach used for all RBM strategies, the indicators and milestones proposed had been used for two different purposes. The indicators were intended to provide examples of HR actions in respect of which the Office could measure progress and measure the impact

of the overall Strategy. She explained that the Office's intention was to set realistic but ambitious targets over a period of six years and to adapt, review and adjust the indicators and targets as it implemented the Strategy. She emphasized in that respect the importance of continuing discussions with the Committee.

37. On recruitment and selection, she stressed the importance of the ILO brand as an excellent employer both for its employment conditions and the values it represented. Such values were reflected in the HR competency framework, and included integrity, sensitivity to diversity, teamwork and collaboration. She indicated that the Office already had several tools in place to measure and assess diversity (including national and geographical diversity), expertise and competencies, but that it needed to attract younger and highly qualified staff through effective and efficient recruitment and selection procedures.
38. On conflict prevention and resolution, indicator 4.2 reflected the relationship between the number of work-related conflicts that could be resolved through informal mechanisms and those that could not be resolved informally and eventually went through the formal mechanisms. The ILO's conflict prevention and resolution system shifted the emphasis and resources away from formal dispute adjudication procedures to informal conflict resolution. The Office of the Mediator provided training on conflict prevention and resolution, and the system encouraged conflict resolution through dialogue and negotiations. At the time of discussion, 80 per cent of reported disputes were resolved through informal procedures and 20 per cent went to the Joint Appeals Advisory Board (JAAB). The target was to limit the proportion of cases going through the formal procedures to no more than one quarter.
39. Conflict prevention and resolution represented less than 5 per cent of HRD's budget. The resources were mainly used to fund the Office of the Mediator and the JAAB. The figure of 39 per cent that appeared in the document represented the percentage of all HR resources supporting outcome 4 (creating an enabling working environment in the Office), which included formal and informal conflict resolution mechanisms and also safety and security, medical services, management of leave and family entitlements.
40. She concurred that the UN "Delivering as One" initiative was a cross-cutting issue not only for the HR Strategy but in the overall implementation of the Decent Work Agenda. As far as the HR Strategy was concerned, the ILO's partnership with the UN system was addressed mainly under outcome 3: collaboration. The Strategy also referred to the need to simplify certain HR practices and to harmonize them within the UN system, as well as to the need for the active participation of the ILO in UN system-wide training activities on UN leadership and UN country team management requirements (outcome 1).
41. The Office intended to encourage further the mobility of ILO staff in collaboration, not only with other international organizations, but also with other entities, including employers' and workers' organizations and the private sector, in a manner that preserved the independence of the international civil service. In terms of internal mobility, the Office continued to be proactive in encouraging staff mobility between headquarters and the field and within field duty stations, as well as functional mobility.
42. Staff surveys would be conducted regularly and independently, and the results would be shared with the staff as well as with the Governing Body.
43. Current policies on rewards and recognition to promote good performance, such as the merit increment and personal promotion systems, had been introduced in the 1980s and had shown their limitations. The Office intended to use the same financial envelope available to adapt or replace them. That would be done in consultation with the Staff Union.

44. Concerning the question on staff security and safety, she noted that the Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health continued to work on issues concerning staff safety and health, including the question of asbestos and the building renovation project. Information on those issues was provided regularly to the Building Subcommittee.
45. She reiterated the availability of the HRD team to make presentations on specific human resources practices to the interested members of the Committee.
46. No objection having been raised to the amendment proposed by the Employers' group to the point for decision, the Chairperson declared it approved, as amended.
47. *The Committee recommends to the Governing Body that it endorse the Human Resources Strategy 2010–15, taking into account the views expressed by the Committee.*
48. Referring to the various comments made during the discussion on the culture of conflict, the Director-General stressed his profound belief in social dialogue and the values of the Organization. One of the first measures he had introduced after his appointment in 1999 was collective bargaining as the main means of determining conditions of service in the Office. The ILO, since then, had been operating on that basis, bringing about a series of reforms, and he remained convinced that the right choice had been made. However, if the current collective agreement on recruitment and selection proved to be an obstacle to moving forward on the important and urgent reforms required to meet the mandate conferred upon the Organization by the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, the Global Jobs Pact and the G20 statement, it may be necessary to consider whether it was still compatible with those demands. He hoped that constructive and respectful dialogue would resume in the Joint Negotiating Committee on those issues, in order to meet the ambitious objectives of the HR Strategy and, through it, the challenges facing the Organization.

### III. Amendments to the Staff Regulations (Seventeenth item on the agenda)

49. The Committee had before it a paper<sup>2</sup> on amendments to the Staff Regulations. The Chairperson introduced the paper, noting that the point for decision was contained in paragraph 8.
50. Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, indicated that his group supported both of the proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations. With regard to the amendment concerning levels of compensation, he said that the Workers' group was pleased that the ILO was taking such an initiative and that it was a step in the right direction.
51. Mr Julien, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, stated that his group supported the proposal for amendment as set out in paragraph 8. However, he requested clarifications concerning the purpose and financial implications of the proposed amendment to Annex II of the Staff Regulations.
52. The Director of HRD responded to that request by indicating that the ILO did not participate in the UN Malicious Acts Insurance Policy. The ILO nevertheless wished to grant similar coverage to that of the United Nations, without distinguishing between the

<sup>2</sup> GB.306/PFA/17.

different causes of service-incurred incidents. Without such coverage, the only option open to the Office would be ex-gratia payments. The overall cost of the coverage to the ILO would not be greater than that incurred by the UN Malicious Acts Insurance Policy.

**53. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body approve the amendments to the Staff Regulations contained in paragraphs 2 and 6 of the document.***

#### **IV. Report of the International Civil Service Commission** (Eighteenth item on the agenda)

**54.** The Committee had before it a paper<sup>3</sup> on the report of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). The Chairperson noted that the point for decision was contained in paragraph 6.

**55.** Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, supported the point for decision.

**56.** Mr Julien, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, supported the point for decision.

**57. *The Committee recommends to the Governing Body that it:***

**(a) *accept the recommendations of the ICSC, subject to their approval by the United Nations General Assembly, on the following entitlements:***

**(i) *an increase of 3.04 per cent in the base/floor salary;***

**(ii) *consequential increases in separation payments, for staff in the Professional and higher categories; and***

**(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.***

#### **V. Matters relating to the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO** (Nineteenth item on the agenda)

##### **(a) Statute of the Tribunal**

**58.** The Committee had before it a document<sup>4</sup> concerning the Statute of the Tribunal. The Chairperson noted that the point for decision contained in paragraph 6 proposed that the matter of the locus standi of the Staff Union should be deferred until the Governing Body's session in March 2011.

<sup>3</sup> GB.306/PFA/18.

<sup>4</sup> GB.306/PFA/19/1.

59. Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, said that the document provided another example of how the ILO's position compared with that of other UN organizations. The ILO's Tribunal had a significant record and was quoted in law courts across the world. The Workers' group found it difficult to accept that the ILO should base its position on that of another UN entity rather than taking the lead on the matter. He felt that the Committee should be ready to take a decision in March 2010, rather than waiting for the outcome of the UN General Assembly's deliberations.
60. Mr Julien, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, stated that his group supported the point for decision as set out in the paper.
61. Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, said that, as the ILO had expertise in human resource matters that was second to none, there was no reason to postpone discussion of the matter to 2011. The Workers' group therefore did not support the point for decision, and would prefer the decision to be taken earlier, and no later than the March 2010 session.
62. Mr Julien, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, said that the ILO was engaged in a process of dialogue with the other United Nations agencies. Seeing that coherence between all such agencies was very important, the Employers supported the point for decision as proposed by the Office.
63. The Chairperson noted that there was no agreement within the Committee on the point for decision as proposed.
64. *In light of the above, the Committee recommends that the Governing Body postpone the consideration of the item to its 307th Session (March 2010).*

**(b) Recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)**

65. The Committee had before it a document <sup>5</sup> on the recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM).
66. Mr Julien, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, supported the point for decision, but wished for informal consultations to be held in view of the increasing importance of the Tribunal.
67. Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, supported the point for decision as well as the Employers' call for consultations. He further stated that the request for recognition was yet another indication of the level of confidence shown in the ILO's Administrative Tribunal.
68. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body approve the recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), with effect from the date of such approval, and that informal consultations take place concerning the workload of the Tribunal.*

<sup>5</sup> GB.306/PFA/19/2.

**(c) Composition of the Tribunal**

69. The Committee had before it a document <sup>6</sup> on the composition of the Tribunal.
70. Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, supported the point for decision.
71. Mr Julien, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, supported the point for decision.
72. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body propose to the 99th Session of the International Labour Conference, the renewal, through the draft resolution below, of the terms of office of Mr Gordillo, Mr Rouiller and Mr Frydman for three years:*

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization

*Decides*, in accordance with article III of the Statute of the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization, to renew the terms of office of Mr Agustín Gordillo (Argentina), Mr Claude Rouiller (Switzerland) and Mr Patrick Frydman (France) for three years.

**VI. Other personnel questions: Special Payments Fund**

73. The Committee had before it a document <sup>7</sup> for decision regarding the replacement of a member of the Board of the Special Payments Fund. The Chairperson noted that the point for decision was contained in paragraph 3.
74. Mr Julien, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, stated that his group did not, in principle, have any objection to the decision. He pointed out, however, that, if the Governing Body's views were being sought on the appointment, the curriculum vitae of the proposed appointee should have been attached to the document.
75. Sir Roy Trotman, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, supported the point for decision and presented his group's good wishes to the new member in her future work with the Special Payments Fund.
76. The Director of HRD clarified that the Office was required to submit the proposal for the approval of the Committee, and indicated that in future, the corresponding curricula vitae would be provided.

<sup>6</sup> GB.306/PFA/19/3.

<sup>7</sup> GB.306/PFA/20/1.

**77. The Committee recommends that the Governing Body appoint Ms Susan Hudson as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Special Payments Fund, effective 1 March 2010.**

Geneva, 16 November 2009.

(Signed) Sir R. Trotman  
Reporter

*Points for decision:* Paragraph 47;  
Paragraph 53;  
Paragraph 57;  
Paragraph 64;  
Paragraph 68;  
Paragraph 72;  
Paragraph 77.



## Appendix

### **Statement by the Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee of the ILO Governing Body (306th Session – November 2009)**

Chairperson, Director-General, members of the Governing Body, dear colleagues and others present here today,

Today, our Organization faces both great challenges and great opportunities. Great challenges because we find ourselves – as global citizens – in the midst of another financial and economic crisis. This is nothing new, and something that the ILO – through its competent, committed staff – has helped our constituents face many times in the past. We are also presented with important opportunities, as the profile of our Organization has been raised globally, particularly in the light of the economic crisis.

The people who come to work for the ILO come because of the ideals and values it represents. They have been, in a way, vindicated in that the employment-led and rights-based approach has gained credibility in the face of a faltering global financial infrastructure. I know that for me, and for many like me, this was a major factor in considering a career in the Office.

The Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee has before it today the Human Resources Strategy. This document is intended to provide you with a road map for how the administration intends to further promote the values of the Office and to achieve the objectives which have been set out through the Social Justice Declaration and the Global Jobs Pact.

As you can imagine, an important document such as this is also looked at by the staff. It gives them an idea of the direction which the Office wishes to take, including the conditions under which they will serve this Organization. I want to begin my statement to you with the first question we raised with HRD when discussing the Strategy in detail for the first time a few weeks ago:

What is the relationship the administration envisages with the staff?

The document the Governing Body has before it, while an improvement over previous drafts, gives little indication. Some of the indications it does give are troubling. It mentions the role of the HR function as “a partner with management”. Indeed, this document seems to be focused on management. We recognize that the development of management capacities is an important objective, and one which has appeared in each HR Strategy since 1999.

However, there is little in the document for the G5 administrative assistant in Addis, the chief technical adviser in Bangkok, or the new staff hired to support the Decent Work Country Programmes worldwide. What about the precarious official, in her fifth year of short-term, external collaborator and technical cooperation contracts? Or the IPEC colleague who has been in the Office for 15 years, who has a proven track record but still has one-year contracts, and is still not considered as an internal candidate for competitions?

Where is the field structure review, and an indication of how the impact of the restructuring will be consulted with the Union? Where is the information on a strategic approach to mobility, including mobility between the ILO and the Turin Centre? The passing reference to recruitment and selection procedures, which I will touch on later, and the contracts policy underestimates the importance of these matters, and the considerable amount of work that remains to be done.

We are constantly reminded of the need for staff to be open to change. When we talk about change, we must also promote those values which make us unique as an organization. Which values do we take with us as we embark on the process of change?

While the Strategy contains a great deal of the latest HR terminology, it seems to overlook some essential values for our Organization, values which are essential to ensure buy-in to the proposed changes. While the document now makes reference to “constructive dialogue with staff representatives”, the words “negotiation” and “collective bargaining” are notably absent. While we welcome the possibility of constructive dialogue, unilateral changes to collective agreements and staff regulations have been too frequent.

Allow me to provide two brief examples:

First, our experience with regard to consultation on the field structure review has been mixed. While we have held a number of cordial meetings with the administration, and have had particularly positive experiences with different regional directors and managers from the field, as well as with the Senior Adviser for Change Management, the amount of concrete information that has been shared has been limited. We have used the opportunity to raise the issue of the growing anxiety among staff and to request that the Office communicate regularly to dispel such apprehension. We have made multiple attempts to discuss policy solutions for those offices undergoing restructuring, without success. We have received no detailed information of the implementation plan. We remain hopeful that a substantive dialogue can be launched at the earliest stage possible – as the ILO itself promotes in its work on socially responsible restructuring – so that we can avoid a situation such as the one we faced in Abidjan, and which remains fresh in our memories.

Second, the issue of recruitment and selection is one which, in the ILO, is governed by both a collective agreement and the Staff Regulations. It is also a subject which has led to growing dissatisfaction and demotivation among staff – both in headquarters and in the field. It is not insignificant that the collective agreement was subject to unilateral changes which, in the opinion of the Staff Union, had a significant impact on the transparency, objectivity and rigour of the overall process.

In the face of unilateral changes to a collective agreement, the Union brought the issue before the Review Panel – an independent panel mandated to resolve collective disputes. The Panel concluded – unanimously and unambiguously – that the “unilateral modifications were in breach of the collective agreement and of Annex I of the Staff Regulations”. Again, this was not the Union saying that the Office should negotiate everything. This was an independent, impartial, expert opinion. In addition, the JAAB – our internal appeals body – observed in its latest annual report that the way the Office currently organized competitions did not follow the procedure set out in the Staff Regulations.

Despite these clear conclusions made by independent bodies, the Office continues to pretend that only minor changes were made, and that the procedures followed were fully objective and transparent. It is precisely because of this unwillingness to recognize the need to negotiate, in the face of clear, objective and impartial advice, that the Union felt it had no other choice than to suspend the negotiations. You cannot have it both ways. The Office cannot refuse to recognize the findings of an independent body calling on it to

negotiate changes which were implemented unilaterally, and then say that it is the Union's fault that there are no negotiations. Nor can it implement further changes without dialogue and then express surprise that the Union takes a position on those changes.

While the point of my presentation is not to focus on recruitment and selection procedures, this is, for the Staff Union Committee, one major area where changes required negotiation.

Let me conclude on this point by welcoming the initiative of the Office in launching the audit on recruitment and selection procedures currently being undertaken by the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight. We believe that this important report will provide an objective and factual assessment of the recruitment and selection procedures, and we look forward to the recommendations it will make for improvements.

I now want to turn briefly to a very serious – even fundamental – issue for ensuring that the conditions exist for the HR Strategy to be a success. It seems counter-intuitive for the ILO Staff Union to be here raising the question of freedom of association to the Governing Body. You have all heard that the Union has been blocked by the Office in its efforts to provide its legal adviser with an employment contract. All we have been asking for nearly seven years is the ability to provide an employment contract to our own legal adviser, paid by our own staff union dues, and managed by the Union.

We believe strongly that this follows from the right of workers' organizations to organize their administration and activities freely, as provided for under Convention No. 87, and the provision of appropriate facilities to the representatives of recognized public employees' organizations as may be appropriate in order to enable them to carry out their activities promptly and efficiently, as recognized by Convention No. 151. This is nothing new.

What is new, and what is particularly sobering is the following: only two weeks ago, we were surprised to learn that the publication of an official communication of the Union was blocked. This serious attack against freedom of expression cannot stand in an institution such as ours. You can disagree with us, object to our language and say that our opinions are completely unfounded. You can say that we are wrong. Sometimes, you may even be right. But to subject our communications with staff to any kind of advance approval process goes against the basic principles of freedom of association and freedom of expression.

The Committee on Freedom of Association itself has provided very clear guidance on the matter, stating: "The publication and distribution of news and information of general or special interest to trade unions and their members constitutes a legitimate trade union activity and the application of measures designed to control publication and means of information may involve serious interference by administrative authorities with this activity". In response to this action by the Office, the Union adopted a resolution on the protection of freedom of association and freedom of expression in the ILO at its Annual General Meeting, and is preparing to take legal action, and any other action deemed appropriate.

In closing, I want again to recall the values of the ILO – the values which brought us here to work, and for which we continue to move forward in achieving the objectives set out by our constituents.

This is precisely what the Union is doing – standing by these core values: demanding respect for freedom of association and demonstrating its openness to dialogue but taking strong action against violations of the duty to bargain in good faith. Despite efforts to ignore the Union, we are here. Despite efforts to stifle our communications, our message is

strong and clear. And when this all blows over, our flags – the flags of the ILO Staff Union and the ILO itself – will still be standing, and standing strongly.

It is no secret that the relationship between the Union and management has been difficult for some time, and seems to be in a deadlock now. This should be a concern to all of us here, as we all believe in the principles and values on which the ILO was founded. As Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee, I remain ready today to work towards overcoming these difficulties. We are committed to negotiating the policies, procedures and practices required to give effect to the Social Justice Declaration and the Global Jobs Pact. However, genuine negotiations can only take place if the administration commits to fully respect the principles of freedom of association – including freedom of expression – and the duty to bargain in good faith.

Which brings me back to my original question: What kind of relationship do you want with your staff? And what kind of relationship do you want with your Union?

Thank you.