



Governing Body

353rd Session, Geneva, 10–20 March 2025

Programme, Financial and Administrative Section

PFA

Date: 24 February 2025

Original: English

Decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the 78th session of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (2024)

Summary: This document summarizes the major topics discussed by the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board in 2024 and the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on the report of the 78th session of the Board (2024).

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Related documents: *Official records of the United Nations General Assembly, 79th session, Supplement No. 9: Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board*, A/79/9 (2024); United Nations General Assembly resolution, *United Nations pension system*, A/RES/79/253 (2024); and related documents. Further information on the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and its investments is available on the Fund's [website](#).

► Introduction

1. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly considered the report of 78th session of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (the “Board”) and related documents at its 79th session ¹ and adopted resolution 79/253 on 24 December 2024. ² A summary of the work of the Board at its three sessions held in 2024 – namely its 76th, 77th and 78th sessions – and of the decisions of the UN General Assembly on the Board’s report is provided below.

► Investment management

2. The market value of the assets of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (“the Fund”) increased from US\$77.9 billion as at 31 December 2022 to US\$88.2 billion as at 31 December 2023, an increase of US\$10.3 billion. As a result, over the 15-year period ending on 31 December 2023, the annualized real rate of return adjusted for the United States consumer price index was 4.8 per cent, above the performance of 2.2 per cent at the end of 2022 and the long-term objective of 3.5 per cent. The rate over the last 50 years performs at 4.5 per cent, hence also above the long-term objective of 3.5 per cent.
3. In its resolution, the UN General Assembly requested the Fund to continue to ensure that decisions in any market were implemented prudently, taking fully into account the four investment criteria, namely, safety, profitability, liquidity and convertibility, and to continue to diversify investment of the assets of the Fund among developed, developing and emerging markets, including in Africa and Asia, with a view to generating a positive social and environmental impact alongside the financial returns.
4. In addition, the UN General Assembly encouraged the Fund to identify suitable comparators with peers from various countries and provide a comparison thereof in its next report.

► Actuarial valuation

5. The external consulting actuary prepares an actuarial valuation of the Fund every two years, in odd years. The valuation determines whether the current and estimated future assets of the Fund will be sufficient to meet projected liabilities, to secure the sound financial health of the Fund, and to maintain the current contribution rate.
6. The assumptions serving as the basis for the next actuarial valuation were reviewed by the Board in 2023. The assumption for the long-term real rate of return was reduced to 3.4 per cent instead of the previous 3.5 per cent, while the assumption for the inflation rate was increased to 2.6 per cent instead of 2.5 per cent.

¹ UN General Assembly, *Official Records of the General Assembly, 79th session, Supplement No. 9: Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board*, A/79/9, 2024.

² UN General Assembly, resolution 79/253, *United Nations pension system*, A/RES/79/253 (2024).

7. Using a five-year smoothing methodology to determine the value of the assets, the actuarial valuation as at 31 December 2023 resulted in a funded ratio of 111.0 per cent, or a surplus representing 0.68 per cent of pensionable remuneration. The Committee of Actuaries and the consulting actuary concluded that the present contribution rate of 23.7 per cent of pensionable remuneration was sufficient to meet the benefit requirements under the plan.

► Budgetary, financial and auditing matters

8. The Board approved the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023, with the unqualified audit opinion of the Board of Auditors (external auditors).
9. The UN General Assembly approved the estimates of US\$156,944,800 for the Fund for 2025, an amount that was up from US\$139,789,700 in 2024 and US\$126,283,400 in 2023, which corresponds to an increase of approximately 12.3 per cent between 2024 and 2025, and of 24.3 per cent since 2023.
10. Services provided by the Fund to the secretariat of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee are budgeted for an amount of US\$5,448,800. This amount went down from US\$8,423,100 in 2024, a decrease of approximately 34.8 per cent between 2024 and 2025 and of 37.0 per cent since 2023.
11. The Board of Auditors noted that expenditures in the Pension Administration were not aligned with the approved budget appropriations and recommended that the Fund develop and implement effective measures that strengthen controls around budget monitoring. It also called for greater transparency and accountability by recommending that the Pension Administration disclose and break down separately the post resources requirements for the Geneva and New York offices with their respective workloads in the next budget proposals.
12. The UN General Assembly requested the Fund to undertake an evaluation of the staffing requirements, including new posts, and to incorporate into the next annual budget proposals an analysis of the vacant posts.

► Governance

13. In 2022, the Board established a Plan Review Group to perform a review of the pension plan. Before recommending the implementation of proposed pension plan changes, the Plan Review Group decided to wait for the results of the actuarial valuation in 2023 to decide whether the long-term financial situation of the Fund would be able to accommodate the proposed changes to the pension plan. However, the reported surplus of 2023 (0.68 per cent of pensionable remuneration) being less than one third of the surplus reported in the 2021 valuation (2.30 per cent of pensionable remuneration), the Board concurred with the recommendation of the Committee of Actuaries to give priority to the long-term solvency of the Fund and see how the next few years developed before adopting any of the proposed changes.
14. In view of the recent applications for membership expressed by several international organizations, the Board established criteria to review the admission of new member organizations into the Fund. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, based in The Hague, was admitted as a member organization of the Fund as from 1 January 2025.

15. The Board appointed a working group to conduct a review of the governance reform initiated in 2021 and formulate recommendations in 2025 on the Fund's governance.

► Amendments to the Regulations and administration of the Fund

16. As part of its mandate, the Plan Review Group considered proposals aimed at simplifying and clarifying of the Regulations, Rules and Pension Adjustment System of the Fund to facilitate the administration of benefits without changing the nature of any benefits. The Plan Review Group considered approximately 50 proposals for the simplification of amendments, including the removal of obsolete provisions, changes to facilitate understanding and amendments to streamline administration. All amendments proposed, having no bearing on the pension plan, were endorsed by the Board and by the UN General Assembly.
17. The UN General Assembly approved the implementation in April 2025 of a new scale for small pensions for participants with 15 or more years of contributory service and requested that the Pension Administration propose options for a longer-term mechanism for adjusting the scale for small pensions in the future.

► Other matters

18. The Board discussed the reports submitted by its advisory committees and the related appointments, as well as information technology aspects, the Emergency Fund for beneficiaries suffering financial hardship, the report of the medical consultant and disability-related issues.
19. The Standing Committee met twice to examine individual legal appeals. At the second meeting, one appeal from an ILO participant was examined and dismissed.