The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee opened the first session of the Annual General Meeting, and welcomed the many members who were present.

1. **Election of a Chairperson**

   Maria-Luz Vega was unanimously elected Chairperson of the AGM (first session).

2. **Adoption of the agenda**

   The Chairperson thanked the Meeting for electing her, and, before moving on to the adoption of the agenda, requested that the Meeting observe a minute of silence for the UN colleagues who were victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

   *The agenda (doc. SU/AGM/2010/1/D.1) was adopted without change.*

3. **Discussion of the draft programme and strategy of the Staff Union for 2010**

   The Chairperson of the Staff Union Committee introduced the item (doc. SU/AGM/2010/1/D.2). He recalled that 2009 was a particularly difficult time for union and staff, but that, thanks to the strength of the members, there was a clear message that staff expect the Organisation to live up to the values it promotes in member States. Following on the report structure adopted in 2009, he outlined three main objectives from the Programme and Strategy – freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining; recruitment and selection; and precarious work – in order to focus work on concrete action plans. Drawing on the lessons learned from 2009, this will necessarily involve a strengthened communication strategy.
The Chairperson then invited participants to comment on the draft Programme and Strategy priority by priority.

Section 1:

Priority I: Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining within the ILO

A participant wished to emphasise the need for better communication, by adding, in Objective 2, the words “…and better communicate at all times with, and mobilise, staff at headquarters and field offices to achieve these goals”.

The amendment was adopted by consensus.

A request to change the order of the objectives under this priority was not carried.

All three objectives were adopted as amended.

Priority II: Recruitment and selection

In response to a participant’s concern that the objectives concerning recruitment and selection may need to be firmer if concrete progress is not forthcoming from the Administration, the President of the Staff Union Committee said that the Committee would develop a concrete plan with dates to put to staff in headquarters and the field. The plan will aim to ensure that the recruitment and selection procedures conform to the rules, including, if possible, engaging in negotiations to ensure greater transparency and objectiveness.

An amendment was submitted to add a further objective to the existing two objectives, as follows: “Convene an extraordinary general meeting within nine months to consider further action if these goals are not achieved”.

The amendment was adopted by consensus and the objectives approved as amended.

Priority III: Precarious use of contracts

A participant sought to strengthen the links between quality jobs for staff and the observance of the Social Justice Declaration, by submitting the following amendment to Objective 3: After the word “outposting” add “; and help ensure quality jobs for all ILO staff through the reaffirmation that an independent, secure and competent international civil service is the first requirement for an effective implementation of the Social Justice Declaration, and an effective articulation between HQ and field structures is necessary for fulfilling the ILO mandate”.

The amendment was adopted by consensus and the objectives approved as amended.

Section 2:

Section 2 of the Programme and Strategy, referring to Regular and recurring work, was also discussed point by point.
It was confirmed that the report was developed with the input of field colleagues, and that titular members from the regions were not at the Annual General Meeting because resources are going into a Global Meeting at the same time as the AGM in October and the celebrations of the 90th anniversary of the staff union.

There were congratulations for the staff union on its collaboration with the Gender Bureau, and for the work-life balance working group, which was instrumental in getting a teleworking policy adopted in the Office.

Several participants raised the importance of safety and health issues and proposed amendments to capture the need for attention on areas not adequately covered by the Office, namely ergonomics, full evacuation drills, and psychosocial services, including the need for a full-time social welfare officer.

_The amendments concerning point IV were adopted by consensus_ (see appendix 1).

All other points were adopted without comment.

**Section 2 was approved as amended.**

**Section 3:**

In discussions on Section 3 on Staff Union means of action, several participants took the floor on specific issues. These included training and the need for the Staff Union Committee to communicate, to new recruits as well as to officials who have been in the Office for some time, what it has done and is doing to uphold the rights of staff.

In response to a participant’s request for information on how it was planned to increase membership, a member of the Staff Union Committee confirmed that the “Staff Union day” organised in headquarters in October last year was very successful in terms of new membership and that this will be done on a regular basis. The Staff Union is active in the information sessions for new officials. More regular, face-to-face contacts by union stewards and committee members with individual staff members will also be held.

Other participants congratulated the Staff Union on its excellent solidarity work across the UN system through CCISUA. It was proposed that the recent affiliation to the Public Services International should be mentioned.

Proposals for amendments were left to the Staff Union Committee to word (see appendix 1).

Section 3 was approved as amended.

_The Programme and Strategy of the Staff Union for 2010 was adopted, as amended, by consensus._
4. **Adoption of the budget for the financial exercise 2010**

The treasurer presented the budget for the financial exercise 2010, and pointed out that the surplus of expenditure in 2010, mainly due to organising a Global Meeting, would be balanced out in 2011 when there would be no Regional Meetings or a Global Meeting.

A participant welcomed the increase in allocation to the Staff Union Assistance Fund and made a plea for more members and contributions.

*The budget for the financial exercise 2010 was adopted by consensus.*

Following the customary expressions of thanks, the Chairperson closed the first session of the Annual General Meeting 2010.

*The session ended at 15.30*
Appendix 1

Programme and Strategy of the Staff Union
for the year 2010
Introduction

2009 represented a challenging year for the Staff Union Committee. While there were some important advances, most notably in the Union’s historic decision to join Public Services International, in policies such as personal promotions, in the training of staff representatives in the regions, and in the solidarity shown by colleagues in mobilizing during the March Governing Body, there were also real difficulties. The main ones were a growing dissatisfaction among the staff in the recruitment and selection system, and a spread of precarious employment across the house. While both of these issues require good faith negotiations between the Union and the Administration, such negotiations would prove challenging if not impossible in the environment which has existed for some months.

The Union has remained open and willing to bargain collectively with management, in an effort to find solutions to the problems ILO staff currently faces. However, the political will to negotiate was not always present on management’s side. This was particularly evident when the Union was forced to call an Extraordinary General Meeting in the face of unilateral proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations in March 2009. In November, the Union itself proposed a “roadmap” outlining a series of steps aimed at re-launching good faith dialogue between the Union and the Administration. It is hoped that these efforts will lead to the possibility of re-building confidence and improving the industrial relations climate in the Office.

Many of the agenda items identified in the Programme and Strategy of 2009, both in terms of the priorities and the recurring work, required long-term commitment in order to produce sustainable results. For this reason, the current Programme and Strategy reflects the same commitments made in 2009, with some slight adjustments. The Union will continue to work to ensure full respect for freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, fair, equitable and transparent recruitment and selection policies and to bring an end to precarious work in the ILO.

While there have been some notable openings in recent weeks, the Union will continue to organize, to train representatives and to put in place the necessary systems and structures to mobilize staff both in headquarters and the field, if new efforts at dialogue prove ineffective. A second Global Meeting of Staff Representatives, scheduled to coincide with the 90th Anniversary of the Staff Union, will represent an opportunity to train and communicate with Staff Union Representatives, and to bring attention to the critical issues our staff currently faces.

The Programme and Strategy continues to distinguish between the Union’s priorities, its means of action, and its statutory and recurring functions. It is intended to focus the Union’s actions on those fundamental areas that require particular attention by the Union. Slight changes have been made under the recurring work items to reflect new developments and lessons learned.
SECTION 1 – Priority Areas for Action

PRIORITY I  
**Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining within the ILO**

In addition to the two resolutions adopted at the second session of the 2008 Annual General Meeting, two more resolutions\(^1\) were adopted in 2009 following attacks against collective bargaining rights and freedom of expression. Respect for the principles of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, as enshrined in numerous International Labour Standards and acknowledged in the Recognition and Procedural Agreement concluded between the Office and the Union, represents a fundamental prerequisite for stable and productive staff-management relations in the Office.

Objectives

1. Engage all appropriate efforts to recruit a Legal Adviser of the Staff Union’s own choosing, using a regular ILO employment contract.

2. Secure due observance of collective agreements, the Staff Regulations and other relevant texts, prevent any initiative of unilateral modification of terms and conditions of employment, and better communicate at all times with, and mobilise, staff at headquarters and field offices to achieve these goals.

3. Ensure respect of the principles of collective bargaining by the Administration, including prior consultation / negotiations with the Staff Union on policy decisions that are likely to have an impact on ILO staff, notably in relation to the Field Restructuring.\(^2\)

PRIORITY II  
**Recruitment and Selection**

Fair, transparent and objective recruitment and selection processes with equal participation of Administration and the Staff Union in the processes represent one of the cornerstones of an independent, secure and competent international civil service. Growing numbers of staff members: candidates, panel members and responsible chiefs, have approached the Staff Union to raise serious concerns with recruitment and selection of both local and international staff in the Office. Arbitrariness in this area, efforts to influence the outcome of recruitment procedures, and appointments unlawfully made outside of the established mechanisms erode confidence in the system, and impact on the motivation and morale of the staff. A good and transparent selection procedure avoids further problems that may occur resulting from the recruitment of officials who do not have the requested qualifications and perform tasks they have not been trained for.

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\(^1\) See: ILO/SU/RES/97 and ILO/SU/RES/99.

\(^2\) The 304\(^{th}\) Governing Body “request[ed] the Office and the Staff Union to consult in dealing with the impact on the staff affected by the implementation of these proposals.”
Objectives

1. Engage all required efforts with a view to ensuring that all recruitment and selection procedures, both for locally and internationally recruited posts, at Headquarters and in the field, conform to the Staff Regulations and the Collective Agreement on recruitment and selection, exercising particular vigilance where competitions are declared unsuccessful.

2. Re-launch negotiations on the revision of the Collective Agreement on Recruitment and Selection procedures, taking account of the 2008 findings of the Review Panel, harmonizing toward best practice the systems currently in place in headquarters, the field and the Turin Centre, and for technical cooperation projects. Making sure that the Staff Union be involved from the very beginning of the call for candidature of any vacant position in the ILO.

3. Convene an extraordinary general meeting within nine months to consider further action if these goals are not achieved.

PRIORITY III Precarious Use of Contracts

Following the adoption of the latest contractual framework by the International Civil Service Commission at its 60th Session in 2005, a review of the ILO’s contract policy has taken place within the context of a JNC Working Group. Progress has to date been slow, and the growing trend to use precarious contracts to carry out core work of the ILO is a major concern. Precarious employment conditions exist for many short-term, daily and external collaboration contracts as well as for technical cooperation staff and those in Branch Offices and “National Coordinators” (formerly National Correspondents), many of whom can work for years in the Office with no job security.

Objectives

1. Conclude negotiations resulting in rationalized contracts policy, in conformity with relevant International Labour Standards while ensuring the best possible conditions for employment security, reasonable probationary periods, appropriate entitlements and indemnities for contracts which are terminated or not renewed, and adequate protections against precariousness in the use of short-term positions.

2. Ensure that cases of inappropriate use of employment contracts and external collaboration contracts are brought to light, and solutions sought in the interest of the affected staff.

3. Contain efforts to increase the use of precarious contracts, outsourcing or outposting; and help ensure quality jobs for all ILO staff through the reaffirmation that an independent, secure and competent international civil service is the first requirement for an effective implementation of the Social Justice Declaration, and an effective articulation between HQ and field structures is necessary for fulfilling the ILO mandate.

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1 In particular the Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158) and the Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198)
SECTION 2 – Regular and Recurring Work

I. Addressing Concerns of Staff Based Outside of Headquarters

1. In addition to following-up on the conclusions and recommendations of each Regional Staff Union Committee meeting, the Union will continue to address the specific concerns of its membership in field offices, including:

   • The impact on staff of the Field Restructuring, including the return of delocalized staff to Abidjan;
   • The staffing and contractual situation of ILO/ITC Turin staff, especially in the context of the difficult financial situation of the Centre;
   • Discrimination between local and international staff in security policies, entitlements and allowances;
   • The review of the General Service Salary Survey Methodology, Mobility and Hardship Allowance, and Post Adjustment;
   • Classification exercise of GS and NO staff and establishment of criteria for GS to NO promotion;
   • Employment and working conditions for Branch Offices and National Coordinators.

2. Influence through consultation and negotiation the implementation of the Field Structure Review, including, *inter alia*:

   • Engaging field staff representatives in effective dialogue/negotiations with the administration on aspects of the review with a potential impact on staff.
   • Sharing relevant information in an accurate and prompt manner with all staff members.
   • The establishment of a coherent mobility policy, based on transparency and equal treatment;
   • Addressing specific concerns of National Coordinators, and guarding against further use of non-career, flexible and precarious contractual arrangements, and
   • Ensuring career progression for National Professional Officers, including to the categories of NO-C and NO-D, in line with the UN Common System.

II. Work-Life Balance and Gender Equality

1. Policies and administrative arrangements for improving work-life balance reflect the current needs and demands of staff in both field duty stations and headquarters, through:

   • Analysis and dissemination of the results of the work-life balance questionnaire/survey and use of its results as the basis for gender-sensitive policy formulation, and
   • Based on the results of the questionnaire, on the principles embodied in international labour standards and on international best practice, negotiate policy proposals aimed at an improved work-life balance, including the adoption of measures on working time and work organization (job-sharing, compressed and/or flexible working hours, etc.).

2. Working in close collaboration with the Gender Bureau, develop proposals and concrete measures to advance gender equality in the Office.
III. Titularization and Personal Promotions

1. Ensure that all relevant procedures are followed in a coherent manner.

2. Negotiate with the Administration to introduce improvements and greater clarity – including the full recognition of “service to the organization” on technical cooperation projects, the Turin Centre and long periods on short-term assignments – in both the titularization procedures and in the discussions on reward and recognition mechanisms.

IV. Staff Safety, Health and Security

1. Improve implementation of Occupational Safety and Health policies in headquarters and the field, through:
   - Active follow-up to outstanding issues from 2009, including publication of the new OSH policy;
   - Implementation of Occupational Accident Reporting foreseen in the forthcoming OSH policy;
   - Organization of information and training sessions, in conjunction with the Medical Service and HRD where appropriate, to assist staff with OSH matters.
   - Addressing emerging issues of concern, particularly ergonomic factors, full evacuation procedures and the psycho-social dimension of OSH, insisting on the prevention and the identification of suitable solutions to stress at work and the need for a full-time social welfare officer.

2. Strengthen the role of ACOSH at Headquarters, support the establishment of joint OSH committees in the field, and strengthen linkages between field committees and ACOSH to ensure that priorities in field offices are addressed by the Administration. This will include:
   - Establishment of Terms of Reference for the Medical Service, and consideration of further measures to implement the smoking policy;
   - Promoting regular site visits and OSH walkthroughs, including the development of an OSH walkthrough checklist, and
   - Mapping field concerns, including technical cooperation project offices, related to OSH.

3. Continue to raise staff concerns and influence security policy at the ILO, including in the regions, and at the inter-agency level through:
   - Ongoing active participation, through our international Federation, CCISUA and other international Federations, in all inter-agency security policy discussions, including the UN Security Management System Network, and the HLCM High-Level Steering Committee on Safety and Security;
   - Consulting with the Administration on the implementation of security policy within the Office, both at headquarters and in the field, with a particular focus on project offices, and
• Continuing to raise issues related to discrimination between international and national staff as regards security and evacuation policies, including entitlements and allowances linked to high-risk duty stations.

V. Social Security

1. Ensure that the policies adopted by the SHIF Management Committee and the UN Joint Staff Pension Board reflect the needs and interests of all concerned, including active staff and former officials, through:

   • Regular and close communications between the Staff Union, including the Former Officials’ Section, and the participants’ representatives in the SHIF Management Committee and the UNJSPB;
   • Encouraging and organizing information sessions, general assemblies or referenda to ensure that any proposed changes to the structure, programme, contribution rates or benefits provided of either system is clearly and fully explained to the participants, and that any decisions taken are informed by genuine consultations.

VI. Training Policy

1. Ensure that staff concerns are taken into account in the ILO training policy, and that the policy is implemented in a fair and transparent manner, through:

   • Strengthening mechanisms for the Staff Union to be consulted on the use of staff development funds, regularly evaluating the impact of training expenditure, and promoting feedback from staff regarding implementation and assessing how proposed training programmes satisfy staff members’ needs and request;
   • Reviewing the interim performance of the staff development fund, and
   • Promoting more regular contact with learning coordinators, with participation of staff representatives.

2. Update the terms of reference for the Joint Training Council, in light of the changes implemented in training policy since signing the Collective Agreement on Personal Development Plans.

VII. Support to ILO Staff in Conflict Prevention and Resolution

1. Contribute to conflict prevention at the ILO by seeing that the rules are better observed:

   • Provision of legal advice to the Staff Union Committee and its working groups and to Union members, at headquarters and in the field;
   • Development of a library of relevant juridical texts, major decisions of the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO, etc.;
   • Participation in information meetings dealing with legal issues.
Contribution to the resolution of individual and collective disputes at the ILO:

- In the case of individual complaints, provide advice on formal and informal channels for dispute resolution, intervene in disputes with a view to informal resolution and, if necessary, draft appeals to be lodged with the competent bodies (in particular HRD, JAAB and Administrative Tribunal), in accordance with the priorities set by the Staff Union Committee;
- Strengthen the system for exchanging information between the Staff Union Committee and the Union’s legal adviser on cases calling for formal action;
- In the case of collective disputes involving the Staff Union, provide advice and drafting of appeals to be lodged with the competent bodies (Review Panel, JAAB, Administrative Tribunal).

VIII. Interns

1. Improve the working conditions of interns both at the headquarters and in the field, through:

   - Improving linkages with the main stakeholders (ILO Interns Network, HRD, Regional Management, Departmental Intern Coordinators) and increasing participation of interns in meetings or events of the Union;
   - Continue discussions to establish a mechanism to fix and adjust the interns stipend, both in headquarters and in the field;
   - Address concerns related to the physical working conditions and recognition of interns.
   - Ensure that the internship policy is complied with, and in particular that interns are not used to replace ILO regular staff.

SECTION 3 – Staff Union Means of Action

I. Communication

1. Roll-out of a communication strategy to inform staff of major issues and mobilize them, drawing their attention to Staff Union initiatives:

   - Update communication methods and equipment for putting across the Staff Union’s messages effectively to the widest possible audience;
   - Renewal of UNION Magazine (to keep staff updated on ongoing actions: actual use of dues collected, difficulties encountered with the Administration, proposed new initiatives, etc.);
   - Improvement of the Union’s web site and preparation of information and training material for consultation online;
   - Organization of regular informational meetings dealing with topical issues and attended by experts on the matters discussed.
   - Promotion of ongoing Staff Union actions, including campaigns to strengthen the visibility of the SUC and its legitimacy vis-à-vis the Administration.
II. Representation

1. Reach 70% coverage of Union Stewards by introducing a recruitment plan in units with no staff representatives, and strengthen the network of Union stewards;
   - Organize trainings for Union Stewards and representatives of field units;
   - Help Union Stewards organize meetings at the unit level and to maintain good relations with line managers.

2. On the occasion of the ILO Staff Union’s 90th anniversary, organize a global meeting of all Union representatives at Headquarters and in the field, with a view to facilitating the implementation of the Union’s programme and strategy and to allowing exchanges on best practices and issues of shared concern.

III. Training

1. Provide information and training to union representatives throughout the Organization.
   - Development of informational PowerPoint presentations on subjects of interest to union representatives;
   - Organize training on staff regulations, relevant policies, dispute resolution and other topics relevant to staff representation held in both headquarters and during Regional Committee Meetings.

IV. Use of financial resources

With a view to ensuring an increased transparency:

1. Closer monitoring of the general accounts
   - “real-time” monitoring of contributions
   - Instate a budgeting system with forecasts and quarterly reports
   - Regular reporting to staff on how the funds are used

2. Monitoring of money collected (e.g. AIDS, HAITI)
   - Accounting for money collected at the time of collection
   - Reporting back to staff on how the funds were used

V. Membership

1. Increase membership in the Staff Union by 5% over the 2009 membership rate:
   - Systematically developing contacts with persons recently recruited by the ILO;
   - Recruitment campaign, notably at Headquarters, and among technical cooperation staff;
   - More regular targeted contacts by union stewards and committee members with individual staff members.
VI. Promoting Solidarity and Representing Staff across the Common System

1. In keeping with the Staff Union Rules and the Resolution Concerning the impact of UN Reform on the International Civil Service adopted at the second session of the 2007 Annual General Meeting, the Union will continue to act in a leadership capacity within our International Federation, CCISUA, endeavouring to:

   • Engage in concerted actions with staff unions and associations, as well as with the Federations, to protect and advance the rights and interests of ILO staff and international civil servants;
   • Represent the staff at inter-agency bodies (International Civil Service Commission, High-Level Committee on Management, Human Resources Network, UN Security Management System Network), and various Working Groups and Steering Committees, bringing to bear the technical expertise of ILO staff in terms of salaries, occupational safety and health, labour law and labour relations, and social protection;
   • Continue working with the Staff Federations to promote solidarity and coherence in voice and representation across the international civil service.

2. The Union will draw on its recent affiliation to the Public Services International to benefit from and further promote solidarity between international civil servants and union members working in the ILO and our counterparts in the national and local public services worldwide.

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