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United Nations common system

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Felipe **García Landa** (Mexico)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-second session the item entitled “United Nations common system” and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.
2. The Fifth Committee considered the item at its 15th and 29th meetings, on 16 November and 23 December 2017. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee’s consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records.¹
3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:
 - (a) Report of the International Civil Service Commission for the year 2017 ([A/72/30](#) and [A/72/30/Corr.1](#));
 - (b) Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly on the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the International Civil Service Commission for the year 2017 ([A/C.5/72/3](#) and [A/C.5/72/3/Corr.1](#));
 - (c) Related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions ([A/72/7/Add.21](#)).

¹ [A/C.5/72/SR.15](#) and [A/C.5/72/SR.29](#).



II. Consideration of draft resolution [A/C.5/72/L.9](#)

4. At its 29th meeting, on 23 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled “United Nations common system” ([A/C.5/72/L.9](#)), submitted by the Chair of the Committee on the basis of informal consultations coordinated by the representative of Israel.

5. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.5/72/L.9](#) without a vote (see para. 6).

III. Recommendation of the Fifth Committee

6. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

United Nations common system

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [44/198](#) of 21 December 1989, [51/216](#) of 18 December 1996, [52/216](#) of 22 December 1997, [53/209](#) of 18 December 1998, [55/223](#) of 23 December 2000, [56/244](#) of 24 December 2001, [57/285](#) of 20 December 2002, [58/251](#) of 23 December 2003, [59/268](#) of 23 December 2004, [60/248](#) of 23 December 2005, [61/239](#) of 22 December 2006, [62/227](#) of 22 December 2007, [63/251](#) of 24 December 2008, [64/231](#) of 22 December 2009, [65/248](#) of 24 December 2010, [66/235 A](#) of 24 December 2011, [66/235 B](#) of 21 June 2012, [67/257](#) of 12 April 2013, [68/253](#) of 27 December 2013, [69/251](#) of 29 December 2014, [70/244](#) of 23 December 2015 and [71/264](#) of 23 December 2016 and its decision 67/551 of 24 December 2012,

Having considered the report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2017,¹

Reaffirming its commitment to a single, unified United Nations common system as the cornerstone for the regulation and coordination of the conditions of service of the United Nations common system,

Emphasizing the importance of, and benefits derived from, maintaining a coherent and unified United Nations common system,

Emphasizing also the obligation of all organizations of the United Nations common system to consult and cooperate fully and swiftly with the International Civil Service Commission on matters relating to remuneration and conditions of service,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work of the International Civil Service Commission;

2. *Takes note* of the report of the Commission for 2017;¹

3. *Reaffirms* the role of the General Assembly in approving conditions of service and entitlements for all staff serving in the organizations of the United Nations common system, bearing in mind articles 10 and 11 of the statute of the Commission;²

4. *Recalls* articles 10 and 11 of the statute of the Commission, and reaffirms the central role of the Commission in regulating and coordinating conditions of service and entitlements for all staff serving in the organizations of the United Nations common system;

5. *Stresses* the importance of the United Nations common system, as established in the statute of the Commission, to ensure unity and parity across the United Nations;

6. *Notes with serious concern* that some organizations have decided not to implement the decisions of the Commission regarding the results of the cost-of-living surveys for 2016 and the mandatory age of separation;

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/72/30), and A/72/30/Corr.1.*

² Resolution 3357 (XXIX), annex.

7. *Calls upon* the United Nations common system organizations and staff to fully cooperate with the Commission in the application of the post adjustment system and implement its decisions regarding the results of the cost-of-living surveys and the mandatory age of separation without undue delay;

8. *Reminds* executive heads and governing bodies of the United Nations common system that failure to fully respect the decisions taken by the General Assembly on the Commission's recommendations could prejudice claims to enjoy the benefits of participation in the common system, including organizations' participation in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, as stated in article 3 (b) of the Fund's regulations;

9. *Requests* the Commission to recommend appropriate measures to deal with those organizations which do not cooperate fully with the Commission and to report thereon no later than at the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly;

10. *Invites* the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to ensure that decisions of the General Assembly are implemented in full and without undue delay across the common system.

I

Conditions of service applicable to both categories of staff

A. Use of categories of staff, including General Service, National Professional Officer and Field Service

1. *Approves* the guidelines for the use of the National Professional Officer category, as recommended by the Commission in paragraph 48 (a) and annex II of its report;

2. *Invites* the organizations of the United Nations common system to abide by existing rules and regulations regarding short-term duty assignments without involving a change of duty station when deploying National Professional Officers outside the country of their employment;

3. *Underscores* the need for the organizations to respect the guidelines for the use of National Professional Officers in the context of short-term duty assignments, and in this regard calls upon the organizations to guard against repeated short-term duty assignments of National Professional Officers outside their country of recruitment;

B. Study on performance management and proposals on performance incentives

Recalling its resolution [70/244](#), by which it requested the Commission to review its recommendation contained in annex III of its report for 2015³ and to study budgetary and administrative arrangements necessary,

1. *Approves* the proposed principles and guidelines for performance appraisal and management for the recognition of different levels of performance, as recommended in paragraph 65 and annex VI of its report for 2017;

2. *Recommends* that the organizations utilize the aforementioned principles and guidelines for recognizing different levels of performance, including non-cash awards and addressing underperformance;

³ Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventieth Session, Supplement No. 30 ([A/70/30](#)).

II

Conditions of service of staff in the Professional and higher categories

A. Base/floor salary scale

Recalling its resolution [44/198](#), by which it established a floor net salary level for staff in the Professional and higher categories by reference to the corresponding base net salary levels of officials in comparable positions serving at the base city of the comparator civil service (the United States federal civil service),

Approves, with effect from 1 January 2018, as recommended by the Commission in paragraph 97 of its report, the revised unified base/floor scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories, as contained in annex VII to that report;

B. Evolution of the margin and margin management around the desirable midpoint

Recalling section I.B of its resolution [51/216](#) and the standing mandate from the General Assembly, in which the Commission is requested to continue its review of the relationship between the net remuneration of the United Nations staff in the Professional and higher categories in New York and that of the comparator civil service (the United States federal civil service) employees in comparable positions in Washington, D.C. (referred to as “the margin”),

1. *Reaffirms* that the range of 110 to 120 for the margin between the net remuneration of officials in the Professional and higher categories of the United Nations in New York and officials in comparable positions in the comparator civil service should continue to apply, on the understanding that the margin would be maintained at a level around the desirable midpoint of 115 over a period of time;

2. *Notes* that the margin between net remuneration of the United Nations staff in grades P-1 to D-2 in New York and that of officials in comparable positions in the United States federal civil service in Washington, D.C., for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017 is 113.7;

3. *Recalls* its decision contained in resolution [70/244](#) that, if the margin trigger levels of 113 or 117 are breached, the Commission should take appropriate action through the operation of the post adjustment system;

4. *Notes* the decision of the Commission to continue monitoring the level of the margin and to take the necessary corrective action under the operation of the post adjustment system should the trigger levels of 113 or 117 be breached;

C. Post adjustment issues

1. *Notes* the efforts by the Commission to improve the post adjustment system;

2. *Requests* the Commission to report no later than at the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly on the implementation of decisions of the Commission regarding the results of the cost-of-living surveys for 2016, including any financial implications;

3. *Also requests* the Commission to continue its efforts to improve the post adjustment system in order to minimize any gap between the pay indices and the post adjustment indices and, in this context, to consider the feasibility of more frequent reviews of post adjustment classifications of duty stations;

4. *Further requests* the Commission to review the gap closure measure in the post adjustment system during its next round of cost-of-living surveys;

D. Report on diversity, including gender balance and geographical distribution in the United Nations common system

1. *Requests* the Commission to continue to provide information to the General Assembly on the progress made by organizations of the United Nations common system in the implementation of existing gender policies and measures towards achieving the goal of 50/50 gender balance and strengthening geographical diversity within the common system, including at senior levels;

2. *Also requests* the Commission to continue to monitor the age distribution of the workforce and to report thereon to the General Assembly.
