



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

19 November 2002

Conclusions of the fourth session of the High-level Committee on Management

Geneva, 7 and 8 October 2002

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I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) held its fourth regular session at the United Nations Office at Geneva on 7 and 8 October 2002. The list of participants is contained in annex 1. The agenda of the session (CEB/2002HLCM/R.7) focused on:

- Security and safety of staff;
- Information and communication technologies;
- The impact on management and programmes of the changing relationship between regular and voluntary funding;
- Greater commonality in health insurance arrangements;
- Emergency preparedness and the development of business continuity plans;
- Reform of the pay and benefits system.

2. All documents related to the session and related presentations can be viewed on the Committee's web site: <http://www.unsystem.org/hlcm/documentation-fourth.htm>.

3. The agenda was adopted by the Committee.

4. In accordance with its standing procedures, the Committee held an exchange of views with the representatives of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) and the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA). Their statements are attached as annexes II and III.

II. Information and communication technologies

5. In March 2002, the High-level Committee on Management established a number of priority initiatives to be pursued in developing an information and communication technology (ICT) vision for the United Nations system.

6. In this endeavour, HLCM had sought the advice and support of the ICT managers who, having met in May 2002 to determine a strategy for delivering those initiatives, had inter alia set up lead agency task forces and other groups to respond to the Committee's requests.

7. The Committee welcomed the efforts made in these priority areas and, in particular, in respect of the elements set out below.

A. Establishment of an Extranet infrastructure

8. Although this matter had been under review for several years, difficulties had repeatedly been encountered in ensuring security for the exchange of information over an Extranet. Organizations had been concerned that the security of their own systems could be made more vulnerable if they were too closely linked with others.

9. This hurdle had been overcome through the evolution of technology and, in particular, the use of virtual private networks. As a result, the United Nations has established the Extranet infrastructure on which one software application currently exists, namely, the Directory of Senior Officials. The implementation was successful and many organizations who had already joined the Extranet had access to the Directory.

10. Noting the positive progress, the Committee confirmed its support for a system-wide Extranet, which it considered to be a valuable tool in meeting the goal of maximizing exchanges of information among United Nations system staff.

11. In particular, the Committee:

- Welcomed the positive results in respect of the project and the work done by the Information Technology Services Division of the Secretariat and the CEB secretariat to bring these to fruition.
- Urged those organizations that had not done so to complete the technical work necessary to enable them to access the Extranet; in the interim, it welcomed the CEB secretariat's offer — on a one-time basis — to provide a CD-ROM of the current Directory.

12. It further invited the CEB secretariat to:

- Examine the many suggestions made by the Committee for applications and types of information to be included on the Extranet, taking into account the need to provide both strategic policy information and administrative information that would be useful to the staff at large (e.g. on salary scales, daily subsistence allowance rates, United Nations system news service, internal vacancies, etc.).
- Look into the extent to which the Extranet could become a more dynamic information base with a facility for users to interact or at least be kept informed, if they so wished, of new postings on the site.
- Provide an estimate of the future costs of the system, taking into account in particular the modalities for the management of its content which it deemed to be a crucial element in the further development of the Extranet.
- Report thereon to its next session.

B. United Nations system search engine

(CEB/2002/HLCM/INF.3/annex 6)

13. The Committee had asked its secretariat to “explore in collaboration with information and programme managers, the feasibility, and cost and benefit of developing an inter-agency search facility across the public web sites of all United Nations system organizations, based on customized commercial software similar to the ‘Google’ service”.

14. In the light of its experience with procuring and installing such a search engine, the ICT managers had requested the United Nations to take the lead in this endeavour.

15. The United Nations provided a full briefing on progress made to date. On that basis, the Committee:

- Requested that detailed proposals of the costs and time frame for the implementation of a system-wide search capability be presented to a future session, taking into account experience gained by the United Nations and its collaborating partners.
- Endorsed the concept of a search engine for the United Nations system as a whole.
- Noted that, based upon a full technical analysis, the United Nations considered that “Google” fulfilled the search engine requirements for the United Nations.
- Expressed its gratitude to the United Nations for the work accomplished and for the opportunity offered to organizations in a position to do so, to participate with the United Nations in piloting the search engine at no cost.
- Urged organizations to complete the “clean up” of their public web sites as soon as possible in preparation for a possible implementation of the system-wide search engine.

C. Development of a compendium of good information and communication technology practice

(CEB/2002/HLCM/INF.3/annexes 1 to 4)

16. In response to the Committee’s request, the ICT network had focused on four areas.

17. The Committee considered that the actions already undertaken in three of these areas (as developed in document CEB/2002/HLCM/INF.3) should be pursued by those actively engaged therein. These were:

- Guidelines for inter-agency consultations within which framework, an SAP user group had been created to coordinate United Nations system experiences and to transfer knowledge of SAP applications;
- Development of a number of quick guides for senior management on key hardware and software and networking issues (the first of which relates to the information technology Infrastructure Library Service Management);
- Methods for identifying and justifying risks, rewards and costs of information and communication technology infrastructure development and business innovations. In this context the United Nations, as lead agency, had determined that the three basic concepts underpinning a common methodology for preparing budget proposals for ICT were:
 - (a) The clear alignment of ICT investment with the core activities of the organization;
 - (b) The demonstration of return on investment through three possible approaches;

- Total positive economic impact
 - Qualitative return indicators
 - Opportunity costs
- (c) The separation of infrastructure costs from development projects;
- In connection with the development of key performance indicators and systems to track those indicators, the Committee acknowledged that the implications of its request to the ICT managers were vast and took note of the proposal put forward by the task force. The Committee requested the CEB secretariat to broaden the scope of this exercise by consulting with other organizations that had made considerable progress in developing key performance indicators both in management and programme areas and share this information on organizational good practices in respect of those indicators with organizations of the system;
 - The Committee agreed to request a task manager (International Labour Organization (ILO)) to look at the commonality of achievement and programme effectiveness which had resulted from introducing results-based budgeting and make recommendations to the Committee at a future session.

D. Information security

(CEB/2002/HLCM/INF.3/annex 5)

18. The Committee had asked for details of best practices in respect of the development of secure and robust information services to cope with the increasing risks of cyber-attacks and the like.

19. It had received, from a working group set up by the information and communication technology managers a road map for managing information security and an outline of the processes involved.

20. The Committee:

- Expressed its thanks to the working group for the comprehensive report;
- Endorsed, in its entirety, the working group's recommendations that:
 - (a) Organizations intending to improve the security of their information should follow a four-stage, ongoing process comprising:
 - Risk assessment
 - Policy development
 - Implementation
 - Monitoring and review
 - (b) In order to enable, facilitate and monitor this process, each organization should set up a group dedicated to the purpose (an "Information Security Oversight" body);
 - (c) Policy enforcement is essential to maintain integrity of the process and protection of information assets;

(d) A specialist in Information Security be appointed in organizations where assets and risks warrant the need.

III. Security and safety of staff

(CEB/2002/HLCM/R.8)

21. In the context of its ongoing review of policies and resource-related issues pertaining to the entire United Nations security management system, the Committee received a briefing from the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator. Its attention was drawn, in particular, to the conclusions of the May 2002 Meeting of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network.

A. Minimum operating security standards

22. The Committee:

- Confirmed its commitment to the implementation of minimum operating security standards at all duty stations.
- Commended those organizations taking an active role in facilitating the implementation of minimum operating security standards.
- Requested all organizations to bring to the attention of senior managers that minimum operating security standards must be implemented and to encourage their field staff to take ownership of them.
- Recommended that all organizations with a field presence identify a minimum operating security standards focal point to liaise with the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator and to participate in minimum operating security standards working groups.
- Requested the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator to provide an update on the status of implementation of minimum operating security standards at the next meeting of the Committee.
- Decided to invite organizations with all urgency to forward the following statement to field representatives:

“Statement adopted by HLCM on 8 October 2002

Minimum operating security standards were adopted for the United Nations system in 2001. It was anticipated at that time that all duty stations falling under any of the five security phases would be minimum operating security standards compliant by the end of 2002. Compliance with those minimum standards is a critical factor in the security management system.

Meeting in October 2002, the High-level Committee on Management expressed grave concern for the low level of implementation of the standards.

Consequently, it called upon all organizations to advise representatives in the field duty stations in question of their responsibilities with respect to the implementation of all aspects of security policy, in particular the implementation and maintenance of a security plan and minimum operating security standards for compliance with both and for ensuring that all personnel

have adequate and operating communication equipment as established by these minimum standards”.

B. Aviation safety and security standards

23. The Committee:

- Agreed that United Nations chartered flight operations should be divided into two distinct categories: peacekeeping and humanitarian/other.
- Requested the World Food Programme (WFP) to consider taking on the role as the agency responsible for administering all United Nations humanitarian and other air operations (excluding peacekeeping).
- Requested WFP also to consider establishing a suitable independent air safety unit to ensure both the efficiency and safety of United Nations humanitarian and other air operations.¹
- Welcomed the offer of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to join WFP and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the Air Safety Working Group.
- Noted that progress had been made with regard to identifying the safety records of commercial air carriers and expressed appreciation for the offer of the International Civil Aviation Organization to collaborate on the matter.
- Called upon those agencies which continued to demand that staff sign a waiver limiting the liability of the Organization in the event of an air or other accident to discontinue that practice.

C. New security arrangements

24. The Committee:

- Noted that, as reported in 2001, owing to the filling of the bulk of the field security officer positions during the first half of 2002, the expenditures of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator were expected to exceed the budgeted level in both 2002 and 2003. The actual expenditures relating to the operation would be reported in the context of the budget performance report for the biennium 2002-2003. On the basis of that report, adjustments would be made to the level of the cost shares of the participating organizations, as appropriate.
- Commended the United Nations on its performance in recruiting new field security officers.

¹ Subject to reservation by UNHCR.

IV. Impact on management and programme of the changing relationship between regular and voluntary funding

(CEB/2002/HLCM/R.10)

25. In response to the Committee's request, a working group had met to identify the major concerns and themes for further study in respect of the changing nature of the relationship between regular (approved) and voluntary (supplementary) funding of organizations.
26. The group had examined:
- Terminology;
 - The extent of approved programme budgets versus supplementary funding;
 - The extent to which supplementary funds were earmarked by donors;
 - The potential for distortion of organizations' programme priorities;
 - The advent of voluntary contributions from non-State donors and the ethical or political issues that may arise therefrom;
 - Programme support costs;
 - Donor requirements in relation to reporting, auditing and presentation of accounts, etc.
27. The group had gone on to identify areas which warranted closer examination in order to address concerns for distortion and to meet other requirements as follows:
- The need to assure governance and oversight by the whole membership over programmes and projects funded through voluntary contributions;
 - The importance of greater central management of fund-raising initiatives;
 - The need for a reappraisal of programme support costs charged, as well as for greater consistency and coherence across the United Nations family when negotiating these with donors;
 - Streamlining of donor reporting requirements.
28. The Committee:
- Welcomed the thrust of this initial review, which was timely, particularly in view of the emerging positions of member States and other donors on the matter;
 - Recognized that, while the situations of individual organizations differed, voluntary or supplementary funding was increasing and the trend to earmark these funds was having an impact on the management of programmes;
 - Noted that some organizations had managed to link voluntary contributions to the thematic themes of activities and programmes approved by their legislative organs, rather than to specific projects;
 - Agreed that predictability of funding — or the lack thereof — had important implications for the management of organizations, not only in financial terms but also for staffing and contractual arrangements;

- Agreed that greater information-sharing and cooperation should be established across the United Nations system for dealing with donors on programme support costs and reporting arrangements.

29. The Committee concluded that the matter warranted bold approaches. In this regard, the CEB secretariat was requested to bring together multidisciplinary focus groups for further reflection, especially as regards (a) the determination of minimum standards for the receipt and management of voluntary funds, (b) conditions for earmarking, (c) a reappraisal of programme support costs formulae and (d) the rationalization of the plethora of reporting requirements.

V. Emergency preparedness and the development of business contingency plans

(CEB/2002/HLCM/R.9)

30. Planning for the year 2000 and the events of 11 September 2001 had brought to light a number of concerns relating to organizations' preparedness to meet emergencies and to put business back on track after catastrophic events. Questions related to the perception of risk, threat scenarios, definition of mission critical elements, immediate response capacity and longer-term recovery strategies had to be resolved for all organizations. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had prepared an initial report on the matter, based on its experience in formulating a Risk, Crisis and Disaster Management Plan, raising policy issues for the Committee's consideration in relation to emergency management, including the phases of preparedness, response and recovery.

31. The UNICEF document underlined the strategic management imperative that senior executives be appointed and empowered to respond to any form of risk, crisis or disaster.

32. The report concluded with an invitation to the Committee to consider four recommendations, as follows:

Recommendation 1. The Committee, on behalf of CEB, should endorse the principle that all United Nations organizations should develop a risk, crisis and disaster management plan.

Recommendation 2. The Secretary-General and heads of agencies, thereafter, should consider mandating the development of their organizational plan in the shortest possible time frame, and should ensure that the necessary financial, human and logistic resources are made available for the process.

Recommendation 3. The Committee should consider seeking the creation of an inter-agency task force in collaboration with the Department of Management of the Secretariat (Task Team), in order to develop a definitive framework with standardized terminology and format. Further, this Task Force should be a reference point for organizations, providing technical advice and guidance and ensuring that all plans are as far as possible capable of being integrated and executed concurrently.

Recommendation 4. The subject should remain on the Committee's agenda with progress reports being presented by organizations to the Committee at its next session.

33. Following the UNICEF presentation, a number of organizations provided extensive commentary on their experiences in this regard. The Committee welcomed the comprehensive and thought-provoking presentations and noted that this represented a sharp wake-up call for all organizations and had already prompted many to review the status of their risk assessment and contingency planning.

34. The Committee endorsed the recommendations² with the following comments with regard to future action:

- Common approaches needed to be developed at the global level and at each duty station.
- Organizations would have to assess in detail the threats they faced, including the risk of loss of key information.
- It was essential for organizations to work together to draw up a list of the collective assets of the organizations, including aircraft, helicopters, global communications networks, field office support, etc. currently maintained by United Nations system organizations that could be drawn upon in the event of a disaster.
- Organizations should determine exactly what their mission critical activities were and the means by which such activities could be continued in the event of a disaster resulting from any of the threats they had identified.
- Within this framework, the responsibility of the host Government, especially in assuming their costs for certain aspects or disaster preparedness, should also be assessed.
- Action plans had to be “living” mechanisms supported by regular review and testing and capable of being activated instantly.
- While contingency plans would contain an assessment of the minimum an organization would have to do to meet any threat, staff safety must always remain a paramount consideration and it could not be subject to a “minimalist” approach.
- Experience showed that any structures created to meet disasters or crises should:
 - (a) Designate clearly the roles and responsibilities of a small team with a short chain of command who were empowered to take action (this was not the time for a Committee!);
 - (b) Define how and where a command centre(s) would be established.
- In the Committee’s view, the goal of the next stage of the consideration of the matter should be to determine how, in the broadest sense, organizations could help each other in the event of any disaster. Most immediately the need was to determine collective assets. To this end, each Organization would need to determine what its own key assets were.

² FAO did not support the creation of a global task force (recommendation 3) although it could support a headquarters duty station approach. In this connection, refer to paragraph 35 below.

- The provision of financial resources was, as always, a concern, especially in an era of zero nominal growth budgets. UNICEF itself had reflected on this matter in the document as follows:

“It is appreciated that this process will involve cost but if we are to ensure that we can maintain our ability to operate no matter what befalls us, then there is no real alternative but to invest for the future in this manner and as outlined above”.

- There was also evidence that the tragic events of 11 September 2001 had sensitized governing bodies to the need for action to avoid threats and that financial support for this stand-alone item was not always as difficult as might be anticipated. (The United Nations reflected that the costs of assuring continuity were often not as extensive as might be assumed.)
- At all stages of the process, the highest priority had to be afforded to communication to staff in particular and attention to this matter should become a fifth recommendation.

35. Clearly this was a matter that the Committee should review regularly. While not necessarily establishing a task force on the issue, the Committee foresaw the need for a networking mechanism by which information, for example, on global assets, could be gathered and maintained. It therefore invited its secretariat, using input from agencies who had advanced furthest in terms of emergency preparedness, including the United Nations, UNICEF, UNDP and the International Monetary Fund, to prepare a report for its next session, incorporating the substance of a policy framework within a “road map” of future Committee policy direction which would lead towards the development of a common action plan.

VI. Reform of the pay and benefits system

36. The Committee had the benefit of a briefing from the Convenor of the Human Resources Network on progress in the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to reform the pay and benefits system and other significant ICSC proposals which would be considered by the General Assembly. The Network was cautiously optimistic about ICSC action to date. The proposals for reform, which were an integral part of organizational change efforts, were headed in the right direction. It was important to keep programme and line managers and staff at large fully abreast of the changes envisaged, of the introduction of pilot projects and other aspects of developmental work in support of the proposals. ICSC was also recommending restoration of the margin to its desirable midpoint and elimination of existing imbalances by granting a differentiated salary increase. It was considered particularly important that Executive Heads make their views known to ICSC on these matters on a regular basis.

37. In this context, on behalf of CEB, the Committee adopted a statement for the Secretary-General to present to the General Assembly in respect of the ICSC annual report for 2002.

Statement by the Secretary-General to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, on behalf of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, on the report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2002

The Executive Heads have repeatedly expressed concern for the lack of competitiveness, flexibility and responsiveness of the current pay and benefits system. They therefore welcome the proposals put forward by ICSC to reform that system. These proposals complement the management reforms being carried through in all United Nations system organizations. They also provide a much needed basis for the improvement of organizational performance. In particular, the Executive Heads consider the development of a more flexible job classification system and the creation of a senior management service to be among the most crucial elements of ICSC reform proposals.

In this context, the Executive Heads also reaffirm the importance they attach to updating the Noblemaire Principle, *inter alia* to reflect, as they stated in 1994, the internationalization of the labour market. More than ever before, organizations are competing with a broad array of institutions for staff of the highest competence. It is imperative that this reality be reflected in the formula used to set pay in the United Nations system.

Concern for the competitiveness of United Nations conditions of employment has been expressed by the General Assembly and governing bodies of other common system organizations on numerous occasions. For example, in resolution 55/258, the General Assembly agreed with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that a competitive package of conditions of service is a prerequisite if the reform of human resources management is to succeed.

The General Assembly and the Executive Heads have also repeatedly requested that the existing imbalances in the current margin at different grade levels be addressed, not least in order to recognize and strengthen managerial capacity. The Executive Heads therefore fully support the ICSC recommendation to restore the margin to its desirable midpoint by granting a differentiated salary increase for the Professional and higher categories.

The General Assembly plays a key leadership role in the determination of conditions of service not only for the United Nations but for all 23 organizations of the common system. In endorsing the ICSC proposals, the Assembly has the unique opportunity of setting in motion the most fundamental management reforms since the inception of the United Nations. Not only will these reforms uphold the common system, they will also strengthen the international civil service and help reinvigorate organizations to meet the missions they have been entrusted with for the twenty-first century.

The case for these reforms is compelling; the dangers of not reforming the system far outweigh the challenges associated with implementing these initiatives. The Executive Heads call upon the General Assembly to request the Commission to give the highest priority to completing its work in this area.

38. Noting the presence of a number of heads of agencies, including the Secretary-General, at the ICSC summer session in 2002, the Committee also confirmed the importance it attached to the presence of Executive Heads at the General Assembly itself to explain the importance of the ICSC proposals.

VII. Greater commonality of health insurance arrangements

39. Building on the historical information contained in document CEB/2002/HLCM/INF.1, the Committee considered that the provision of adequate health insurance coverage was a system-wide issue which had implications for a number of human resources policies, inter alia, in respect of mobility.

40. The Committee decided:

- To invite the Human Resources Network to make recommendations for those areas in which a more coherent approach might be feasible. Furthermore, the Network should consider and make recommendations to the Committee on long-term care insurance provisions;
- To request organizations based in New York as a matter of urgency to review greater commonality in health insurance approaches including the provisions of the Medical Insurance Plan.

VIII. Other business

A. Auditing requirements for European Union contributions

41. Following a briefing on reporting arrangements for contributions received from the European Union, the Committee:

- Noted that a number of agreements had already been reached with the European Union regarding arrangements for their contributions and agreed that it was important for organizations to “march in step” and in the same direction in terms of their responses to European Union reporting requests, especially in the context of future European Union donations. To this end, they agreed to share information through the CEB secretariat on any pertinent developments.

B. Relationship between the High-level Committee on Management, the High-level Committee on Programmes and the United Nations Development Group

42. A number of Committee members expressed concern that the United Nations Development Group and its extensive range of working groups appeared to be duplicating the functions assigned to the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes by CEB. They noted that it would be necessary to clarify the respective functions of the United Nations Development Group, established as an Executive Committee by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the two high-level committees of CEB, so as to remove confusion, avoid duplication and build synergies between the system-wide bodies and the United Nations Development Group, to advance their respective goals and forms of collaboration.

C. United Nations accounting standards

43. The Committee considered that it would be useful to have a closer overview of the use of accounting standards among the organizations of the common system and agreed to designate a focal point, Jessie Mabutas of WFP, to pursue ongoing work with respect to United Nations accounting standards.

D. Chief Executives Board for Coordination comments on reports of the Joint Inspection Unit

44. Following a discussion of a proposal for organizations to provide individual comments to Joint Inspection Unit reports, the Committee:

- Confirmed that, as per the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, it would continue to provide joint system-wide comments on relevant Joint Inspection Unit reports, which would be coordinated through the CEB secretariat. It also agreed to work towards greater consistency in the designation of Joint Inspection Unit focal points among organizations of the common system.

* * *

45. In the course of its meeting, the Committee had the benefit of a briefing from Karsten Bloch of the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office on the procurement processes of that Office.

Annex I

List of participants

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name and title</i>
United Nations	Joseph Connor, Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management
	Jan Beagle, Director, Specialist Services Division
	Eduardo Blinder, Director, Information Technology Services Division
	Bertrand Juppín de Fondaumière, Director of Administration, United Nations Office at Geneva
	Diana Russler, Deputy United Nations Security Coordinator
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Keith Walton, Director, Management Policy Office
	John Burley, Head, Resources Management Services
	Duncan Barclay, Chief, Human Resources Management Section
International Trade Centre	Marc Weidmann, Chief, Information Technology Support Section
	Gian Piero Roz, Director, Division of Administration
United Nations Environment Programme	Alexander Barabanov, Chief, Division of Administrative Services, United Nations Office at Nairobi
United Nations Development Programme	Jan Mattsson, Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau of Management
United Nations Population Fund	Imelda Henkin, Deputy Executive Director (Management)
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Mary Ann Wyrsh, Deputy High Commissioner
	Saburo Takizawa, Controller and Director, Division of Resource Management
	Janet Lim, Director, Emergency and Security Service
United Nations Children's Fund	Karin Sham Poo, Deputy Executive Director
	Anna Maria Laurini, Senior United Nations Affairs Officer
	Bill Gent, Security Coordinator, Office of Emergency Programmes
World Food Programme	Diana Serrano, Director, Human Resources Division
	David Morton, Director, Transport and Logistics Division

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name and title</i>
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	Johanne Girard, Manager, Human Resources
International Labour Organization	Don Skerrett, Director, Office of the Director-General and of Operations
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Khalid Mehboob, Assistant Director-General, Administration and Finance Department
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Warren Mellor, Acting Director, Bureau of Field Coordination
World Health Organization	Maryan Baquerot, Executive Director, General Management Marjory Dam, Director, Security Coordination
International Monetary Fund	Inger Prebensen, Deputy Director, Technology and General Services Department
International Civil Aviation Organization	Agya P. Singh, Director, Bureau of Administration and Services
International Maritime Organization	Roger Jones, Director, Administrative Division
Universal Postal Union	Moussibahou Mazou, Deputy Director-General
World Meteorological Organization	Kathleen Charles, Director, Resource Management Department
World Intellectual Property Organization	Tony Keefer, Special Adviser to the Director-General
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Julio Camarena-Villaseñor, Director, Human Resource Management Branch
International Atomic Energy Agency	David Waller, Deputy Director-General and Head of Management
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	Pierce S. Corden, Director of Administration
World Tourism Organization	Peter Shackelford, Director of Administration Division Carmen Molina, Chief of Personnel
United Nations Compensation Commission	Tony Salmon, Information Systems Section, Support Services Division
Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office	Karsten Bloch, ICT and E-Commerce Manager
FICSA	Janice Albert, General Secretary
CCISUA	Marlene Sequeira, Vice-President

Organization

Name and title

CEB secretariat

Shaukat Fareed, Director

Roger Eggleston, Secretary, High-level Committee on Management

Eckhard Hein, Secretary, High-level Committee on Programmes

Peter Leslie, Inter-Agency Finance and Budget Adviser

Mary Jane Peters, Inter-Agency Human Resources Management Adviser

Karina Gerlach, Senior Inter-Agency Officer

Annex II

Statement by the General Secretary of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations

1. FICSA welcomes this opportunity to provide our views to the High-level Committee on Management. We would like to comment on some of the items on your agenda (CEB/2002/HLCM/4/CRP.1) which are of greatest concern to staff. In addition, we would like to make some suggestions for future work.

Security and safety of staff (CEB/2002/HLCM/R.8 and CEB/2002/HLCM/R.9)

2. FICSA attended the Inter-Agency Security Management Network meeting in May 2002 and we would like to say that we welcome the work that the United Nations Security Coordinator and the individual organizations are doing to improve staff security and safety.

3. However, we were very concerned to read, in document R.8, that there has been slow progress in terms of compliance with the minimum operating security standards. FICSA stands ready to assist in encouraging field staff to take ownership of the standards as proposed by the United Nations Security Coordinator.

4. At the Vienna meeting, we were impressed by the presentation on information and communications technology (minimum telecommunications standards). To paraphrase our colleague from WFP, all staff have the right to personal security, the right to communicate and the right to access information.

5. Regarding aviation safety, FICSA appreciates the affirmation that safety should take priority in selecting air carriers. Political and financial considerations should not infringe on the safety and security of staff members.

6. FICSA would like to emphasize the importance of informing staff of their right to refuse to travel on aircraft where their safety might be compromised. In addition, we fully support the view that organizations should discontinue the practice of requiring staff to sign insurance waivers prior to boarding the aircraft. We would like to note that other forms of transport, for example, boats, can pose risks as well and thus request that policies related to other types of transport be reviewed.

7. FICSA welcomes the initiative to improve risk management and preparedness for crisis situations. Unfortunately, preparations for less dramatic incidents and accidents can be inadequate as well.

Pay and benefits review (CEB/2002/HLCM/4/CRP.2)

8. FICSA made extensive comments on the pay and benefits review during the meetings of the working groups, the Human Resources Network and ICSC, which are reflected in the reports. Our comments focus on the plans for the next year.

9. We look forward to receiving reports on progress made in developing the new master standard. We expect that the concept of the dual career ladder will be reflected in the new standard. In assessing the value of different types of work, we

request that the new master standard eliminate any gender biases that might exist currently. We believe there should be an analysis of the implications of applying the new standard as well. For example, staff will be anxious to know if occupations are upgraded or downgraded.

10. Many of our concerns about the Senior Management Service were addressed in the working group and ICSC sessions and some remain. For example, one of our concerns was an assumption by some that good managers had to be recruited from outside. We believe that organizations should develop good managers from within the system. This is important because many functions require in-depth understanding of the particular organization and acquiring this knowledge takes many years. As we argued during ICSC sessions, years of experience are important and should not be discounted.

11. We believe that training in managerial skills and assistance in planning for a career as a manager would be one way to improve prospects for advancement for General Service and Professional staff at the lower grades. In relation to this, we would like to express our appreciation for the Secretary-General's remarks about staff in his report to the General Assembly (document A/57/387). We note in particular his strong support for enhancing career prospects of General Service staff; recognition of the need to achieve gender balance among Professionals at the senior levels; and recommendation to increase resources for training of staff.

Noblemaire Principle and Professional salaries

12. While recognizing that ICSC did not consider review of the application of the Noblemaire Principle to be part of the pay and benefits review, FICSA welcomes the inclusion of this topic as a separate item on the ICSC agenda next year. We view this matter as a high priority and look forward to these deliberations.

13. On a separate but related matter, FICSA was pleased that ICSC decided to recommend that the margin be restored to 115, in accordance with the resolution of the General Assembly.

14. FICSA would prefer less differentiation among grades than was recommended in the ICSC report. We believe that P-5s and D-2s, who may receive raises of 6.5 and 10.7 per cent, respectively, will be perplexed to learn that D-1s may receive 13.3 per cent increases. The history and reasoning for the differences in the margin among grades should be investigated and clearly explained to staff. While appreciating the need for technical accuracy, a raise should be understandable and meaningful in terms of human resources management as well as statistical analysis.

Greater commonality in health insurance arrangements (CEB/2002/HLCM/INF.1)

15. With regard to the document on health insurance, FICSA appreciates this review of a complex topic. Clearly, staff in the common system should have health insurance arrangements which provide comparable levels of coverage for comparable costs. We agree with others that the insurance schemes need not be exactly the same.

16. We would like to highlight a few points: first, the issue of extending health-care coverage to domestic partners has not been addressed; second, the question of

long-term care for both active and retired staff is a matter of concern for our members.

17. We disagree with the view taken by the Human Resources Network that increased health-care costs resulting from stress must be accepted as part of doing business. We propose that the medical and human resources specialists within the United Nations examine the reasons for stress-related illnesses and make recommendations to address the problems.

18. As an aside, we believe that one cause of stress is the lack of proper procedures for preventing and resolving conflicts within organizations. We welcome the Secretary-General's comments on improvements in internal justice systems.

Changing relationship between regular and voluntary funding (CEB/2002/HLCM/R.10)

19. The trends in funding and increase in voluntary funding raise a number of issues for staff. Undoubtedly, staff will be concerned about the potential impact on posts, staffing and contractual arrangement.

20. Once again, we would like to draw attention to the Secretary-General's report, which highlights one type of contract problem. He mentions the issue of long-serving staff finding themselves with short-term contracts and limited career prospects. The goals of creating longer-term contractual prospects should be taken into consideration in discussions on the changes in funding.

21. We understand that this is a preliminary review and we look forward to future discussions on this important topic.

Annex III

Statement by the First Vice-President of the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations

Mr. Chairman, colleagues of the United Nations system,

CCISUA wishes to present its comments on some aspects of the agenda of the fourth session of the High-level Committee on Management and to have thus the opportunity to exchange views with you and put forward some questions brought to my attention by members of the Federation.

Security and safety of staff

CCISUA believes it is important to bring several additional issues pertaining to staff security to the attention of the High-level Committee on Management. It should be noted that whenever national elections are held in some areas of the developing world, there are increased risks to United Nations staff due to the worsening of the security situation in the country. Care should be taken that all staff, international and national, are provided with equal protection and given the equipment and tools (e.g., two-way radios, evacuation plans) to ensure maximum protection. Care should also be taken, in particular when recruiting security officers in the field, that they are not hired from local law enforcement that has been associated with terror activities in the country.

Each duty station should have a fully functional security management team and those teams should include staff representatives. Staff representatives have a very important role to play in security issues, since they directly affect the welfare of their constituents.

Air safety is a critical part of serving in the field. Accidents, including airplane and helicopter crashes, have accounted for a large number of deaths of personnel working for the United Nations. Appropriate standards must be enforced; otherwise you are asking staff to take their lives into their own hands. Equally important is the enforcement of minimum standards at airports and landing strips. In many areas where staff serve, hazardous landing conditions are a cause for concern.

The system of minimum operating security standards is an important step for determining when security concerns warrant the suspension of operations. The United Nations must adhere to these standards to avoid putting United Nations personnel at risk. The low level of implementation of these standards must be addressed without delay. Insufficient communications equipment is another area that must be addressed, since it is critical for the security management system to operate effectively with accountability.

Information and communications technologies

CCISUA wishes to stress the essential need for flow of information, both vertically and horizontally. Staff often complain that they are not aware of decisions taken at the very top of their organizations. We do acknowledge the efforts you have

made to reach your staff; however, we would welcome the creation of a question-and-answer facility, whether through a web site or a hotline. The option considered in the development of an "Extranet" is well received; we look forward to testing this information-sharing tool with the hope that it will be as user-friendly as possible for all staff, whether they are computer-literate or not.

Impact on management and programmes of the changing relationship between regular and voluntary funding

The budget cuts of the previous years have led to a search for extrabudgetary funding to cover some activities that were already included in work plans but did not have sufficient funding. This practice resulted in creating expectations for longer contracts from staff members under the 200 series who had been working for long periods of time with the United Nations. These staff members had fixed-term contracts that provided most of the benefits of permanent contracts, but they naturally worried about the renewal of their contracts while their organizations were seeking new funding. The independence of the international civil service is jeopardized by such a practice.

The allocation of voluntary funding is not always transparent. It depends upon the field that the donor is willing to finance; in so doing, it is the interest of the donor that prevails and not that of Member States. The allocation of voluntary funding depends also upon the relationship that exists between the different departments and management.

For offices away from Headquarters, especially regional commissions, voluntary funding allows for the hiring of highly specialized staff from overrepresented countries who cannot be hired on posts subject to geographical distribution.

Voluntary funding provides resources for activities identified after the work plan and the budget have been assigned. It relates mainly to activities in the economic field, such as unpredictable crisis. The regular budget does not provide for enough flexibility in reallocating resources or priorities.

Greater commonality in health insurance arrangements

CCISUA strongly supports the view of the Human Resources Network that good health insurance coverage is a significant condition of service. In fact, we consider it to be one of the most important elements in attracting and retaining staff. In the Director-General's report to the 1999 International Labour Conference, entitled "Decent work", the International Labour Organization stated that "a healthier, more educated and skilled population is the surest route to higher productivity ...". For its staff, the United Nations, as a good employer, should be setting the best practices by ensuring that all staff have access to the highest quality medical care.

The areas on which the Human Resources Network would like to focus, such as funding arrangements, levels of contributions and benefits and long-term care, are areas where it is not possible to provide identical coverage and plans, but at least

equitable solutions can be found to ensure that staff, according to the standards in the region, have access to the best possible medical care.

CCISUA reiterates that this is an obligation of the United Nations, if it is to remain a model employer utilizing the best prevailing practices.

Emergency preparedness and the development of business continuity plans

Emergency preparedness and the development of business continuity plans are issues in which CCISUA has great interest and concern. Every organization of the common system should identify its mission critical elements, analyse a variety of threat scenarios and develop detailed operational plans for use in emergencies. Communication is an essential part of this process; however, briefing and training of staff are also key elements. The experience of other organizations and Governments who have developed comprehensive emergency preparedness procedures should be utilized to the fullest extent.

Basic needs are sometimes overlooked in favour of larger schemes. For example, it is essential that every duty station have a functional central broadcasting system to alert their staff in case of emergencies. Computer-based systems are excellent as a secondary means of information; however, all staff do not have access to computers.

CCISUA stresses the fact that staff representatives have an important role to play in this process by briefing staff and keeping them informed about how the Organization would respond to various types of emergencies. It is also important for organizations to fully understand the concerns and needs of their staff on these issues. Such understanding can only be gained with open and honest dialogue to solicit staff views. Staff unions and associations can facilitate such dialogue with the staff.

Reform of the pay and benefits system

CCISUA has followed closely the work of ICSC during 2002 on the reform of the pay and benefits system and has expressed its views regarding the three aspects of the reform which were discussed at the fifty-fifth session of ICSC.

On the subject of expanding the application of the Noblemaire Principle, CCISUA wishes to reiterate what it stated at both the fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions of ICSC: our Organization is not as attractive as it used to be. It is not competitive; but, worse, its staff does not want to stay. If you and we do not do anything in the very near future to redress the situation, we shall lose what makes the strength of our international organizations: a competent, devoted staff, capable of sacrificing itself for the organizations it works for. Applying the Noblemaire Principle, and the whole Noblemaire Principle, is the basis for going forward. How can we accept as the only comparator the United States public service, when that comparator cannot even recruit college graduates because the salaries offered are too low? CCISUA appeals to you: additional reference points such as IMF, the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development must be

included. Why should we be happy with less when other international organizations aim at more?

Reviewing job evaluation and devising a new master standard should be done keeping in mind the proposed introduction of broadbanding. Pilot projects should be conducted during two years and the results reported to ICSC before extending it to all organizations. CCISUA reserves its comments and observations until such time as the pilot results are analysed. CCISUA wishes to follow the pilot implementation, as it is essential that staff involved in it play an active role.

Regarding the introduction of a senior management service, CCISUA considers that the reform of the pay and benefits system cannot be successful unless there is a strengthened managerial cadre. The proposal to create such a service would be acceptable, provided a mechanism of checks and balances is put in place and reviewed regularly. The Senior Management Service must not become an elite group and should not require a different pay system, since it will comprise existing posts that will be selected to be part of it. CCISUA insists that core competencies of future Senior Management Service members be validated and that learning and assessment strategies be developed. CCISUA strongly requests that training the replacements of managers who will retire within five to ten years should be carried out ahead of time, to allow for the assessment of in-house talents.

Thank you.
