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Executive Board : 201<sup>st</sup> Session  
Finance and Administrative Commission (FA)  
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**ORAL STATEMENT BY ISAU ON POINT 5:  
FOLLOW-UP TO DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE  
BOARD AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT THEIR PREVIOUS SESSIONS**

PART IV : Human Resources Issues

- A. Geographical distribution and gender balance of the staff of the Secretariat.
- B. Progress of the After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI) working group and its recommendations.
- C. Annual report (2016) by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC): Report by the Director-General.

Madam Chairperson,  
Madam Representative of the Director-General,  
Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Finance and Administrative Commission,  
Excellencies,

I am honoured to be making this statement before you, on the subject of items relating to human resources.

On **Geographical distribution and gender balance**

1. The Secretariat provides much information on geographical distribution and gender equality but these data are not organized and presented in a sufficiently readable manner to enable those two issues to be monitored. The current presentation of these data is truncated, since it offers no tangible elements on geographical distribution for all grades and does not provide information on distribution for staff employed under the regular programme. These deficiencies are inexplicable, since the lack of clear and comparable information is a serious barrier in terms of readable data and prevents the monitoring and review of recruitment and promotion policies.

2. ISAU regrets that the objective of 85% of countries represented has been repeated in the Human Resource Strategy for 2017-2022. The Administration should show more ambition to make a significant improvement in geographical representation within the Secretariat. ISAU therefore urges the Administration to adopt a more ambitious goal for the coming five years, that of 90% by 2022.

3. We have data on gender balance in all grades and on geographical distribution by regional group only for the group of Directors and above, but not on regional distribution in the Professional grades. This is inexplicable.

4. The need for this information to be available is all the more imperative because the data provided on gender balance in all grades reveals considerable imbalances in Professional-grade positions for women. ISAU therefore requests that efforts should be made at the P-4 and P-5 levels in respect of gender equality and geographical distribution.

5. Women are clearly under-represented at the ADG, D-1 and P-5 levels, although they are over-represented at the D-2 level (73%, but out of total staff numbers of only 15). These imbalances are much more serious than it would appear at first sight. For example, what explanation is there for the non-representative nature of Group V(b) in the Communication and Information Sector and Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), where representation of Group I is 53%? To tolerate such levels of imbalance is a direct violation of the principles of universality and pluralism which absolutely must be at the centre of UNESCO's actions.

6. ISAU wishes to emphasize that **parity does not mean that women are represented more than men; parity is balance between women and men in all grades and sectors.** ISAU therefore invites the Administration to strive more strongly to ensure that balance.

7. The initiative to emphasize external recruitment should under no circumstances affect the recruitment or promotion of internal candidates. The way in which the Secretariat is approaching the geographical distribution issue by stating that suppressing internal recruitment would promote the recruitment of staff from non-represented countries is deceptive. Such an argument ignores the deficiencies of current recruitment modalities.

8. ISAU reiterates its request for geographical distribution measures and parity to be applied equally to consultants and all types of contracts in the area of staff recruitment.

#### Regarding After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI)

9. ISAU supports the suspension of the study aiming to introduce a new after-service social insurance system and considers that the current scheme has fully shown its effectiveness and is continuing to provide the general satisfaction expected of it.

10. ISAU has noted the report on the progress of the ASHI working group and its recommendations. It would be premature to comment on the latter, but we agree with some of the working group's concerns, particularly the lack of real collective negotiations with third-party administrators and health-care providers. Similarly, we believe that the idea of basing the insurance schemes on national health-insurance systems and making the former into supplementary insurance coverage is relatively risky and apparently lacks relevance in relation to the difficulties, particularly financial ones, facing national social-insurance funds.

#### Regarding the last item concerning the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)

11. ISAU welcomes the initiatives from the ICSC. Regarding the introduction of severance pay for the holders of fixed-term contracts leaving the Organization upon expiration of contract after 10 or more years of continuous service, ISAU would like to have more details on the financial implications and the conditions for its application as requested from the ICSC by the General Assembly.

12. ISAU emphasizes that the study on the introduction of the local national civil service should be considered if and only if it takes clearly into account employers which have a highly advantageous remuneration system. If this were not the case, the result would undeniably be a fall in salaries and, as a result, a risk of drastic reductions in UNESCO's ability to attract the best talents to respond to the high expectations of Member States.

In conclusion, we request Member States to give the Secretariat the human and financial resources it needs to ensure job security for staff, without which the objectives set by UNESCO could not be achieved.

Thank you for your attention.