

**ORAL STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION OF UNESCO  
(ISAU)**

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

Thank you for giving me the floor.

ISAU is concerned about persistent problems such as **the lack of planning and the lack of human resources management**.

1. First, there is a growing tendency towards the use of non-staff members at Headquarters and in the field. We are concerned because this reflects the risk of a loss of the Secretariat's expertise. At this rate, the number of non-staff, currently 49%, will exceed that of civil servants, thus reducing UNESCO to a "temping agency". **Full information on the exact number of temporary staff and project posts is still missing.** ISAU requests that priority be given to internal recruitment or to the **regularization of staff with long-term temporary contracts or project posts**.
2. The announced decrease in the number of consultants, which nevertheless accounts for 21% of the Organization's workforce is **misleading, because the average amount paid per contract increased by 17% in spite of the measure to reduce by 20% the fee element of all new consultant contracts.** We recall that consultants **should only be hired on an ad hoc basis and only when the expertise required is not available within the UNESCO Secretariat.** The **predominance of consultants from Group I is also deplorable.**
3. We welcome the reduction in the number of contracts awarded to retired staff members and propose the establishment of a handover policy by the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM).

**Regarding the 2011-2016 strategy**

4. The question of an **evaluation of the previous strategy involving the staff** remains a burning one as the development of a new strategy must draw on the lessons learnt from the previous one. A new strategy cannot be developed without an objective evaluation and especially not without consulting the staff. **ISAU requests greater involvement in the decisions concerning staff because it regrets being far too often presented with a "fait accompli".**
5. The lack of genuine career development plans for the staff and the **limited role of the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) in the recruitment process are alarming.** HRM must not confine itself to the role it plays all too often of rubberstamping supervisors' choices. It must be involved throughout the recruitment process in the interest of greater transparency and equity. **It must also take into account French language proficiency in the recruitment and career development of appointees to management positions.** All temporary vacant posts should be published internally to end the current opacity. ISAU requests that G-6 and even G-5 category posts be advertised internally before being advertised externally.

6. **The staff is the Organization’s most important asset.** Clearly! It must be highlighted, however, that the quality of human resources management and the recruitment process have a direct impact on UNESCO’s overall performance and effectiveness. This report does not make this sufficiently clear. **It is hard to find a correlation between performance and career advancement, as the External Auditor has emphasized.**
7. Why are 34 Member States non-represented in the Secretariat while Group I remains over-represented? With regard to gender parity, more needs to be done for P-5 category posts.

#### **As to the 2017-2022 strategy**

8. A staffing plan is essential to achieving objectives in an optimal manner. Priority should be given to lateral recruitment and moves of staff for internal appointments. The absence of a genuine career policy leads to the resurgence in the recruitment of external candidates.
9. **“Learning, an imperative in a knowledge-based Organization”.** The lack of a training budget, a key element, is a handicap for the staff. Continuing training ensures competitiveness and excellence within UNESCO.
10. ISAU welcomes the proposal to establish contracts for a duration that might reach five years. Moreover, we are awaiting proposals from HRM for the establishment of **flexible working hours, which, unlike teleworking, is open to everyone.**
11. ISAU fully endorses the outcomes of the working group on After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI), which recommends better control over third-party administrators for improved management. We support the proposal to establish a permanent specialized body to address insurance-related matters. The matter of the ASHI deficit deserves greater details, particularly with regard to the consequences.
12. We request that the Administration pay particular attention to our colleagues in the field who feel isolated. Abuses and a lack of transparency in the field offices are often reported to us.

In conclusion, we acknowledge that the Strategy’s objectives are laudable, but find it hard to say whether their achievement is possible in the light of the current financial situation. **We are indeed very concerned about the financial crisis, and we urge those Member States that have not paid their contributions to meet their responsibilities. Without sufficient funding for the regular budget, UNESCO cannot carry out its mission.**

ISAU is counting on the new Director-General to impart a new dynamism and give fresh impetus to the Organization, which is running out of steam. We would like to see greater stability in the leadership of HRM, which has had five directors in the past four years.

Thank you for your attention.