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FOLLOW-UP TO DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT THEIR PREVIOUS SESSIONS

PART III

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

ADDENDUM

COMMENTS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION OF UNESCO (ISAU)

SUMMARY

B. Report on the geographical distribution and gender balance of the staff of the Secretariat and on the implementation of the measures taken to redress any imbalance

Pursuant to Item 9.2.7 of the UNESCO Human Resources Manual, the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU) submits its comments on human resources issues (document 209 EX/5.III.B).

1. ISAU regrets to note that, once again, geographical imbalances in human resources persist in the Organization. It is incumbent upon us to point out that this state of affairs, which is regrettable, is less problematic in itself than the lack of effort by the Secretariat to remedy it. Since the very creation of our Association, we have deplored geographical imbalance in the Organization, which we see as a serious breach of the ideals of UNESCO, as it persists despite our complaints and proposals.

2. On a more technical level, the imbalances in favour of nationals of the same geographical group raise the question as to whether our Organization has a serious problem of efficiency, since the conclusion to be drawn from this imbalance is that recruiters are more concerned with recruiting from this group than with selecting individuals on the basis of their skills. This indifference to the overall effectiveness of our Organization raises questions.

3. With regard to document 209 EX/5.III.B, submitted by the Administration, we should first of all stress that we are not convinced by the assertions of the Bureau of Human Resources Management (ADM/HRM) that recruiters will be invited to take into account applications from under- or non-represented countries. The appeal to the goodwill of recruiters has been reiterated so many times over the years that it has become worthless. As we regularly repeat, one of the reasons for this



problem is that ADM/HRM does not have any real control over the effective management of the staff, and particularly over recruitment. The document betrays this shortcoming when it says, "*At the pre-selection stage, managers must now include, as far as is possible, a candidate from a non-represented or under-represented Member State. HRM may return a recommendation which does not take into account such a qualified candidate*". This statement makes it clear that while ADM/HRM can intervene at the beginning and end of a recruitment process, it is simply absent from the rest of the process.

4. To a certain extent, the debate on geographical distribution is therefore relatively futile, since we are being made to discuss it with ADM/HRM, even though the Bureau acknowledges in its document that it is only involved upstream and downstream of the actual recruitment process. If recruiters are not steered all the way by ADM/HRM, a situation is created in which the Bureau intervenes only extraneously, at the risk of giving recruiters the impression that ADM/HRM, guarantor of the staff policies decided by the Member States, is an obstacle to be circumvented. This propensity of recruiters to circumvent staff policies is, moreover, very regularly reported to the staff associations by staff members who apply internally for posts open to recruitment and find that, despite their skills and experience, their applications are not at all taken into consideration with the attention officially prescribed by ADM/HRM.

5. Our second set of remarks concerns the statistical tools which, despite the efforts made in recent years, do not provide Member States with a clear picture of the problems relating to geographical distribution. While we welcome the fact that ADM/HRM is finally publishing information on non-geographical posts, it is regrettable, nonetheless, that the information provided is not as precise as that for geographical posts, which are detailed by grade and by country. From this point of view, it seems to us that the way in which ADM/HRM gives statistical priority to geographical posts is irrational. The argument put forward by ADM/HRM is based on the principle of the source of funding and the status of posts, information which may indeed be of interest to Member States. The reality of human resources, however, does not stop at the way they are financed. Regardless of the mode of financing, the purpose of a post is to deliver results. At any given moment in time, the reality of the Secretariat is that of all the staff, who contribute to the pursuit of the Organization's missions. In this connection, we cannot underestimate the absurdity of discussing the geographical and cultural balance within the Secretariat when the statistics relate to 651 posts and ignore the other 1,651, some of which are managerial posts.

6. The Administration must present data on geographical posts, but it cannot use such statistical artifice as to prevent Member States from ascertaining the reality of geographical distribution in UNESCO. Moreover, this statistical artifice leads in practice to an increased lack of transparency in the recruitment of non-geographical posts. Thus, in absolute numbers, the proportion of Group I representatives in the Secretariat is 35% (out of 652 posts). The table we provide on the regional distribution of the 1,651 non-geographical posts shows that there are 692 staff members from Group I, which is 42% of the total, and therefore a higher proportion than for geographical posts.

Regional group	D/P		NO	GS		Total
	HQ	Field		HQ	Field	
Group I	149	97	0	298	148	692
Group II	11	8	5	36	16	76
Group III	18	16	32	23	80	169
Group IV	60	28	43	35	89	255
Group V(a)	22	33	93	66	110	324
Group V(b)	19	12	17	42	45	135
Total	279	194	190	500	488	1651

7. Returning to geographical posts, it should be noted that the weighting system proposed by the Secretariat revealed the same imbalances as the other measurement criteria, showing that those imbalances were profound. Having noted that the Secretariat, as is often the case with the question of geographical distribution, failed to provide Member States with complete and accurate information, we have calculated the distribution by group on the basis of this weighting (see below). We reiterate our frank disagreement with the practice of displaying data without explaining how it is calculated. It should be recalled that such a practice contravenes the Administration's primary duty to provide Member States with transparent and readable data. If the Administration establishes a weighting system for the calculation of geographical distribution, it is the responsibility of the Administration to provide the results by country and by region.

Total by grade and by regional group using a weighting system										
Grade	DDG	ADG	D-2	D-1	P-5	P-4	P-3	P-2	P-1	Total
Group										
Group I	0	8	24	39	98	114	59	27	0	369*
Group II	0	4	3	9	18	32	18	11	0	95
Group III	0	4	6	15	14	30	20	20	0	109
Group IV	4	0	6	15	30	70	39	22	0	186
Group V(a)	0	8	6	21	32	62	33	21	0	183
Group V(b)	0	8	3	21	8	16	12	14	0	82
Total	4	32	48	120	200	324	181	115	0	1024

* + 37 including the United States of America and Israel

Gender balance

8. ISAU welcomes efforts to ensure gender balance in the Organization but regrets, nevertheless, that the situation at the P-5 level continues to deteriorate. ISAU reiterates our request to ADM/HRM to take concrete measures to rectify this anomaly. In addition to the recruitment of women at this level, ISAU recommends that internal promotions be encouraged.