



this is *at its sole discretion*; as such, it cannot determine the rights or obligations of the individuals involved it has no enforcement power on legal decisions, including the authority to impose sanctions or remedies.

Moreover, the members of the Appeals Board are in part elected by the Staff through elections they being peers with no requirement for legal qualifications; and in part appointed by the Director-General - who is also respondent in the proceedings and uniquely empowered for the final determination. This process calls into question the objectivity and independence of the present internal justice.

Furthermore, the right to equality of arms is compromised at a time when guaranteeing equality by access to lawyers and legal services is crucial, the Staff is not permitted to be represented by external lawyers they are not provided with any legal services. The Administration on the other side has the full support of well-trained lawyers of the Office of Legal Affairs, and the staff left to rely on staff associations that are not staffed by persons with legal qualifications for such costs cannot be sustained. No funding is provided for this purpose.

In line with the recommendations of the JIU to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal justice system to safeguard the rights of individuals affected by the current system must be implemented without delay.

Adequate resources will not only reduce conflicts within UNESCO through more effective informal dispute resolution but also expedite case disposal in the formal justice system. The initiative of a formal system for the administration of justice within UNESCO should be aimed at protecting the rights of Staff and providing effective remedies.

Access to impartial internal justice is a fundamental right, and it is essential to ensure that the Appeals Board constitutes a competent and unbiased body, especially considering there is only one layer of judicial appeal for the UNESCO Staff that of the ILOAT, which is final and binding.

The independence of the international civil service and its jurisprudence on due process are fundamental and necessitate robust safeguards to ensure this independence. It is crucial UNESCO prioritises an essential system that maintains integrity, accountability, and trust within UNESCO to resolve disputes effectively and uphold rights and obligations.

I respectfully requests the Members of this Executive Board to support ISAU's advocacy for the right to health and right to fair treatment in internal justice. Your support is vital in promoting these essential rights.

I hope to have conveyed that if these matters are not adequately addressed it will lead to the erosion of trust inside UNESCO.

Thank you for your attention.