



ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DU PERSONNEL DE L'UNESCO
INTERNATIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION OF UNESCO

8 October 2025

Madam Chairperson of the Executive Board,
Madam Chairperson of the FA Commission,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the remarkable work accomplished by the Chairperson of the Executive Board. You have demonstrated exemplary rigor, an intimate knowledge of our Organization, and a sincere attachment to its values. Your leadership has been a model of discernment and dedication. We are deeply grateful to you for your ability to recognize the value of the staff and place them at the heart of the Organization.

Allow me to congratulate Mr Khaled El-Enany, whose brilliant campaign highlighted all the qualities that the world could expect from the Director-General of UNESCO. ISAU will continue to work constructively in the interests of our Organization.

Today, UNESCO is at a critical juncture. The Director-General's term of office is drawing to an end against a backdrop of budgetary, geopolitical and institutional challenges. While Directors-General are "passing through", the staff embody the continuity of UNESCO. We regret that this awareness has not always guided the decisions taken by the Administration, whose attitude, ranging from mistrust to indifference, has undermined the bond of trust with the Organization's staff.

UNESCO's staff are its most valuable asset, ensuring the implementation of your decisions and resolutions, the vector of your vision, and the vibrant heart of our mission. It is in this spirit that ISAU wishes to bring several major concerns to your attention.

The current Human Resources Management Strategy reveals a worrying gap between stated intentions, their uneven implementation and the reality experienced by staff. This gap, highlighted by the global survey, the Ethics Office, the Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) and the Appeals Board, fuels the feeling of an organization that is "at sea" and has become uncertain of itself, as if resigned to the weakening of "the moral and intellectual solidarity of humankind". The deterioration of the working climate and the growing demotivation of our staff call for concrete and immediate measures. We can no longer be satisfied with cosmetic solutions or symbolic actions.

Moreover, the lack of transparency in recruitment, the absence of any link between performance and promotion, the persistent insecurity of affiliated staff, and chronic delays in implementing human resources policies are all symptoms of a system that call for structural reform.

ISAU also regrets the late publication of the document on the results of the survey on the conditions of employment of the General Service and related categories (GS). This delay meant that we were unable to carry out a thorough analysis, or to submit our written comments in a timely manner.

We wish to express our disappointment regarding the recommendation of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to freeze the current GS salary scale. However, we welcome the

recommendation to significantly increase allowances for dependent children, for spouses, and for the first dependent child of a staff member without a spouse.

While we understand that, given the financial situation, an increase in allowances from 1 October 2024 may prove difficult, ISAU requests that the possibility of phasing in these allowances be explored in order to take into account retroactivity.

We must also highlight the worrying instability at the head of the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM). This excessive turnover hampers the continuity of reforms, undermines staff serenity and compromises the effectiveness of the Human Resources Strategy. An organization is directionless without effective and fair staff management. It is time for HRM to return to its proper strategic role. Its integration, or even dilution, into ADM corresponded to a period of declining influence for HRM. The Bureau must once again report directly to the Director-General in order to guarantee its independence and ability to act proactively and innovatively.

ISAU reiterates its concern at the infringement of the independence of the Appeals Board. Substantial modifications made by the Administration to the report of this body reduce the analytical scope of the document and hinder informed debate by Member States. The Directorate cannot interfere in the work of the Appeals Board, including its report, without acting as both an interested party and a judge – a conflict of interest that can only harm the entire Organization. An Appeals Board deprived of its independence no longer has a *raison d'être*. We therefore implore you, dear Delegates, to demand that the Appeals Board be allowed to present its report without any interference in order to guarantee transparent and impartial internal justice.

Regarding the revision of the Statutes of the Appeals Board, we call for the inclusion of the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) to allow the suspension of a contested administrative decision when its implementation would cause irreparable harm. We regret that this draft proposal has not been submitted to the Board at this session. How can this delay be explained, when the JIU recommendations were published in 2023? We also insist that all JIU recommendations be taken into account, as they represent an essential guarantee for staff and protection for the Organization itself.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to conclude by reiterating that ISAU will continue to embody the spirit of responsibility and constructive dialogue that is indispensable to the transformative mission that you, the Member States, have entrusted to UNESCO and its Director-General.

We believe that it is only by working together, while respecting the founding principles of our Organization, that we can build a fairer, more efficient and more humane UNESCO.

Thank you for your attention.