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Status update on the payment of outstanding pension benefits



The well-being of current and former United Nations staff members is a top priority for the UN's Management. It has thus been monitoring the situation related to payment of pension and separation benefits very closely and has impressed upon the CEO and his senior team the need to ensure all appropriate measures are put in place so that newly separated staff are paid in a timely manner.

The Pension Fund has informed the UN's Management that as of 30 June 2016, only 20 cases of the "backlog" accumulated as of 1 March 2016 (1,706 cases for the UN Secretariat and 1,730 cases for UN Specialized Agencies) were pending completion.

The Fund has processed a total of 2,776 cases (64%) out of the 4,316 new cases submitted to the Fund since 1 March 2016 through the dedicated efforts of the Fund's operational staff and the newly established task force.

The UN's Management continues to be concerned about the totality of outstanding cases forwarded to the Fund that remain under review and with the capacity of the Fund to process the upcoming surge of separation cases expected from peacekeeping missions in a timely manner.

The steps required from the date of retirement to the first pension payment are as follows:

- (1) Full set of separation documents is submitted to the Pension Fund Secretariat (Separation Personnel Action, Separation Notification (PF4) prepared by the employing organization, and Payment Instruction prepared by the staff member);
- (2) Case is assigned for processing by the Fund;
- (3) Case is processed requiring calculation, audit, and certification, provided that all documentation is duly completed;
- (4) Benefit is paid.

The UN's Management has requested the Fund to be provided with comprehensive information on all outstanding cases. The Fund has reported the following actionable cases as being still pending processing as of 30 June 2016:

- · 1,688 retirement and initial separation cases; and
- 900 (approximately) special cases (such as survivor benefits, child benefits).

The Fund also indicated that they have a large number of deferments (by choice) and recalculation cases as well as cases recorded in their system for which documentation is missing. In this respect the UN's Management has also requested the Fund to proactively assist member organizations and separated staff by following up on individual cases in order to help expedite (re)submission of missing documentation. Management will in turn follow up with the responsible entities in the Secretariat to track the status. Separated(-ing) staff members and submitting organizations are strongly urged to ensure that all required documentation is submitted to the Fund in due time, and that proper confirmation is obtained from the Fund of correct receipt.

The Administration has impressed upon the Fund the need to continue to urgently address all the outstanding cases as a top priority. The Fund is currently in the process of establishing a second Task Force to increase the processing capacity to deal with the current and the expected upcoming surge of separation cases. The Administration will continue to meet with the Fund's leadership on a regular basis to assess progress until the situation is normalized.