United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization **Executive Board** ex

Hundred and seventy-fifth session

175 EX/6
PARIS, 28 July 2006
Original: English

<u>Item **5**</u> of the provisional agenda

**REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFORM PROCESS**

STAFF POLICY

SUMMARY

In accordance with the General Conference 33 C/Resolution 75 (I),
the Director-General presents to the Executive Board a report on the
implementation of the staff policy, including an update on the
staffing situation and the implementation of the human resources
policies already in place.

Decision required: paragraph 29.

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   At the 33rd session of the General Conference, the Director-General presented a progress report on the staff policy reform, in which he outlined the main results achieved in the implementation of the human resource policy framework and presented the medium- and long-term staffing strategy. The General Conference expressed its appreciation for the progress achieved in the policy framework, including the respect of rules and procedures, the performance assessment process, and the enhanced role of learning and development and invited the Director-General "to report to the Executive Board at its 175th session on the implementation of the staff policy". (33 C/Resolution 75 (I)).

2.   Pursuant to this resolution of the General Conference, this document provides the Executive Board with a progress report on the implementation of the human resource policy framework since its 174th session, as well as with an update of the staffing situation as of 1 June 2006.

II.   UPDATE ON STAFFING AS OF 1 JUNE 2006

Headquarters – Field distribution

3.   As of 1 June 2006, the distribution of UNESCO regular budget staff shows that 70% (1,180) of the staff is at Headquarters and 30% (513) is in the field. In January 2000, 74% of the staff was at Headquarters and 26% in the field.

Senior management staffing

4.   As shown in Table I below, the senior management staffing level remained stable with a total of 89 staff members in the Director category as of 1 June 2006, which is below the ceiling of 101 Director and above posts approved in document 33 C/5.

Table I: Senior management posts/staff

Senior Management Posts	Posts in 32 C/5	Posts in 33 C/5	Staff as of 1/6/2006
DDG	1	1	1
ADG	10	10	8*
D-2	25	23	20
D-1	61	65	59
Total	**97**	**99**	**88***

* Not included ADG/ADM who joined the Secretariat on 8/6/2006.

The Young Professionals Programme

5.   **Ten Young Professionals** (among whom seven women), selected among some 430 applicants, joined the Secretariat in 2006. Of this group, eight Young Professionals are nationals from under-represented Member States and two from non-represented Member States. Six of them are assigned to Programme Sectors i.e. Education, Sciences, Communication and Information and Social Sciences, and the other four are assigned to Central Services (Bureau of Human Resources Management, Bureau of the Budget, and External Relations).

Recruitment: update from January to June 2006

6.   Since January 2006, <u>44 appointments</u> were made to posts at the Professional level and above (38 appointments to Professional posts, including 10 Young Professionals, and 6 to Director posts). Of these 44 appointments, 23 (52%) were internal candidates and 21 (48%) external candidates. In the Director category, 3 appointments out of 5 were external candidates.

7.   Of the <u>21 external recruits to P and D posts</u>, 11 <u>(52%)</u> were candidates from under-represented Member States (9) and non-represented Member States (2). This figure is above the target set by the General Conference at its 32nd session to "… fill, as an objective for the 2004-2005 biennium, a minimum of 50% of the posts open for external recruitment with candidates from non- or under-represented Member States" (32 C/Resolution 71).

Promotions: update from January to June 2006

8.   Since January 2006, 54 staff members were promoted (31 Professional staff and 23 General Service staff). Of these 54 promotions, 30 (55%) resulted from a competitive process, 15 (28%) from post reclassification and 9 (17%) from advancement in split-grade posts (P-1/P-2 and General Service technical group).

III.   UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY FRAMEWORK

Recruitment: Global Recruitment Exercise

9.   A **global recruitment exercise** was launched in February 2006, with the internal advertisement of 40 Professional and General Service posts vacant or to become vacant in 2006. The exercise concerned 19 Professional posts at Headquarters and in the field and 21 General Service posts at Headquarters. The Education Sector was not included in the exercise since it has undertaken a comprehensive sectoral review, including a staffing review. The internal recruitment process has been completed for 34 posts (14 Professional posts and 20 General Service posts) with the following results: 27 posts were filled with internal candidates (12 P posts and 15 GS posts) and 7 posts will be advertised externally (2 P posts and 5 GS posts). Six posts are still under evaluation.

Staffing Arrangements for Post-Conflict Situations

10.   To support UNESCO's action in post-conflict situations, the Bureau for Human Resources Management has put in place specific measures to facilitate the rapid deployment of qualified staff to post-conflict areas where UNESCO's presence/action is required at short notice. They include a roster of 50 qualified and committed staff, who have volunteered to carry out missions at short notice, to post-conflict countries/regions and who were selected, out of 130 applicants, against 13 key profiles required for post-conflict situations. The key profiles are those of Heads of UNESCO Antenna, Project Officers (in the field of Education, Communication and Information, Natural Sciences and Social and Human Science) and Administrative Officers. To attract candidates, the set up of the roster was accompanied by an information campaign, including an information session for staff at Headquarters, the diffusion of a user-friendly brochure, etc.

11.   Training for staff on the roster is mandatory. A specific one-week training programme to prepare them for their future missions has been put in place. It focuses on programme delivery in post-conflict situations, on individual safety and preparedness and UNESCO's work in the inter-agency environment has been designed for staff on the roster. The first training session took place in June 2006 for 27 staff.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT – UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES SINCE JANUARY 2006

12.   Since 2006 the following training activities have been undertaken to meet the six objectives set in the training framework approved by the Director-General for 2006-2007:

Objective 1: **To enhance the positioning of UNESCO within the United Nations system.**

- Training on United Nations programming tools (CCA/UNDAF) was organized in Cairo for 32 field staff members from the Arab region. The objective is to provide a better understanding of the United Nations programming tools and harmonize the priorities and projects with the United Nations system at country level.

- Sessions on HIV and AIDS in the Workplace were attended by some 100 staff members.

Objective 2: **To enhance partnership building.**

- A self-training CD-Rom on fund-raising and negotiations skills is being developed. The objective is to give more information to UNESCO specialists, at Headquarters and in the field on the priorities and policies of UNESCO's main bilateral and multilateral donors.

Objective 3: **To enhance the Management and Accountability Culture.** Several online tools were developed in support of this objective:

- Three workshops to provide a basic training on UNESCO operations have been held in Doha, Islamabad and Bamako and two team-building exercises have been organized in Bamako and Harare, with a total of some 95 field staff trained. CD-Roms on "basic training on UNESCO operations" and for field Administrative Officers are under development;

- A CD-Rom "Managing People with Confidence" for all UNESCO supervisors/managers has been developed and will be distributed in the autumn of 2006;

- Training in support of IT management systems continued with the training at Headquarters of staff involved in the design and implementation of STEPS (SAP HR system) and 18 administrative staff from 12 field offices in the use of the finance module of the Finance and Budget System (FABS). Three UNESCO institutes that went live in FABS in January 2006 received post implementation user support and coaching.

Objective 4: **To enhance programming and delivery.**

- Twenty-one "resource persons" for a human rights-based approach to programming (HRBA) at UNESCO – of which seven from the field – have been trained by the SHS Sector;

- Twenty-three youth focal points as well as heads of field offices and 22 staff members from the Arab and African regions were trained on the mainstreaming of youth issues into programming. Some projects have already resulted from these learning activities;

- A hundred staff members and some members of Permanent Delegations followed a two-hour seminar by a leading expert in the field of gender equality.

Objective 5: **To increase upward mobility of staff.**

- A competency framework and career paths for the Programme Specialists (P-1 to P-4) and General Service staff will be developed and piloted in the Communication and Information Sector and the Bureau of Human Resources Management in 2006. This framework will outline the core knowledge, experience and skills required for successful job performance. It will also include performance indicators and generic career paths.

Objective 6: **To support learning and development activities.**

- In order to support the launching of learning and development activities, a CD-ROM entitled *Guidelines for Programming and Monitoring Leaning & Development Activities* has been distributed to all UNESCO's services;

- A brochure presenting detailed information on each training activity to be implemented in 2006-2007 has been issued to all staff in June 2006;

- An evaluation of two specific training programmes (Results-Based Management and Human Rights-based approach) has been undertaken. The objective of these evaluations is to measure the efficiency of these programmes and, based on their results, to make recommendations and proposals for the 2006-2007 training programmes;

- To support the monitoring and evaluation of training activities, a training database has been developed to record evaluation results provided by participants for each course.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT: UPDATE ON THE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT EXERCISE FOR 2004-2005

13.   The final phase of the **Performance Assessment** cycle has been implemented across the Organization, bringing to completion the first two-year performance cycle which started in 2004 under the new policy. During this last phase, supervisors conducted the final performance review of their staff, including a mandatory performance discussion and an assessment of results and achievements for 2004-2005. Set up in each sector, bureau, field office, the Review Panels, which are a key component of the new policy, reviewed the performance reports of staff to ensure the quality, objectivity and consistency of performance evaluations. To launch and support this final phase of the cycle 2004-2005, HRM organized a series of information sessions across the Secretariat.

14.   At the end of May 2006, more than 85% of the staff's overall performance assessments have been completed by the supervisors and Review Panels have been set up in the following Sectors/Bureaux: CLT, ADM, ERC, BB, HRM, SCG, SCX, IIEP and IBE. In most of the assessments completed, staff members have carried out a self-assessment. Such widespread use of this new provision, which is entirely optional, shows that dialogue and feedback, key elements of the new policy, are gradually finding their place in the assessment process in the Secretariat. HRM is undertaking an analysis of the lessons learnt following the completion of this first exercise.

Performance agreement for senior management staff

15.   When the new Performance Assessment policy was introduced for UNESCO staff, it was decided that a separate performance evaluation process would be developed for the senior management, given the level and scope of responsibilities entrusted to this category of staff. To that

effect, a specific **performance agreement for senior management staff**, including heads of field offices, has been developed by HRM, in close cooperation with IOS and other Services concerned.

16.   This agreement will be signed by the ADGs, directors of bureaux, directors/heads of field offices with the Director-General and will cover the period of a biennium. Expected results are defined and grouped into the following areas of responsibility: Programme Planning and Delivery, Partnerships and External Relations, People Management and Budget/Financial Management. The key managerial expectations for managers are established on the basis of the existing senior managerial competency framework. These new proposals are scheduled to be introduced in 2007.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

17.   As part of the framework of the medium- and long-term staffing strategy a succession planning process is being put in place for directors of field offices and Administrative Officers. Taking into account the posts to become vacant in the current biennium, two generic job profiles and vacancy announcements have been developed for the two functions. These two vacancies will be advertised in order to set up rosters of pre-qualified candidates. In this process, some training opportunities will be identified and offered to the staff members requiring additional development to fully meet the generic profiles of these two functions.

MERIT-BASED PROMOTIONS

18.   To complement the existing **Promotion** policy, the Bureau for Human Resources Management has been working on the design of a merit promotion scheme. A review of merit promotion schemes in other United Nations/International Organizations has been carried out in May 2006 and consultations were held with the Advisory Council on Personnel Policies (ACPP).

19.   Some basic principles and eligibility criteria have been identified. The merit promotion scheme will be based on merit and linked to results-based performance. It is also proposed to introduce a recognition scheme which will recognize outstanding individual contribution as well as teamwork and managerial excellence. Concrete proposals for a merit-based promotion and recognition programme have been developed by HRM. These proposals will be further discussed with the Advisory Council on Personnel Policies (ACPP) and the Staff Associations prior to the Director-General's approval.

HIV AND AIDS IN THE WORKPLACE

20.   The new UNESCO policy on HIV and AIDS in the workplace reflects the commitments and responsibilities of the Organization as a member of the United Nations Common System and of the UNAIDS programme. This policy aims at engendering a culture of care that supports overall staff well-being and to ensure that all employees:

- are aware of HIV/AIDS, how it is transmitted and how it can be prevented;

- have sufficient access to HIV/AIDS-related information, care and support; and

- are protected from discrimination on the basis of real or perceived HIV infection.

21.   The policy sets out guiding principles such as elimination of stigmatization and discrimination, gender equality, prevention and training. In addition, the policy outlines some key

initiatives taken by UNESCO such as the establishment of a Workplace Committee on HIV and AIDS, the development of specific training activities in this area and the access to free, voluntary testing and counselling. This policy is also aligned on the HIV and AIDS policies of other United Nations agencies.

MONITORING HUMAN RESOURCES PERFORMANCE

Service standards in human resources transactions

22.   The recently published Table of Delegated Authorities and Accountabilities outlined clearly the responsibilities attached to key Human Resources Management services such as recruitment, classification, learning and development, performance assessment, salaries and allowances. In addition to a description of each process, the person or service responsible for the transaction is clearly identified, and their accountability clearly spelled out.

23.   The Table of Authorities also establishes, for the first time, specific service standards for each transaction, by which each unit concerned undertakes to provide the service requested within a maximum time-frame. The objective of such standards is to ensure timely and efficient delivery of human resource services. HRM has set up a mechanism to monitor the implementation of these service standards and to take, where required, the necessary corrective measures.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT TOOLS

A.   Online management tools

Human resources manual

24.   Work is well advanced in developing a new online Human Resources Manual. Key chapters, such as salaries and allowances, recruitment, performance assessment have been drafted and validated. The new online manual will be comprehensive and will cover all areas of Human Resources Management. The Manual is scheduled to be completed and online by the end of 2006 or early 2007.

HRM Intranet site

25.   In parallel, HRM has been actively working on the development of its intranet site in close cooperation with BPI. The objective is to provide an easy and user-friendly access to comprehensive human resources information including clear and precise information on human resources activities. The site would also give access to the staff members to personalized and individualized information such as performance evaluation, leave status, curriculum vitae and recent personnel transactions. Part of the new Intranet site will be online by end September 2006.

B.   Human resources integrated systems

STEPS

26.   The implementation of the new HR integrated information system – STEPS (System To Enhance Personnel Services) was officially launched on 31 January 2006. The system will be implemented in two phases. Phase 1 – to be completed by the end of 2006 – covers payroll, personnel administration, organizational management, time management, travel and position budgeting and control. The blueprint for these modules was completed at the end of June 2006 and

reviewed by a Validation Committee, composed of representatives of all services concerned. The Project Team (both UNESCO and SAP) will then configure the system before it can be tested and finally delivered to users by the end of the year.

27.   Phase II covering the remaining functionalities (i.e. manager and employee self-services, training and event management, staff development, recruitment and workflows) will start, subject to the availability of funds, in early 2007.

New Attendance/Leave Management Application

28.   In April 2006, HRM launched a new Intranet-based attendance/leave management application called "TULIP". This new system, developed in close cooperation with DIT, will enable the Organization to manage more effectively the leave taken by staff members. TULIP is easy to use and provides instant online access to leave status to supervisors and staff, thus allowing an easy monitoring of the leave in a work unit. The new application also eliminates paperwork since all leave transactions are done online.

PROPOSED DRAFT DECISION

29.   In the light of the foregoing, the Executive Board may wish to consider the following draft decision:

The Executive Board,

1.   Recalling 33 C/Resolution 75 (I),

2.   Having examined document 175 EX/6,

3.   Takes note of the work accomplished to develop and implement the human resource policy framework;

4.   Invites the Director-General to pursue the implementation of the human resource policy framework, and to report to it at its 176th session and, thereafter, to report to it, on an annual basis, at its autumn session.

Hundred and seventy-fifth session

175 EX/6 Add.
PARIS, 21 September 2006
Original: French

Item **5** of the provisional agenda

**REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFORM PROCESS**

STAFF POLICY

ADDENDUM

SUMMARY

In conformity with item 2805.7 of the UNESCO Administrative
Manual, the UNESCO Staff Union (STU) submits its observations
on the report by the Director-General.

Introduction

1.   Relations between the UNESCO Staff Union (STU) and the Administration (Bureau of Human Resources Management, Sector for Administration and Central Services) are very cordial and it is clear that an atmosphere of dialogue has been established in the Secretariat. However, the matters that we raise are not always taken seriously and, above all, there is no real willingness to resolve them. For example, whenever STU draws attention to an administrative irregularity, HRM neither makes nor enforces any change, even after verifying the case. In one of the programme sectors, for instance, in a section in which there are two P-5s among others, the head of section is a P-4. This is an administrative aberration and an indirect way of awarding a promotion (which is imposed de facto) outside the statutory procedures. HRM has looked into the case, but for reasons unknown to us, there has been no follow-up.

2.   Human resources are managed in such a way at UNESCO as to discourage any form of staff participation. Appearances are kept up, but the views of staff associations and even those of joint bodies are ignored as much as possible. The representatives of Member States no doubt have the impression that decisions relating to human resources management, particularly those concerning working conditions, are taken as part of a democratic process and they no doubt wonder why discontent among UNESCO staff is continuing to grow. The real reason is that the voice of the staff is heard but not respected.

Restructuring of the Education Sector

3.   Staff in the Education Sector were surprised at the restructuring solution adopted by external consultants and the sector's senior managers. The structural logic, in relation to the programme approved by the General Conference and the Organization's mission in the area of education, remains very unclear to the staff.

4.   With regard to human resources, the choices made in regard to the assignment or confirmation of responsibilities and the selection of staff who are supposed to strengthen certain field offices have been interpreted as measures based on personal considerations that are completely unrelated to the Organization's interests. Clarification has been requested, but the staff consider that no satisfactory explanation has yet been given, despite several meetings in which the Deputy Director-General, the Assistant Director-General for Education, the Director of HRM and other senior staff have taken part. The two staff associations strongly support the cause of colleagues whose field posting seems to be punishment rather than recognition of their professional excellence.

Recruitment and succession planning

5.   Recruitment at UNESCO continues to be effected outside the written regulations. The procedure as a whole is respected only in appearance. Practically all advertised posts are earmarked for persons selected before the official assessment, which is arranged in such a way as to appear fair. Thus, there is no competition and the best or most deserving candidate has no chance of being selected. The same is true of succession planning for staff members nearing the statutory retirement age. When a post is about to fall vacant, it is "assigned", before any assessment has been carried out, to a person in conformity with criteria that are not always those stipulated in the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

6.   HRM no longer has the financial means to verify applications or assessments and members of the Advisory Board on Individual Personnel Matters (PAB) are not always afforded the necessary conditions (training, advice, time and information) to verify the fairness of the process.

Unfortunately, statements by observers from the two staff associations are only very rarely supported by HRM, which rules out one of the few opportunities for equitable judgement.

7.   This state of affairs is a major obstacle to the career development of staff members and to the voluntary rotation of Professional staff. Such practices not only add to the personal frustration of staff members but also exacerbate the deprofessionalization of staff and result in more disputes in the workplace, which are two ongoing causes of the Secretariat's inefficiency.

Promotions and merit-based promotion

8.   The same holds true for promotions through reclassification of posts. Personal relations between staff members and their hierarchical superiors and other non-statutory considerations govern such promotions. As promotion through application for a vacant post is uncertain and merit-based promotion has been suspended, career development opportunities are practically non-existent.

9.   The Director-General announced the redefinition of the procedures for merit-based promotion on 15 November 2005 ("Prior to the reintroduction **next year** of the merit-based promotion system, which will apply to all staff, […]"). At the beginning of September 2006, the Advisory Council on Personnel Policies (ACPP) had still not been involved in the consideration and formulation of the policy in question. This is just one example of the usurpation of the Council's statutory role and of the abuse of power that is turning ACPP into a rubber-stamping and controlled body, when the Council should be a think-tank on staff policies and a source of proper advice on the subject.

Training

10.   Given that the opportunities for administrative "rewards" are limited by the lack of transparency as regards recruitment and promotion, training could offer some degree of satisfaction. However, in this area also, the real criteria applied correspond neither to programme requirements nor to the staff's personal expectations. While the objectives identified by HRM are interesting, real solutions have yet to be found in order to achieve those objectives.

Performance assessment

11.   At the end of 2005, for the first time, the performance of UNESCO's staff was assessed using "PerfoWeb". This exercise has ended in more conflicts than usual. These misunderstandings are due to a number of factors, including, first and foremost, the fact that very few people (whether those assessed or the assessors) have understood the meaning and the scope of the exercise. Therefore, the first lesson that HRM should learn from this experience is that it is not enough simply to issue procedures and that a minimum of guidance is also required when introducing new human resources management principles. The most troubling factor is the attitude that performance assessment is the expression of some kind of power over subordinates. Assessment is therefore becoming an internal contract of subordination that did not form part of the procedure as originally envisaged and that should be eliminated through control mechanisms that are not yet operational.

HIV and AIDS prevention

12.   A major effort has been undertaken at Headquarters in training on HIV and AIDS prevention in the workplace. The quality of the training provided by HRM, while indisputable and commendable, still falls short of the requisite standard. Since the matter is one that is highly sensitive in all cultures of the world, even among international civil servants, the message is still hardly being conveyed. The UNESCO Administration should have the courage to require the staff to be informed and to enable them to prevent infection or combat the virus and its complications, while respecting those suffering from the virus or from the disease.

Accountability in human resources management

13.   Decentralization and the delegation of authority entailed, together with the complete lack of financial resources for human resources management, have created "no man's land" situations in this area. It is very often the case that matters go unresolved because nobody assumes responsibility. The Deputy Director-General has held discussions with Headquarters staff members whose cases had been drawn to his attention by the staff associations. He has thus taken cognizance of the injustice that some have suffered, the hierarchy's failure to act and, as he has often noted, the lack of initiative and responsibility among hierarchical superiors, who, despite being fully aware of the situation, do nothing to find a fair solution. While it is laudable that the highest appointed official of the Secretariat devotes time and energy to try to resolve individual cases, the procedure is nevertheless completely disproportionate and reveals the lack of genuine accountability in human resources management. At best, injustices are resolved, but disciplinary measures are never taken against those who should have avoided the situations in question or at least found upstream solutions.

Human resources management tools

14.   These tools are very important and should raise efficiency; more hindsight is required to permit a fair assessment of their real impact on the quality of the Secretariat's everyday work. The apparent improvisation in the application of the new tools does not augur well for positive results.

Executive Board

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Hundred and seventy-fifth session

175 EX/6 Add.2
PARIS, 25 September 2006
Original: French

Item **5** of the provisional agenda

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFORM PROCESS

STAFF POLICY

ADDENDUM 2

SUMMARY

In accordance with Item 2805.7 of the UNESCO Administrative Manual, the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU) submits its comments on the report by the Director-General on the implementation of the reform process: staff policy.

1.   The International Staff Association of UNESCO (hereinafter ISAU) has taken good note of the efforts made to reform the Organization's human resources management and of the results obtained since the 174th session of the Executive Board, as set out in the "Report by the Director-General on the implementation of the reform process", published as document 175 EX/6 and under the heading "Staff Policy".

2.   We are aware that progress is inevitably uneven at a time when many new initiatives are being undertaken while old management habits and styles subsist. We have however noted that to date the reform process has emphasized procedures themselves, in particular changes made to staff policy and the development of various human resources management tools.

3.   With regard to substance, it is now necessary to draw up **a strategic plan with emphasis on the integration of all these initiatives into a single consistent whole** enabling the Organization to adapt to its changing staffing needs and to transform the current long and complex process into a more dynamic and flexible activity. The need for such planning is all the more pressing now that the number of retirements is expected to rise throughout the Organization in the next few years.

4.   From this standpoint, the report under consideration falls short of our expectations because, firstly, it is merely a descriptive listing of a few selective measures to improve human resources management, rather than an analysis of the results of the reforms. As no criteria have been established, it is difficult to gauge the progress made towards the achievement of the main objectives and to assess the obstacles to change.

5.   However, as the reforms are applied the need for better information about actual changes is being felt more and more keenly. We therefore reiterate our hope that future reports will be more detailed and will analyse systematically improvements achieved, their impact and the obstacles encountered.

6.   Secondly, the report does not quite provide what was requested, either. It does, in paragraphs 10 and 17, provide some perfunctory information on *staffing arrangements for post-conflict situations and succession planning*, but, apart from the specific measures taken under those two items of reform, there is no indication of what has been done or should be done to "*implement the approved medium- and long-term staffing strategy, taking into account the strategy and programmes of the Organization within the limits of future budgets*".[1]

7.   It was, however, for that reason that the General Conference, in 33 C/Resolution 75 (I), <u>also</u> invited the Director-General to submit this report to the Executive Board for consideration at its 175th session. We therefore look forward with interest to learning more about the progress made in implementing the strategy and recommend that an additional exhaustive report be drawn up on the matter and submitted as soon as possible.

8.   In addition to these general considerations, ISAU would like to make some specific observations and recommendations on aspects of the report that are of particular concern to us.

The Young Professionals Programme

9.   The progress made in implementing the Young Professionals Programme is encouraging. ISAU is pleased to note that managers who have long preferred experienced professionals to young professionals are now increasingly aware of the advantages that they may derive from recruiting staff through the programme and that such staff are an asset for the future of the Organization.

Recruitment

10.   In paragraph 7 the report highlights, and ISAU naturally welcomes, the increase in the external recruitment of staff from under- and non-represented Member States. We consider however that enough is not always being done to encourage, or even oblige those with the authority to make appointments to start the process of filling vacant posts in a timely manner and thus reduce the lengthy period during which posts remain vacant and, above all, the persistent gap between those Member States which are over-represented and those that are under- or non-represented.

11.   We are also concerned about the very sharp drop in recent years in the **representation of some (groups of) Member States in managerial** and decision-making posts, while such **high-level posts are monopolized by a small number of other Member States**.

12.   ISAU is further concerned about the cold, resolute motives of some sectors' officials who prefer to recruit from *outside* rather than *in-house*, the exceedingly large number of staff hired under appointments of limited duration (ALD) arrangements to perform recurrent regular programme

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[1]   33 C/Resolution 75, I, paragraph (b).

duties and the growing insecurity of the civil service at UNESCO which is the unavoidable outcome.

13.   Hence the rising tide of complaints about the lack of transparency and the dysfunctions noted in the application of selection criteria and procedures. In the opinion of a growing number of the staff, current recruitment practices are designed to facilitate direct appointments, made in some instances without publication of a vacancy notice or a recommendation by a Personnel Advisory Board (PAB) but through personal acquaintance or cronyism, thus disregarding internal promotion and the rules in force.

14.   As to the global recruitment exercise launched in February 2006, it is interesting to note from paragraph 9 of the report that the "*Education Sector was not included in the exercise since it has undertaken a comprehensive sectoral review, including a staffing review*". ISAU nonetheless wishes to state that the staff whom it represents, and with them hopefully all of the Secretariat's staff, do not intend to do nothing about the obvious consequences of the **recent decision to endorse the "problematic" restructuring of the Sector**.

15.   We have so informed the Director-General and we know that, out of concern to avoid open conflict, whether individual or collective, he rather prefers the Staff Association and Union to contribute to the search for solutions to contentious cases of colleagues in the Education Sector.

16.   It is therefore interesting to know that the Presidents of the two representative staff associations have decided, responsibly and in an unprecedented movement of active solidarity, to form a united front to enter into negotiations with the Assistant Director-General for Education (ADG/ED) and the Director of the Bureau of Human Resources Management (DIR/HRM). There is still hope, then, and it is highly desirable that that hope should not be dashed.

Promotions

17.   Even though the number of staff members to have been promoted has risen in the first half of this year, which we can only welcome, we cannot disregard the fact that colleagues in the Secretariat, especially those in the Professional category (Ps) are increasingly being assigned more varied and complex additional duties because line managers have fewer resources at their disposal and ever-increasing tasks to perform. As the post pyramid narrows at the top of this category, there are very few opportunities for advancement.

18.   This is all the more regrettable in that, although their post descriptions remain inapposite, requests for post reclassification submitted by some colleagues in the General Service category (Gs) have been rejected, either for lack of proof deemed convincing by the Administration or for budgetary reasons.

19.   We nevertheless hope that, during the discussions on individual cases that the Deputy Director-General (DDG) has recently proposed judiciously for a number of G staff in this situation, it will be possible to find ways and means of reducing their frustration and maintaining their morale by enabling staff with lengthy experience and undisputed skills to be promoted.

20.   In any event, ISAU considers that to progress otherwise than on a case-by-case basis, as is the case now that there are more promotions through post reclassification, emphasis should no longer be placed on individual post descriptions when determining grades, but greater importance should be attached to post requirements in terms of tasks to be accomplished, skills and capacities. This is the aim of the human resources strategy which provides for the introduction of a system based on the establishment of families of jobs and generic post descriptions within those families.

Performance Assessment

21. It is encouraging to note that the introduction of the new performance assessment system has been completed and that it seems to have been used successfully throughout the Secretariat. We are somewhat surprised, however, by the Administration's seemingly sudden haste to inform the Executive Board about the initial trial of the system, when it has not yet discussed the lessons learnt with our representatives and has delayed in providing us with data that have been " under analysis" for months.

22. Even so, suffice it to note that the new system will require a radical change of attitude among supervisors and, above all, appropriate training to build their staff management and leadership capacity to make, in particular, fair, balanced and accurate assessments. In this respect, ISAU has already noted some failings in cases contesting performance assessments recently brought before the Reports Board.

23. A greater source of concern is the "secrecy" of the Board's deliberations, for the Staff Association's/Union's observers are not authorized to attend its meetings even though they have that right in all other joint advisory bodies and the Appeals Board. This aspect of the functioning of the Reports Board runs directly counter to the principles of transparency, social dialogue, conflict prevention, justice and the right to be heard and defended on an equal footing with one's supervisor. Furthermore, under the expanded terms of reference recently entrusted to the Board as part of the reform process, it may now in fact submit even more draconian recommendations to the Director-General, sometimes going even further than the line managers' recommended solution, thereby increasing the feeling of professional insecurity and demotivation.

24. In such circumstances, ISAU can do no more than encourage the Administration to speed up the adoption, as announced, of **a new merit-based promotion policy** which is essential for the effective implementation of an integrated performance assessment and career development system which, we hope in any event, would permit better acknowledgement of each staff member's contributions and merits.

For the Executive of ISAU

Sidiki Coulibaly
President