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New York, Friday 2 November 2018

*Delivered by Patricia Nemeth, Vice-President for Conditions of Service  
on behalf of Ian Richards, President*

Madam Chair. Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for giving us the time to provide our inputs on this important agenda item and we thank the Chairs of the ICSC and ACABQ for their presentations.

In light of this we have the following observations:

We support the increase in pensionable remuneration proposed jointly by the ICSC and the UN Pension Board. This brings it closer to the US comparator in terms of how much of the final salary a pension replaces. It's an update that has been much-delayed, and closes the gap between G and P staff.

We also support the proposed measures for the child allowance. Once again, this ensures the amount is updated correctly in accordance with the methodology. This update was delayed extensively during the consideration of the earlier compensation review.

We support the introduction of an end of service grant for staff on fixed-term contracts whose contracts expire without renewal. This is critical given all the reforms and restructuring exercises taking place. We trust that the General Assembly will be satisfied with the considerations provided by the ICSC.

We also support an allowance for staff who choose not to bring their families to D and E duty stations that are deemed safe. These duty stations are isolated and lack basic healthcare. The fact that many staff already choose not to bring their families, while paying for a second home out of pocket, shows the importance of this allowance in order to attract staff to field locations. It reflects a similar provision in the US comparator.

We are pleased to see progress on the much-needed review of the post adjustment system. We will be participating fully in this process, both regarding improvements to operational rules and the statistical methodology.

We will also be participating closely in the review of salaries for locally-recruited staff, to take into account our concerns regarding willing (participating) comparators, weights that reflect where our staff are actually recruited from (generally the private sector), currency fluctuations, language skills and actual comparability.

We support the framework on diversity. As staff unions we have been at the forefront of the campaign for a more diverse workforce, whether in terms of gender, geographic origin, disability or other factors. At the same time, competence must remain the primary determinant.

Finally, we believe that after 42 years, the ICSC needs a review of how it operates. In line with modern national systems we believe that staff should have a full negotiating rights in the determination of conditions of service. We appreciate the efforts made by the Commission at its last session to build consensus, but we do feel that this needs to be enshrined more solidly so that the ICSC becomes fit for purpose in the 21st century.

Allow me to close by congratulating Mr. Larbi Djacta for his election as Chair of the Commission.

Thank you.