





As signaled at the twenty-seventh meeting of States Parties and the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, Member States continue to express support for the work of the Commission. However, concerns remain over the conditions of service, including the continued lack of medical coverage for members of the Commission.

While some advances have been made in addressing this issue, including improvements made to the GIS laboratories and common areas, I understand that the Commission considers that further progress is needed.

In this regard, I note that, at its seventy-second session, the General Assembly took note of the written information, provided by the Secretary-General on options for mechanisms to provide medical insurance coverage to members of the Commission, including costs, and the information provided by the Secretariat during the Twelfth (60) and Thirteenth (61) Sessions (2012-2013).



have consistently expressed the urgent need for a permanent solution, which does not depend on voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund, and which covers all members of the Commission.

Medical insurance, while central, is but one output of the working conditions of the members of the Commission.

In keeping with the decision taken at the twenty-seventh Meeting of States Parties, the Secretariat circulated a questionnaire to assess the working conditions of the Commission in its present composition with a view to identifying appropriate solutions to pending issues.

These findings will be reviewed by the Commission during its plenary meetings at this session and then shared at the twenty-eighth Meeting of States Parties to facilitate deliberations in the context of the Working Group on the conditions of service of the members of the Commission established by the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention.

The Commission is encouraged to consider in this context its working conditions and any necessary improvements so that a frank and full discussion of these matters can be held at the upcoming Meeting of States Parties in June.

The General Assembly also reaffirmed the importance of the work of the Commission for coastal States and for the international community, and recognized again the significant workload of the Commission in view of the large number of submissions already received and a number of submissions yet





away from United Nations Headquarters to work on it intersessionally.

In those cases in which the submitting States have granted this privilege, they do so on the understanding that the data will remain in the exclusive possession of the members of the Commission and only for the purpose of expediting the examination of the submission.

Of course, an even higher degree of confidentiality is required when States invoke the provisions of Annex II to the Rules of Procedure of the Commission.

In the most unfortunate of circumstances when alleged breaches of confidentiality are made, under Annex II to the Rules of Procedure, the Confidentiality Committee is required to investigate the breaches and then report on its findings.

I have been informed that, at the present session, a report of the Committee will be presented in respect of the alleged breaches by three members of the Commission. As per its rules of procedure, the Commission will have, in turn, to inform the Meeting of States Parties of the allegations and the results of the investigation, together with its recommendations. All States Parties to the Convention will then be informed of the findings and recommendations of the Commission in this regard.



It is clear that the mere fact of reporting a breach of confidentiality to the Meeting of States Parties may have an adverse impact on the reputation of the entire Commission, especially as this would be the second time that this will happen. These matters are being taken seriously by the Meeting of States Parties and thus require your considered reflection and attention.

Distinguished members of the Commission,

In conclusion, and on a more positive note, let me say that I am especially pleased to note the intense level of work undertaken by the members of the Commission since the election at the twenty-seventh Meeting of States Parties in June of 2017. I understand that the work of the past two sessions has been very productive and characterized by a renewed energy and a constructive and collaborative spirit, which represents a very positive omen for your future sessions.

Let me assure you that my OaJ 0 Tw 25.605n1 Tw 6.41 0 Td [(e)6.2(n)