



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

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– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, and Serbia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

I would like to thank Mr. Rhodes, Chair of the International Civil Service Commission, for introducing the Commission's report for 2013, and Mr. Huisman, Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, for his remarks on the statement of the SG on the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the ICSC. Our thanks also go to the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Mr. Ruiz Massieu, for his introductory remarks on the related report of that Committee and to Ms. Analena, President of the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System, and Mr. Pace, President of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations, for their statements.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to stress that the Member States of the European Union support the significant and independent role of the International Civil Service Commission. Its work is important to the United Nations and must play a key role in enhancing the effective functioning of all the organisations of the common system, especially now given the current worldwide financial and economic crisis.

We have repeatedly underlined that staff are the core of the Organisation. In this regard we continue to believe that the Secretariat needs to strive for new levels of efficiency, economy and transparency in the way the United Nations does business. The Secretariat must continue to identify areas where improvements can be achieved and come forward with ideas for how they can be achieved. Only motivated staff members, proud of the organization, confident that good work will be rewarded, and mediocrity not tolerated, will

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

go the extra-mile and perform at the highest possible standard. It is in this sense that we remain committed to providing staff of the United Nations with the appropriate support to allow them to work effectively and safely, especially those working in the most dangerous circumstances.

At the same time we have to be realistic and operate within the same limitations imposed by many Member States on their own national civil and diplomatic services as a result of the financial difficulties they face. We must all realise that it is, as we have said before, no longer possible to artificially insulate UN staff members from current economic realities without risking progressively impacting on the very sustainability of the system.

Mr. Chairman,

We studied the reports in front of us today with great interest and are committed to providing guidance to the Secretariat and the ICSC on those we consider as urgent and sensitive areas. First of all, we will do so with regard to the post adjustment and the implementation of the methodology on the margin management procedure, approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/191. Given the data and the projections provided by the ICSC, the margin appears to veer away from the desirable midpoint of 115 – which is reason for concern and must be addressed properly.

Furthermore, we will look into other important issues under this agenda item, such as the mandatory age of separation. We note with some concern that the ICSC and the representatives of Common System Organizations were not in the position to come to an agreed conclusion as to how to proceed on a possible increase to 65 years for current staff members. We may need more information on the merits of such a step, but also on the potential shortcomings before we can take a well-considered decision.

Other questions we should analyse carefully are the remuneration of staff in the professional and higher categories, the related proposed revised base/floor salary scale, and the conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited staff. We will study these issues and are looking forward to an exchange views on these matters.

The Member States of the European Union would also like to stress that the comprehensive review of the compensation package for staff in all categories, which the General Assembly supported on 12 April this year, and which has since been welcomed by other Common System organisations, remains vital in ensuring that the Common System remains sustainable in the future. We would like to underline the importance of establishing a more

realistic and simplified system that better responds to the needs of the organisations involved.

We are looking forward to discussing these issues further with all other Member States and the International Civil Service Commission as well as the Secretariat in the upcoming informal consultations.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.