

UK Statement: UN Common System

Tuesday 16th November 2021

Chair,

Firstly, thank you to the Chair of the ICSC, Chair of the ACABQ and the Controller, Chandru Ramanathan, for introducing their reports.

Mr Chair,

The pandemic has shown the importance of all workforces, including the UN's, being able to adapt. It has reinforced the fact that we must continually modernise in order to meet present day – and future – challenges. The ICSC has a key role to play in ensuring that the organisations of the Common System can do just that - harnessing new and more modern working modalities as they build their future workforces.

Terms and conditions, including remuneration, play an important part in attracting and retaining the best talent for the UN. They must also ensure that the UN can have a truly diverse workforce. To that end, we strongly support policies that support a culture of respect and inclusion, help to rejuvenate the system, and increase diversity, looking beyond the limited, but important, focus on gender and nationality. In that context, we look forward to the outcomes of the working group on parental leave, a key enabler of gender equality.

We also welcome the focus on performance management, including effective training and addressing underperformance, and we strongly support policies which promote a culture of mobility across the system. It is important that the ICSC plays its role on these important issues, drawing on best practice from the public and private sectors.

Mr Chair,

A unified single approach is at the heart of the Common System. In order to re-establish this, it is crucial that new cost of living surveys are carried out effectively

and regularly. Changes must be based firmly on reliable data and a solid evidence base. We welcome the work that the ICSC is doing on this front. We also look forward to the Secretary-General's upcoming report and proposals on the jurisdictional setup of the Common System.

Finally Mr Chair,

We know the pandemic has had an unprecedented economic impact across the world. Many governments have had to put in measures in regards to their own budgets and workforces to ensure affordability and sustainability. We – and the ICSC – must be cognisant of this context, and ensure the system remains affordable. This will also mean limited resources can be focused on delivering results on the ground in the most effective way.

To conclude, the UK reiterates its continued support for a coherent, fair, effective and efficient UN Common System, and we look forward to engaging constructively to support that aim and reach consensus in a timely manner.

Thank you.