

30 January 2023

Greetings to one and all,

It is my very great pleasure to write to you all and provide an update on the ongoing activities of AFICS/NY at the beginning of the year.

A lot has gone on since I first wrote to you in September 2022. So let me take this opportunity to highlight some of the activities that our Governing Board, its Bureau and Committees have carried out over the last five months.

- The **leadership team of the Bureau** consisting of the President and two Vice-Presidents - Darshak Shah and Nancy Hurtz-Soyka - met with senior UN officials including the Chief Executive of Pension Administration, Ms. Rosemarie McClean, the Representative of the Secretary-General for the investments of the Fund, Mr. Pedro Guazo, and USG Catherine Pollard who oversees the UN's Health and Life Insurance Committee. We were able to continue to bring to their attention any concerns retirees have raised with us.
- The **Bureau** also continued its regular conversations with senior officials of **UNFCU** to bring your ideas and suggestions to them as to how they can continue their ongoing efforts to enhance their services for retirees.
- In addition, the **Bureau** is working with the Pension Fund to arrange a hands-on seminar for those wishing to enroll in the digital Certificate of Entitlement and feel that the whole process is too overwhelming. This seminar will occur in early March with details to follow.
- The **Ad-Hoc Committee on Communications**, under the leadership of Gail-Bindley Taylor has run a series of Focus Groups, in which many of you have volunteered as facilitators and participants, to review how AFICS/NY can improve its communications. The Committee will produce a draft Communications Strategy by May for approval and implementation.
- **This Committee** has also undertaken a review of the current communication tools used by AFICS/NY including the website, the Bulletin, the management of content, arrangements for mailing, and the way in which AFICS/NY receives and sends messages and has begun to make and implement recommendations for improvement.
- The **Nominating Committee**, under the leadership of Dr. Sudershan Narula and Marianne Brzak-Metzler, has launched the Governing Board's election process for 2023. There are six vacancies. We hope that many of you will run for the Governing Board. The announcement issued by the Co-Chairs can be found on our website at AFICS/NY or UN.org/other/afics.

- The **Health and Life Insurance Committee**, under the leadership of Jay Karia and Dr. Sudershan Narula, continues to represent retirees in the all-important work of the United Nations Health and Life Insurance Committee (UNHLIC) which reviews the benefits and costs of our health insurance scheme as well as the reports on usage by the administrative service providers and recommends any adjustments to premiums to the UN Controller. The UNHLIC meets twice a month and AFICS/NY representatives are always in attendance and are fully involved in all the analysis and decisions taken by this vital body, always advocating for health insurance issues for retirees. The Health and Life Insurance Committee has also produced two draft documents for End-of-Life considerations for retirees and their beneficiaries. These documents will be made available to all of you very soon and will also be posted on our website.
- The **Pension Committee** under the leadership of Suzanne Bishopric, has reviewed General Assembly resolution 77/258 on the United Nations Pension System adopted on 22 December 2022. The members of the Committee met on 18 January to discuss the impact of inflation, including cost-of-living adjustments, implications for investments, and the future inflation outlook. The Succession Planning Group is undertaking a search to replace Co-Chair, John Dietz, who recently stepped down from that role. We thank him very much for his service.
- The **Membership Committee**, under the leadership of Dr. Sudershan Narula and Nancy Raphael, was requested to participate along with the leadership of the Bureau in the recent pre-retirement seminar organized by the UN Staff Union. I am pleased to say a good number of soon to be retired colleagues joined AFICS/NY immediately after the presentation. This Committee will be engaging in a major outreach effort in the next couple of months to those about to retire from the UN, and the Funds and Programs.
- The **IT Committee**, under the leadership of Mac Chiulli, has continued to provide information support to the work of all the Committees and to keep the website up-to-date.
- The **Ageing Smart Committee**, under the leadership of Mac Chiulli, is now planning the restart of the annual event on topics that might be of concern to retirees. Do let us know of any suggestions you may have for topics.
- The **Social Committee**, under the leadership of Barbara Linardo and Susan de Sousa hopes to plan more in-person and online get togethers in the coming months, including the customary reception after the Annual Assembly which this year will take place on 18 May. The newly formed AFICS/NY Book Club continues and will have its next meeting on 11 April.

I would like to say here that the AFICS/NY office continues to be open and is extremely well supported by Velimir Kovacevic who provides outstanding assistance to the Bureau, its leadership, the Governing Board, all its Committees, ably responds to the needs of new and prospective members and engages responsively with our various partners with whom we work in the UN system. Our AFICS/NY Library continues to be well run by Dawne Gautier.

There are still two final important points of information I would like to share with you before closing.

- First, I would also like you to know that AFICS/NY will be moving out of the DC-1 Building to the UNITAR premises on 45th Street and First Avenue in March. We have a **Move Task Force** under the leadership of Darshak Shah, which has been working in close partnership with the UN Department of Operational Support to ensure a smooth move from our current premises to our new location in the UNITAR building. We will let you know our contact information and the exact move date as soon as we have those details.
- Second, I would also like to personally invite each of you to the AFICS/NY Annual Assembly which will be held on the **afternoon of 18 May from 3-6 pm with a reception to follow**. Do mark your calendars and come and join us to hear from senior officials on pension, health insurance and other key issues and as usual to meet and socialize with dear colleagues afterward. Details on the Assembly and reception will be shared with you nearer the date.

We hope this update is useful to you all. I take this opportunity to express deep appreciation to the Bureau, Governing Board, Governing Board Committees, our office and all of you who are supporting the work of AFICS/NY.

Do let us know how we can continue to best serve you. You can call the office at 212 963 2943-or email us at afics@un.org

We look forward to hearing from you and to serving you in 2023

Warmest wishes to you all.

Debbie Landey
President