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**FOLLOW-UP TO DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED
BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
AT THEIR PREVIOUS SESSIONS**

PART III

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

ADDENDUM 2

COMMENTS BY THE UNESCO STAFF UNION (STU)

SUMMARY

A. Preliminary proposals for a new UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy covering the period 2023-2027

Pursuant to Item 9.2.E.7 of the UNESCO Human Resources Manual, the UNESCO Staff Union (STU) submits its comments on the report by the Director-General.

STU has gladly participated in the preliminary consultations regarding the elaboration of a new UNESCO human resources management strategy for 2023-2027. STU is looking forward to learning further details about the report being prepared. STU is happy that these procedures are being put in place and fully supports focusing on the three following areas:

- getting ready for the future of work, especially the possibility of adopting more agile ways of working;
- the importance of ensuring and promoting staff well-being (including mental health);



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- leaving no one behind: the importance of equality and diversity in key HR policies (recruitment, learning, career development, performance and recognition) aiming to attract, retain, develop and motivate employees with emphasis on qualified candidates from under-represented member states/with special needs.

However, STU would like to highlight the crucial need for transparency and more effective collaboration between staff associations and the Administration. This requires clear guidelines and frameworks. On-paper principles on telework and mobility for example should be available and directly applied in UNESCO work environment. The staff embraces a progressive approach that needs to recognize our positive contributions and sacrifices, especially over the last two years in which it provided a quick and effective response to the new pandemic reality in our Member States and at home. May one thing be clear: **there is no returning to the previous status quo**. The staff has shown that it can do more and do it better with an updated framework centred on the previously mentioned focus areas.

STU would like to emphasize again that the timely availability of updated guidelines and rules is essential to ensuring equity and a smooth transition period during the implementation of these changes. STU remains available as always to contribute to new proposed guidelines with constructive ideas and suggestions. While ensuring that existing staff rights are respected is absolutely essential, it does not prevent from having a shared goal of adopting results-based measures allowing the best possible allocation of expertise and competencies within UNESCO to achieve success in any new initiative. The staff constitutes a key asset of UNESCO and remains ready to play its role and work towards “Fostering an enabling environment for the efficient and effective delivery of UNESCO’s priorities”. STU cannot dissociate the best interests of the Organization from the importance of the staff well-being. STU would also like to see effective action taken to have a more innovative and flexible work environment, keeping the focus on results without ever penalizing staff well-being.

Additionally, STU will continue to contribute to addressing the results obtained in the 2021 Global Staff Survey. While it observes improvements in so many points, STU is especially concerned by the fact that UNESCO appears to be lagging behind the reference benchmark median as it clearly shows that there is a lot of room for improvements in UNESCO perceived working conditions when compared to other similar organisations. STU is specially looking forward to see actions to improve the working conditions of those who do not have fixed-term contracts, including service contract holders, Project Appointments, interns, and any other type of temporary contracts.

As for the Managed **Mobility** Exercise, the STU regrets that the 2021-2022 exercise was as **poorly** conducted as the previous one, **without clear, precise and transparent criteria**. Moreover, no administrative circular updating the process was published before its implementation, which exposes UNESCO to legal proceedings before the ILOAT **with great risks of being condemned**. In many respects, this exercise was more a matter of **functional** mobility than geographical mobility, with only field colleagues moving from one field office to another field office, while Headquarters colleagues remained, for the most part, at Headquarters but on another post. This also allows them to restart their standard assignment duration from zero and thus **escape the next geographic mobility exercise**. The STU will now be very attentive to the implementation of functional mobility which concerns general service contract colleagues and hopes that it will be carried out in a more clear, transparent and fair manner.