

Mr. Chair, Commissioners, Colleagues

It is my pleasure to speak to you on behalf of CCISUA and its staff in the field and headquarters duty stations.

Allow me to start by thanking UN Volunteers for hosting us. I think we can agree there is room for qualified mid-career professionals to provide their expertise for a defined period, but of course as a complement rather than a replacement of the international civil service.

I also take this opportunity to introduce Ms. Patricia Nemeth, our new Vice-President for Conditions of Service, elected last June.

This session we hope to see positive progress on a number of key issues, including pensionable remuneration, options for staff in D and E duty stations to install their families elsewhere and receive non-family service allowance, end of service severance pay, and a long-awaited revision of child allowance.

We look forward too to the start of a meaningful review of post adjustment, to address the many concerns that have come to light over the last few years – we have contributed inputs to the design of the process and we hope to see them reflected. We also trust that the review of methodology for locally-recruited staff will enable organizations to continue to provide a competitive package. The last methodology review, for professional staff, was not necessarily well received, and not just by staff. Antonio Guterres, then as High Commissioner for Refugees, called it “counterproductive” and said it “threatens to affect our ability to fulfill our mandate.” And we note that a member of the Commission clarified that there was a cost-cutting mandate.

Mr. Chair, we look forward to discussing the proposal to update the common system framework on diversity and gender and trust that on this matter to the Commission will lead by example.

Let me close by noting that while the ICSC is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, it also benefits from maintaining the continued confidence of its principle partners, staff and organizations. And indeed Mr. Chair, you alluded to that this morning. To this end we are concerned at the turn of events during the working group on duty stations with extreme hardship conditions that took place last month in Rome. This feeds into growing unease by staff and, we believe, the CEB. And when organizations have to be threatened with budget cuts to implement decisions, and staff submit multiple legal appeals against them, often with the support of those same organizations, there may be space for improvement.

I note in this context the reform of the UN Pension Board, currently being mandated by its parent body, the General Assembly. Therefore, let us work together to re-establish confidence by all stakeholders in this important body.

With that allow me to wish everyone a productive summer session and to thank you Mr. Chair for your leadership over these last few years and draw attention to important areas of progress during that time, including on the mandatory age of separation, for which there was valuable collaboration.

Thank you