



Geneva, 29 April 2020

Sir,

The three staff representative federations, FICSA, CCISUA and UNISERV, express their gratitude for your focus on meaningful reform of the United Nations, with its aim to make the organization more “agile and nimble”. We share your concerns regarding the “bureaucracy, byzantine procedures, and endless red tape”.

We wish to assure you that we are committed to ensuring that the United Nations will remain relevant and fit for purpose for future generations to come while ensuring that the concept of an independent international civil service as enshrined in the UN's charter is upheld.

We want to take this opportunity to state our clear understanding of the need to engage on the subject of "Future of Work".

For this reason, we are requesting that the staff federations be allowed to engage in a meaningful manner, as willing partners in efforts to overcome this complicated programme of work and to help build an organization that is "fit for purpose" and "relevant."

We note, however, that to a certain extent, engagement with staff as well as its duly elected representatives appears to be selective rather than inclusive. We note, for instance, the active and ongoing engagement with groups such as "Young UN" by the HLCM, which we are told are used as a "sounding board". We would like to respectfully suggest that a more appropriate “sounding board” would be the staff federations which represent, through democratic elections, all demographics in our workplace, including by age, gender, sexual identity, duty station, and category of staff.

We acknowledge that since the most recent HR Network meeting in Geneva, the federations are engaged regularly concerning the improvement of the administrative guidelines that have been developed for the COVID-19 Pandemic, this is indeed viewed as a very positive development.

.../...

We recognize that due to the recent developments related to the Pandemic, the "Future of Work" appears to have presented itself in an accelerated manner. It has also been made clear to us by your senior leaders that "returning to the status quo before the pandemic" will not be an option.

Cognizant of the many challenges the organizations and the world will be facing "post-COVID-19" we believe that now more than ever a partnership between all stakeholders that fosters an open, transparent and inclusive approach towards developing and innovating our organizations to meet those challenges is crucially important. As mentioned by you in your call for shared responsibility and global solidarity issued in late March, there is a clear need to invest in "community led resilience" and we would be happy to be part of that approach within our common system to lead with the example of best practice.

Fully aware of the work of the HLCM that is ongoing, we wish to reiterate our desire to be engaged fully and transparently and work together with all stakeholders on the way forward.

As you have reiterated yourself, "now is a time for unity and solidarity".

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of our highest consideration.



Mr Stefan Brezina
CCISUA President



Ms Tanya Quinn-Maguire
FICSA President



Mr Stephen Towler
UNISERV President

Mr. António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York, NY 10017, USA

Cc: Ms Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary of the UN for Management and Compliance
Ms Martha Helena Lopez, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources