Coordinating Committee International Staff Unions and Associations

Briefing note on common system issues for the 69th session of the General Assembly

CCISUA represents 60,000 staff across the world. Many work in difficult locations, including in the deep field. Some work in danger of their lives.

Compensation review

CCISUA is concerned that the cuts being considered by the ICSC will unduly target staff in the field, making field service and mobility less attractive. This will undermine efforts by organizations to promote greater mobility.

These cuts include:

- Removing the boarding element from the education grant meaning staff, especially single mothers, will be unduly weighed by considerations on their children's education in choosing whether, where or when to move.
- Removing additional freight allowance making it expensive for staff to ship basic food items, including for children, to hardship duty stations.
- Reducing rest and recuperation for staff in conflict zones, a move that is contested by staff and the organizations as it will harm the psychological well-being of staff operating sensitive missions in high-stress environments.

These cuts come on top of the earlier discontinuation of second household allowances for staff sent to non-family duty stations and the abolition of the alternative place of assignment, in which staff sent to non-family duty stations would have their families officially assigned to a near-by family duty station. Taken together, service in the field is becoming far less attractive.

Margin

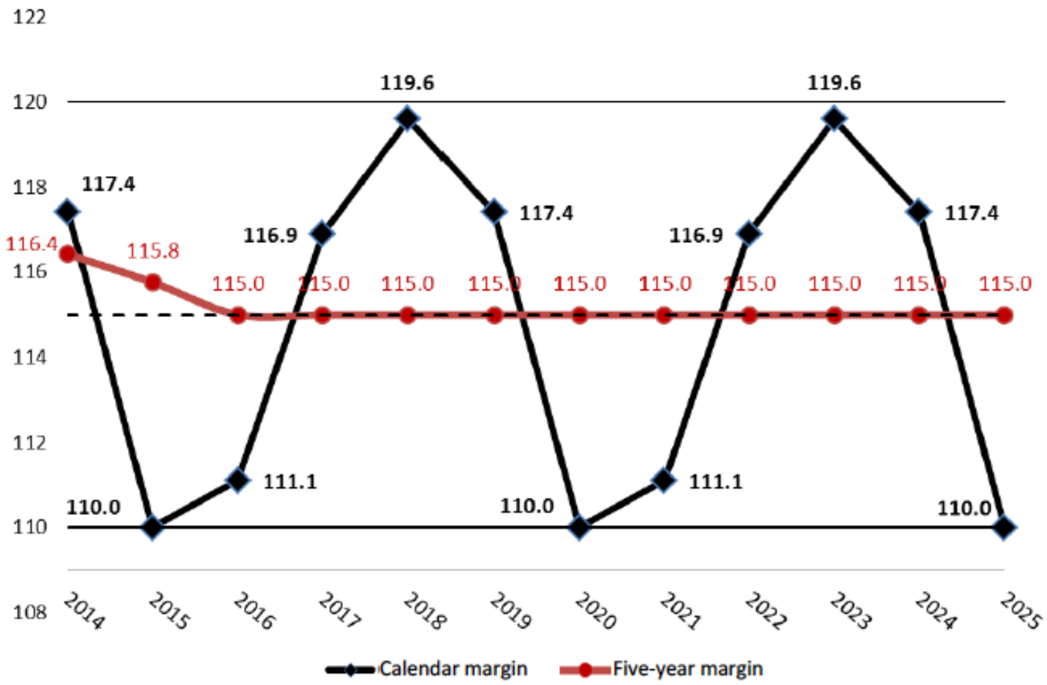
The General Assembly has decided that UN pay be 10 to 20 percent higher than pay for the US federal civil servants in any given year (called the calendar margin), with the understanding that the margin be maintained at a level around *(although not at)* the desirable midpoint of 15 percent over a period of time.

CCISUA therefore agrees with the ICSC that:

- the calendar margin, currently at 17.4 percent, is on a downward trajectory and will reach 15 percent in two years as a result of a freeze on UN salaries and concurrent increase in US salaries.
- the average margin over the last five years is 16.4 percent and over the last twenty years as 13.7 percent. As the calendar margin reaches 15 percent, the long-term average will also converge at the desirable midpoint.
- artificially forcing the five-year average margin to 15 percent is an incorrect understanding of the margin management system as it would require an immediate

overcompensation in the calendar margin, first downwards (a 6 percent cut in salaries) and then upwards, as illustrated by the ICSC chart below. This is neither sustainable, predictable nor competitive. It is not a wise methodology for setting salaries on an annual basis, and penalizes current or new staff for gains made by earlier staff.

Illustration of five-year average margin management at the desirable midpoint



Mandatory age of separation

CCISUA supports the ICSC's recommendation that current staff be able to choose to retire at the new retirement age of 65 as of 2016.

- It conforms to current global workplace trends.
- The ICSC has shown there to be no negative impact on gender or geographic diversity, rejuvenation or performance. The ICSC has indicated the tools that need to be used for this.
- It will reduce the pension fund actuarial deficit by a fifth and ASHI liabilities by $31 million.
- Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has publicly urged support for this measure on behalf of the Secretariat, UNDP, UNOPS, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN-Women and UNFPA.

About CCISUA
CCISUA represents staff of the UN Secretariat as well as staff of the ILO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO and WFP.

Contact
Ian Richards, President
ian.richards@unctad.org, +41 76 456 8392