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***Statement by Ms. Paulina Analena, President of the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA), ICSC session, New York, March 2014:***

***Item 2: Report of the Chair on activities since the last session***  
(document ICSC/78/CRP.1)

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, Colleagues, and friends from the other Staff Federations,

CCISUA takes this opportunity to congratulate and welcome the new Commissioners as well as the re-election of the others.

I am honored to once more address the Commission on behalf of more than 60,000 staff members from 17 organizations represented by CCISUA, the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System. Our members have given us many thoughts about the issues being discussed in New York these two weeks, and they are awaiting our report back to them on topics that are critical to their everyday lives – not only at work, but that also affect their personal and family lives.

You are all aware that every UN staff member has committed not only to a career aligned with their personal ideals and in service to their organizations and to the global community. Linked with their careers, they also made a lifestyle choice that

extends to their spouses, their children and other family members. Some staff even are asked to put their lives or health on the line in order to help the UN help others.

The issues being discussed at this ICSC session are critically important to the many staff of the United Nations and to the organizations to which they contribute.

In this context, CCISUA is very concerned about the review of the common system compensation package. Linking that review to cost savings can obscure the value and critical importance of staff contributions to the goals of the United Nations, often under hardship conditions. For us, sitting in comfortable meeting rooms, it is sometimes difficult to comprehend and to quantify the UN's vital role in international leadership and standard-setting, and the delivery of vital life-saving assistance in sometimes dangerous situations that can be life-threatening to staff. Not all civil servants or employees of the private sector, with whom UN staff are compared, have to face the same dangers or cultural dissociation. We need to keep the unique nature of UN work in our thoughts as we discuss compensation and related matters.

As CCISUA mentioned in previous sessions, it has been confirmed by no less eminent body than the ACABQ that there is no financial crisis in the United Nations. Our deliberations over the coming two weeks, and in following days, should be based on the technical merit and long-standing track record of the ICSC's solid methodological approach to matters that impact on the lives of selfless people who work "24/7" to support the United Nation's global achievements.

Many of the items on this session's agenda can place further duress on staff who are already stretched by challenging working conditions. Staff must be viewed as an asset, and not an "expense". Without committed, motivated and properly supported staff, no mandate of the United Nations can be delivered anywhere. Every single day, twenty-four hours a day,

365 days a year, staff risk our lives and sacrifice our family life in order to carry out the work of the United Nations, as determined by its Member States. Staff deserve to be recognized for their dedication and to be compensated accordingly.

Mr. Chairman, the value of the United Nations is the leadership and support that we can bring to national programs. The United Nations functions through its staff who must be multi-talented leaders and facilitators. They ensure that resources are brought together in synergy to achieve the United Nations' humanitarian and development objectives. They must be able to work in multicultural environments as independent advisers without allegiance to national governments, while nonetheless leading, coordinating, supporting and guiding the programs mandated by governments through the UN.

CCISUA therefore trusts that the Commission will carry out critical discussions on staff remuneration and related issues with an open mind and the objective of supporting multi-talented and courageous staff, taking into account what these individuals bring to the UN common system through their commitment to serving others. Please remember that we are hired in our own countries to serve the UN all over the world and that our families have to be taken care of fairly. Please remember the sacrifices of our colleagues - even to the ultimate sacrifice of lives - in order to provide basic services such as food, shelter, security and support for people in need.

Staff are not just numbers in a budget; we are committed human beings who work very hard, make the choice to serve those less privileged, sacrifice other career possibilities and comfortable family lives, and who deserve support and respect.

Mr. Chairman, all of us - Commissioners, Administration, Member States and staff representatives - must ensure that the United Nations system attracts the very best and the brightest to manage its complex tasks and face the challenges of

international work in very difficult circumstances.

As I have said before, CCISUA supports the United Nations Common System in its role to ensure consistency in the conditions of employment throughout the system, promote coherence and equality, and foster efficiency. CCISUA continues to believe in and support the role played by the International Civil Service Commission, which can only be fully achieved if the Commission retains its independence and fulfils its role as a technical and standard-setting body. This will be most successful and most beneficial if all parties to the UN's work, including staff, are fully involved in all phases of all consultations.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

CCISUA looks forward to a constructive discussion and will provide comments on individual issues upon the presentation of specific reports.

Thank you.