



INFORMATION CIRCULAR

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT VIENNA**

1. The Joint Advisory Committee of the United Nations Office at Vienna was established in accordance with regulation 8.2 of the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. The Joint Advisory Committee reports to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna.
2. The purpose of the Joint Advisory Committee is to provide joint administrative machinery with staff participation to advise the Director-General on personnel policies and general questions of staff welfare as provided in staff regulation 8.1.
3. The functions of the Joint Advisory Committee include:
 - (a) Advising the Director-General on questions relating to staff administration;
 - (b) Making recommendations to the Director-General regarding conditions of service and general conditions of life affecting staff;
 - (c) Considering general administrative instructions or directives at the local level prior to issuance;
 - (d) Reviewing relevant documentation of the Staff Management Coordination Committee.
4. The Joint Advisory Committee will:
 - (a) Establish its own rules of procedure;
 - (b) Establish such subsidiary bodies as it deems necessary to assist it when considering specific issues.
5. In accordance with staff rule 108.2, the Joint Advisory Committee is to be composed of three members and three alternates representing the Administration, and three members and three alternates representing the staff. Two members and two alternates shall represent the administration of the United Nations Office at Vienna, and one member and one alternate shall represent the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. A chairperson will be selected by the Director-General from a list proposed by the Staff Council.
6. The present circular supersedes information circular UN/INF.40 of 13 September 1984.



UN/INF.40

13 September 1984

Personnel Service

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

Establishment of the Joint Advisory Committee of
the United Nations Office at Vienna

1. The Joint Advisory Committee of the United Nations Office at Vienna is hereby established in accordance with regulation 8.2 of the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. The Joint Advisory Committee will report to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna.
2. The purpose of the Joint Advisory Committee is to provide joint administrative machinery with staff participation to advise the Director-General on personnel policies and general questions of staff welfare as provided in staff regulation 8.1.
3. The functions of the Joint Advisory Committee will include:
 - (a) Advising the Director-General on questions relating to staff administration;
 - (b) Making recommendations to the Director-General regarding conditions of service and general conditions of life affecting staff;
 - (c) Considering general administrative instructions or directives at the local level prior to issuance;
 - (d) Reviewing relevant documentation of the Staff Management Co-ordination Committee.
4. The Joint Advisory Committee will:
 - (a) Establish its own rules of procedure;
 - (b) Establish such subsidiary bodies as it deems necessary to assist it when considering specific issues.
5. In accordance with staff rule 108.2, the Joint Advisory Committee is to be composed of two members and two alternates representing the Director-General and two members and two alternates representing the staff, a chairman (president) will be selected by the Director-General from a list proposed by the Staff Council.

8 March 1978

To: Heads of Offices away from Headquarters
Chiefs of Missions

From: M.H. Gherab
Assistant Secretary-General
Personnel Services

Subject: Establishment and operation of Joint Advisory Committees
at duty stations and missions away from Headquarters

1. The recent delegation of authority in personnel matters to Offices away from Headquarters has accentuated the need for greater participation of staff representatives in the decision-making process concerning local conditions of service. This trend has also been apparent in recent years as a result of the growth in the size of staff at local offices and the increased awareness on the part of both the Administration and the staff of the desirability of resolving local issues locally. To this end, a number of Joint Advisory Committees have been set up in the past year or are in the process of being established at various duty stations as the regular channel for staff/management consultations. The Office of Personnel Services welcomes and supports such initiatives. It is ready to assist in the establishment of similar committees at other duty stations where a duly-constituted staff representative body exists to make the operation of a local Joint Advisory Committee feasible and meaningful.

2. The broad terms of reference of Joint Advisory Committees are set out in Chapter 8 of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules on staff relations. Within that framework, the attached paper provides general guidelines regarding the composition, functions and procedures of local committees. These guidelines have been prepared in the light of the experience of the Joint Advisory Committee at Headquarters and with due regard to the requirements of smaller offices in the field. They are to be used as a guide to the establishment of new JAC's at local offices. For those duty stations where a local JAC is already in existence, it is suggested that, to the extent possible, its operation should also be brought into conformity with those guidelines so as to bring about a maximum degree of uniformity in the activities of JAC's throughout the Secretariat.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE
JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEES AT DUTY STATIONS AWAY FROM HEADQUARTERS

Composition (See Staff Rule 108.2)

1. Joint Advisory Committees at duty stations away from Headquarters shall consist of a Chairman selected by the Head of the Office from a list proposed by the local Staff Council, a number of members and alternates representing the Staff Council and an equal number of members and alternates representing the Head of the Office. The latter should include a representative of the Personnel Office and in larger offices a representative of the Financial Office.

2. The actual number of members and alternates of the Committee may vary according to the size of the Office, but should not exceed four members and three alternates representing either side, as indicated in Staff Rule 108.2(a)(ii) and (iii). An alternate member may attend meetings and participate in the voting only if a member of the same side is absent.

3. The term of office of the Chairman, members and alternates of the Committee shall be one year, which should normally coincide with the term of office of the local Staff Council.

4. The Head of the Office shall designate a Secretary to the Committee, who should not be one of its members or alternates.

Functions (See Staff Regulation 8.2 and Staff Rule 108.1(e))

5. Joint Advisory Committees at duty stations away from Headquarters shall advise the Head of the Office on questions relating to staff administration and welfare at the local level. They may make recommendations to the Head of the office regarding the conditions of service and general conditions of life affecting staff of the local office. The Committee is also the appropriate forum to consider general administrative circulars on local staff matters before their issuance. However, the Committee shall not be competent to deal with grievances or other matters involving individual staff members, since separate recourse and appeals procedures exist for those purposes.

6. While the joint consideration of specific problems of the local office should be the main concern of the Committee, there may be instances where discussions of local issues may generate proposals of a wider scope, such as those requiring amendment of staff rules or revision of personnel policies applicable throughout the Secretariat. In such cases, the Head of the Office will transmit the Committee's recommendations, together with his or her comments, to the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services for referral to the Joint Advisory Committee at Headquarters for its consideration.

Procedures (See Staff Rule 108.2)

I. Vice-Chairman

7. A Vice-Chairman shall be elected by the Committee from among its members at the first meeting of each term. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall act on his or her behalf.

II. Meetings

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8. Meetings of the Committee shall take place on a regular basis, if possible at least once a month. Additional meetings may be convened at the request of representatives of either side.
9. Members of the Committee shall be notified by its Secretary, at least three days in advance, of the date, place and provisional agenda of the meeting; however, urgent meetings may be convened by the Chairman at shorter notice with the concurrence of the representatives of both sides.
10. Additional Staff or Administration representatives may be invited from time to time to participate in the Committee's discussions of particular problems.
11. The presence of at least one member of the Committee from each side shall be required in order to hold a meeting.

III. Agenda

12. The provisional agenda for a meeting of the Committee shall be drawn up by the Secretary to include all items proposed by representatives of either side. Each item proposed for inclusion in the agenda should normally be accompanied by an explanatory note or working paper concerning the nature and purpose of the item.
13. The provisional agenda should also include approval of the minutes of the previous meeting or meetings and an item entitled "Other business" under which brief oral reports on matters of interest to the members of the Committee can be made.
14. When adopting the agenda, the Committee may amend or delete any of its items, or place on it additional items of an urgent character. The Committee will determine the priority of consideration of the items of the agenda as it deems necessary.

I. Working groups

15. There should be one Committee at each duty station. The Committee may establish working groups to advise it on specific issues or on matters affecting a particular category or group of staff. Whenever possible, the Committee should approve written terms of reference for its working groups, outlining their composition, functions and procedures. Each working group should be composed of representatives of both sides in equal number, including at least one of each side selected from the membership of the Committee. The Chairman of the working group may be designated by JAC or elected by the group from among its members. Working groups submit their reports and recommendations to the Committee.

V. Decisions and recommendations

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16. Under the guidance of the Chairman, the Committee should endeavour to reach its decisions by consensus. However, when that proves impossible, the Committee may take its decisions by voting. For that purpose, a majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. The Chairman shall participate in the voting only when there is a tie vote.

17. The Committee shall submit its recommendations to the Head of the Office in the form of a report, to which minority or dissenting opinions may be attached.

VI. Records

18. The meeting records should be drawn up in the form of short provisional minutes, giving an analytical summary of the proceedings. The minutes are subject to approval by the Committee. When minutes of a previous meeting are amended before approval they should not be reissued but the minutes of the meeting at which they are approved should indicate what changes have been made.

19. Two copies of all minutes, working papers and reports should be sent to the Assistant Director for Special Assignments, Office of Personnel Services at Headquarters (Room 3627D).