

# UNECA *StaffVoice*

Issue 2, June 2012



Economic Commission for Africa



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# One UN

“Beneath the surface of states and nations, ideas and language, lies the fate of individual human beings in need. Answering their needs will be the mission of the United Nations in the century to come”. United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech.

“The true measure of the success for the United Nations is not how much we promise, but how much we deliver for those who need us most”. United Nations Secretary-General-elect, Ban Ki-moon. Acceptance Speech to the General Assembly upon election.

“One UN” – these are the words that lace several documents related to the United Nations, leaving many that are unfamiliar with the system, wondering what on earth this means. Are we making ourselves understood by others who have a stake in the UN system? Simply “One UN” means that that United Nations Organizations, with the mandate of providing assistance in the field of economic development and overall social progress, should pool their efforts and resources in order to become effective and make a difference in the life of those who need their support and intervention. Clearly, all agencies located in any country need to coordinate activities and build synergies to deliver as one United Nations. This is the wish of providers and recipient countries as well as the current Secretary-General and his predecessor. The question in everyone’s mind is, “How is this going to be possible with a system which has

existed for so long and been used to delivering and addressing specific issues and concerns in a fragmented manner? Would a more united approach to development make the United Nations more effective?

The United Nations has seven Programmes and Funds, namely: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which deals with global development challenges; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which protects refugees worldwide; the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), provides humanitarian and development assistance to children and mothers; the World Food Programme (WFP), which aims to eradicate hunger and malnutrition; the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), helps Member States to fight drugs, crime and terrorism; the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which, among others, is a source of assistance for programmes supporting women’s health and the rights of women and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which coordinates the United Nations’ environmental activities. There are 17 specialized agencies and several commissions and committees, each with its own field of responsibility for sectors such as food and agriculture, atomic energy, civil aviation, agricultural development, labour, the maritime industry, the monetary, telecommunication, education, industry, postal, bank, food, health, intellectual property, meteorology and tourism. All the



*Seble Demeke  
Editor-in-chief, UNECA Staff Voice, and  
UN Special Correspondent in Africa*

specialized organizations have a certain degree of priority in what they do, depending on the need of the society they serve and the level of development of that society. The question that is being posed is, if all these efforts are pulled together would they bring a better result for delivery? The overall measuring scale of the level of achievement would be when children no longer go to bed hungry; when we have an acceptable percentage of the healthy population working normally, with those who have worked all their lives retiring in dignity and when we have an acceptable percentage of educated people with a modicum of knowledge and communication resources. Only then can we conclude that the contribution of the UN system organizations has been worth the effort.

What then is the added value that a “One UN” brings to Member States? Government has primary responsibility for taking care of its people in all areas of development. The UN is not a substitute for gov-

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ernment responsibility but rather a partner which supports government efforts to improve people's livelihoods. Coordinated delivery as One UN would therefore help governments to achieve the following:

- (a) Save scarce resources to use for other priority areas;
- (b) Measure the concrete results of efforts by the UN system, which
- become more visible as one package;
- (c) Identify areas of their development which are lagging behind and require scaled-up support from their partners;
- (d) Create a transparent and accountable system of budgeting and management;
- (e) Focus on current priorities such as social development,

unemployment and define their overriding development goals to reduce poverty.

The proportion of resources channeled through the UN system keeps on shrinking and the system is being continually requested to deliver more with less. The budget of the Organization has been on zero-percent growth for several years. Member States have been asking for more results-oriented programmes. For instance, they would like to know the exact number of children vaccinated for polio and not the number of health workers dispatched to the field to carry out the vaccination. The overhead costs of agencies are under strict scrutiny, useful programmes are to be reduced or merged. These are just a few indicators of the urgent need to "Deliver as One".

Confronted with these scenarios, requirements and challenges, the UN cannot and should not seek to do business as usual. It should take this as a challenge and an opportunity to transform its machinery to effectively deliver to the millions who need its support and presence. This initiative of "Delivering as One" was taken five years ago and it is not too early to assess what has been done by the system as a whole in response to the need to create direct benefits to recipient countries and the overall cost-effectiveness of its structural transformation towards delivering as One UN.



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# Foreword

We are all privileged to be serving the UN at a time of so much excitement and opportunity for our host country Ethiopia, a founding member of the United Nations. Ethiopia is host to the largest UN presence in Africa, but it is not simply in numbers that we excel but in the quality of our programmes and intervention.

We are living in times where the world is more complex but easier to span; where we face baffling emerging challenges but are called more and more to draw upon our fundamental principles. The United Nations still has the power to inspire future generations as we see even here in Addis, where high school students gather at the Africa Hall

each year to eagerly take part in the Model UN General Assembly. While our children passionately debate UN resolutions with all the mastery of future world diplomats, we the staff of the United Nations are increasingly faced with a development and humanitarian assistance landscape that is fast becoming over-crowded; while the current economic crisis has tightened our source of financing. The UN is no longer the only game in town, and



NGOs, CSO, and bilateral partners are delivering development and humanitarian responses on the ground with ever increasing efficiency and effectiveness.

However, as the United Nations, we still have a unique advantage for collective action. But to keep taking advantage of that position we need to be mindful of the need for continuous reform. And this reform, or

*Eugene Owusu  
UN Resident Coordinator  
UNDP Resident Representative and UN  
Humanitarian Coordinator*

renewal, will help us, as staff of the United Nations, to have an organization that is relevant for today's world, and with integrity, provides solutions in a transparent, accountable, efficient and flexible manner.

We need to strengthen our Organization so that it is more open to change, improvement and innovation. And all of us, as staff of the United Nations, must play a role to make that happen.

## Message from Makane Faye, Chairperson, UNECA Staff Council

Invited Guests, Head of Agencies,  
Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the UNECA Staff Union, I would like to welcome you all to this historical day for the launching of UNECA Staff VOICE magazine. This is a milestone achievement and all staff members should be proud of it.

You might all wonder why we invited you here today and what additional values the Staff Voice would bring to the work of the Commission and to other UN agencies located here in Addis Ababa. We in the Staff Union are convinced that this magazine, will contribute to make the work of the United Nations more visible in an official way through outreach and connection with those that have put their hope on the UN for peace, prosperity and social development. In this context, I am honoured to announce that the magazine has four objectives:

1. It will open a forum and a communication channel, somewhat informal, for Staff Management relations to work together to find amicable solutions to staff problems and concerns. This will be done in addition to the existing formal negotiation platforms. There is no organization without staff and vice versa there will be no staff without an organization. Therefore, we are convinced that opening a new venue for exchange of ideas and negotiation forum as needed will save time, energy and resources for other burning issues which the Commission and other UN family organizations need to deal



*Makane Faye  
Chairman of the UNECA Staff Council*

with in their daily activities towards facilitating the continent's walk through achievement of the NEPAD Goals and the MDGs.

2. The Staff Voice magazine will be distributed throughout the African continent: ECA Sub-Regional Offices, Embassies and other intergovernmental organizations in Addis Ababa, to all UN organizations worldwide and it will be online in the Staff Union's website. This will no doubt contribute to improve the

image of the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the entire UN system in Ethiopia.

3. This is a first attempt to bring together views of different UN organizations located in Addis Ababa

and those of the African Union (AU) in an informal way. The UN is supposed to grasp opportunities for expanding joint services and this is the way how the various agencies present at this duty station can deliver as One.

4. The magazine will further open the doors for partnering with the Private Sector. It is being done elsewhere in UN Headquarters in New York, Geneva, Vienna, etc. why not here in Addis Ababa, where we have

seen the private sector coming up in many ways. Several United Nations General Assembly Resolutions encourage partnership with the private sector as long as the contribution is towards the achievement of the organization's goals. As you



all know MDG 8 urges to “Develop a Global Partnership for Development” which hence leads to the UN engaging partnership with the private sector in all continents and many countries. Accordingly, we would like to see the Staff VOICE to become an additional bridge between the UN Offices in Addis Ababa and the private sector.

I believe that the four above objectives justify publication of the

STAFF VOICE and I hope that in your daily activities to achieve the NEPAD and Millennium Development Goals, you will fully contribute in the next issues of the magazine.

On a Special note, I sincerely wish, on behalf of the Staff Union, to thank the ECA Senior Management, which made possible publication of the Magazine through the ECA Print shop. I would like to express my gratitude to the Execu-

tive Secretary, the Deputy Executive Secretary as well as all Directors and staff who accepted to feature in the first edition of the Staff VOICE. This was not easy because we know that your time and ideas are valuable but you agreed to put it at the disposal of the Staff VOICE.

Finally, I would like to announce to staff that we have several companies (page 69 of the Staff Voice), including shops, restaurants and Spas,

which have offered to provide services at discounted price to the Staff Union members. In an interim basis, all staff of the UN will benefit from it up to 31st March 2012 and from 1st April, Staff Union members will be issued with special IDs to be shown in the above facilities in order to benefit from the discount. Hence, I am kindly appealing to any ECA staff who is not yet member of the Union to join. A membership form is included in the Staff Voice.

To conclude, I thank all of those who have made the magazine become a reality. They are many and include staff members, companies who offered to make publicity and those who offered discounted prices to UN Staff members.

I hope we will continue working together.

The UNECA Staff VOICE is officially launched on this Day of 26 January 2012, at 16:00 at Africa Hall, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The STAFF VOICE will be produced on quarterly basis.

Thank everyone who has made this event worthwhile. God Bless You All.



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(1,2,3) Management and staff present at the launching

(4) Yetunde TERIBA, Head Gender Coordination and Outreach Division, Women Gender and Development Directorate, African Union Commission (AU)

(5) Thorsten Windten, General Manager, Ethiopia and East Africa, Lufthansa German Airlines and Soner Aydin, Director Ethiopia, Turkish Airlines

(6) Berhanu Abebe, Sales Manager, bmi and Yemane Bisrat, General Manager AiRLink



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# Town Hall Meeting with Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General

Remarks by Muluatsega Legesse,  
Vice-President of the  
Executive Committee of  
UNECA Staff Union



*Muluatsega Legesse  
Vice President, Staff Executive Committee*

Mr. Secretary-General, Madam Ban,

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the UN family in Ethiopia, I am very pleased to extend a warm welcome to the Secretary General, Mr. Bank Ki-moon, Madam Ban and to all staff members present at this Town Hall meeting.

Mr. Secretary General, we take note of your vision and the road ahead that you outlined at the beginning of the year, urging the world to move from talking about “what” to detailing “how”, the need of adequate and predictable resources and your stand for the Organization’s Member States to do their part in order for us to exercise the saving. We also want to acknowledge that this is the fourth time that you have made it a point to meet with all of us regardless of your busy schedule. We are very grateful for that.

I wish we can say the New Year has just begun and we are looking forward to the new journey with you in your second term at the office. However, Mr. Secretary General,

the staff feels frustrated by the approach which was taken by your Office during your last term, for not adequately addressing issues that were raised on several occasions that they met with you, in town hall meetings, face to face, at SMCCs and through video conferences.

## **Mr. Secretary General,**

Staff duty station continues to suffer from a perceptible deterioration in living conditions due to the same reasons that had been raised before, namely:

- The continuous erosion of the local currency and its effect on the locally recruited staff, especially after they retire.
- The current methodology of GS salary survey and benefit package, which is leaving the duty station less attractive to recruit highly skilled labour both, local and international.

Your promise to have a better relationship with staff during your second term does not seem to have met the expectations of staff. We had been promised few years ago, that a task force would be set up to look into local salary erosion in Ethiopia and elsewhere and the possibility of

pegging GS salaries to the dollar and/or at least aligning pension benefits to the dollar. Indeed, the ever increasing inflation and the devaluation of the national currency against major foreign currencies including the US dollar, has led to a sharp rise in the price of goods, leading to falling purchasing power of staff members. Also, our local staff members have been retiring into poverty and are facing difficulties in meeting their financial obligations. In addition, our salary, which is based on local currency, is compelling experienced staff to seek greener pastures at other international organizations in Ethiopia, such as the African Union, which have pegged local salaries to the US dollar.





a decent life after so many years' service to the United Nations.

Thank all for your attention.

Editor Habteselassie's Note: If the African Union can pay all its staff in hard currency and peg their remuneration and pension benefits to the United States dollar, then the case that the Secretary-General must simply make to the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)

is that because of the noble principles the United Nations Organization upholds, it (and its Joint Staff Pension Fund), should not be seen to be profiting financially from application of the

Nobelmaire and Fleming principles at the expense of the majority of its staff (locally-recruited and general service) world-wide. Blaming ICSC does nothing to change principles set down in a different age and time. Somebody had to change things. As promised during his Town Hall Meeting, the Secretary-General, should continue to plead the case of staff suffering the effects of devaluation after they have given a lifetime of service to the Organization. That would leave him a more than commendable legacy as he completes his second term of office and really make him one of us.

- Re-classification of the duty station to B

International staff members are deeply affected by the reclassification of Addis Ababa as B duty station. While it is true that road infrastructure in Addis Ababa and throughout the country has improved considerably in the last years, due to Government's efforts to improve such infrastructure, other infrastructure and services such as health, educational facilities, water and sanitation, electricity, communications and information technologies have declined.

As a result of the falling Ethiopian Birr and the reclassification of Addis Ababa, all staff categories in this duty station can hardly cope with the rising cost of living. We can no longer send our children to decent schools where they can have world-class education to give them the

same opportunities as their market-able their parents had.

On the staff management relations front here in Addis, the last two years have seen tremendous improvement in our interactions. There has been mutual understanding and cooperation between management and the staff union in terms of participation in the various staff management committees, including formation of the JNC, in terms of informal resolution of disputes, implementation of the 2010 GA Resolution on Human Resources and stepping up staff welfare. We also came out with the first issue of the ECA Staff Voice.

Last but not least, we would like to congratulate our retirees and commend them for their dedicated years of services to the UN and hope that at least for the years to come, the pension benefits would be pegged to US dollar to enable them to have

# The Launching of the UNECA Staff Voice magazine

Remarks by Doreen  
BONGOY MAWALLA  
Director of Administration



Dear,  
Mr. Makane Faye, Chairman of the Council, UNECA Staff Union  
Mr. Abdalla Hamdok, Deputy Executive Secretary, ECA  
Colleagues,

I am very pleased to be part of the official launching of the UNECA's Staff Voice magazine. I not only wish to congratulate the Staff Union for this very important initiative, I want to express similar sentiment as was stated by the Staff Union (SUC): 'Staff and Management, together we can make a difference'. Indeed, this has been a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation. In fact, I see the mandate of the Staff Union is same as that of Administration: we both are committed to the welfare and well-being of our staff members. Again, as said earlier, together we can make the difference for our staff.

Dear Colleagues;

There has been a strong and productive partnership between the ECA management and Staff Union. It is also worth noting that together we have established the Joint

Negotiations Committee (JNC), composed of members nominated by both sides, to work together on major policy issues that would have an impact on the professional and personal lives of staff members. We are currently finalizing the details for holding the fourth meeting of JNC which should be held within the next two weeks or

so. The Staff Union has been very cooperative in nominating members to several other committees such as rebuttal panel, joint monitoring committee, recruitment bodies etc, which is very important in ensuring impartial conduct of business by these committees.

In looking ahead: The Staff Union and Administration plan to conduct quarterly Open Forums, each of which would focus on one or two particular issues of common concern that can be explained in detail and discussed through an

open question and answer session. These sessions and the issues they will cover, would be announced well in advance to all staff. The objective will be to explore solutions to issues and challenges faced by staff members.

To complement the Open Forums, there is also an intention that both

the Staff Union and Administration concurrently run a system of periodic joint counseling sessions for staff who may have grievances, or who may need personalized guidance on any issue relating to their work life, career, etc. These sessions will be conducted by HR experts and Staff Union members.

Colleagues;

Staff Union has been playing an important role in the informal resolution of disputes, by working with the management. We will, in fu-





ture, jointly avail the services of the Office of the Ombudsman, which is based in Nairobi, to address any complex issues that are affecting individual staff members. There is a standing arrangement with this office to visit ECA on a regular basis.

Indeed, the Executive Secretary has

always maintained that the collaboration between the staff union and the management is extremely important and critical for the smooth implementation of the mandate of the Commission and has asked me and my good friend Makane, to ensure that there is constant and regular dialogue.

Once again, I offer my sincere congratulations to the staff union for the launch of this important publication, and I give my pledge that administration will continue to provide its support on subsequent editions.

I thank you



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## Eugene Owusu

UN Resident Coordinator  
UNDP Resident Representative and  
UN Humanitarian Coordinator



Eugene Owusu  
UN Resident Coordinator  
UNDP Resident Representative and  
UN Humanitarian Coordinator

Mr. Resident Coordinator, I would first of all like to thank you on behalf of the UNECA Staff Union for accepting to be interviewed by the STAFF VOICE magazine. The first issue has been printed and distributed and your personal copy was delivered to your office. The second issue is now in the pipeline and the main focus is, the use of Common Services in the United Nations System Organizations located in Addis Ababa.

### **Q1. What is the mandate of your office as a Resident Coordinator?**

EO: The Global Resident Coordinator's (RC) system was set up in 1981 following a General Assembly resolution. The RC function is normally assumed by the UNDP Resident Representative, which is the case for Ethiopia.

The UN Country Team is guided by the Standard Operating Procedures that set out the principles of interaction and roles and responsibilities of the Resident Coordinator and the Country Team.

The UN Country Team in Ethiopia comprises 26 UN agencies including the Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank and IMF) and the International Livestock Research Institute. Our Country Team is one of the largest in the world. In Ethiopia, the Resident Coordinator's Office has a core team of seven staff and is aimed at strengthening coordination among UN Agencies, to enhance the impact of our humanitarian and development activities. The RC is responsible for over-

all coordination of all UN operational activities in consultation with the UNCT. The RC is responsible for coordination of the UNCT in strategy, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of development programmes at the country level, contained in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The RC also leads the UNCT in developing increased coherence including implementation of Paris aid-effectiveness measures.

The RC has an equal relationship with, and responsibility to, all UNCT members. The UNCT, under the leadership of the RC, provides overall guidance, programme oversight, advocacy, resource mobilization and allocations for UNDAF. The UNCT meets on a monthly basis and holds an annual retreat.

The RC, on behalf of the UN System, also supports the government's coordination efforts as it relates to external assistance and in line with its national priorities.

### **Q2. What is the One UN concept?**

EO: The then UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, launched the UN reform process in 2006 with the objective of repositioning the UN system to become a more relevant, effective and efficient partner as it supports countries to achieve their development objectives in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Eight pilot countries were selected to test trial a new way of delivering UN assistance at the country level, based on the principles of One Programme, One Budgetary Framework, One Leader, One Office and One Voice. These countries are Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam. In partnership with the Government, our Country Team has voluntarily embarked on the Delivering as One initiative.

### **Q3. As a Resident Coordinator of the UN System, how do you see the UNCT "Delivering as One UN"?**

EO: As I mentioned earlier, Ethiopia became a 'self-starter' country in 2008 and the Government of Ethiopia and UN have been rolling out the Delivering as One (DAO) process to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN system in Ethiopia ever since.

A Joint High-Level Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Government of Ethiopia and myself as UN Resident Coordinator, with representatives of Line Ministries, donors, and UN Heads of Agency was put in place in 2009 to provide overall guidance to the DAO process.

The UN in Ethiopia is committed to working closely with the Govern-

ment to further advance the UN reform agenda. One key aspect of this is to maximize our programme alignment with the overarching national priorities. We have done this with our UNDAF for 2012-2015, designed as a four-year plan and fully aligned to Ethiopia's national Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) timeframe and priorities.

Within the DAO framework, the UNCT in Ethiopia's UNDAF Action Plan replaces agency-specific Country Programme Action Plans. This will strengthen alignment with national priorities and processes as well as increase coordination, synergy and complementarities amongst UN agencies.

Our UNDAF was also prepared with strong Government involvement and the participation of all key stakeholders including civil society organizations and development partners.

In early 2011, the Ethiopia One UN Fund was established to support coherent resource mobilization, allocation and disbursement of donor resources under the leadership and direction of the Resident Coordinator. The One Fund will enable the development of a joint resource mobilization strategy, as well as increasing transparency and predictability in the use of resources.

The UNCT in Ethiopia is making efforts to harmonize and re-design management processes and business practices to ensure more effective delivery of UN support to the Government of Ethiopia (GoE)'s national development strategies. The Operations Management Team is further strengthening joint work on common services. This has led to improved linkages between and among UN agencies in the areas of

travel, procurement, human resources management, health and information and communication technology.

The UN has made significant achievements on the One Voice front. The UN Communication Group (UNCG) was revitalized with a number of successful outcomes such as the celebration of UN Week, MDG advocacy and the first joint publication on the work of the UN System in Ethiopia. The UN has also jointly sponsored the Great Ethiopian Run (GER), one of the major sporting events in the country as part of its "communicating as one" agenda. Additionally, under the leadership of the UNCG, the UN has completed the rebranding exercise and now has a new and distinct 'Ethiopia Delivering As One' brand.

***Q4. ECA being the coordinator of the system at the Africa regional level and your office responsible for the coordination of all UN programmes at the country level, how do you work together with ECA?***

EO: Most UN agencies have liaison offices to the AU and the ECA. The ECA is a member of the UN Country Team (UNCT) and plays an active role in helping us jointly meet our Delivering as One agenda. We feel very privileged to have the ECA so close by as its regional perspective re-enforces Ethiopia's unique position as the political capital of Africa. The interlinkages between country level efforts and regional dynamics is very strong as was highlighted during the recent Horn of Africa drought. Another example is the strong regional leadership role that Ethiopia plays on the climate change platform. Ethiopia is the first African country to come up with a Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) vision and strategy. UN country offices, such

as UNDP, provided strong support to the Ethiopian government during the process of developing the CRGE vision and strategy documents which, we believe, will positively influence the development agenda of many countries in Africa and, by implication, the regional agenda on climate change and development. In this context, UN country programmes and the regional programme of the ECA are synergized and therefore mutually reinforcing.

***Q5. What are the values added to your role because of the fact that Addis Ababa hosts the African diplomatic community and also the third largest international community after New York and Geneva?***

EO: Addis Ababa is commonly referred to as the political capital of Africa and as I said earlier, this further enhances our access to and active participation in the regional policy discourse than had we been based in another country. I believe that this helps strengthen our programmes and interventions as well as our policy advocacy work.

Q6. The UNECA Staff Union is interested in the possibility of creating a Federation of UN Staff Associations (FUNSA) in Addis Ababa? Would this be welcome as a parallel development to the One UN Concept being pursued by the Secretary-General?

Of course, the idea of further collaboration within the UN structures is one we welcome but, naturally, the decision must be well researched to ensure that it is in the best interest of staff.

Thank you Mr. Resident Coordinator, for your time and cooperation.

***Interview by Seble Demeke***

## Ted Chaiban, UNICEF Country Representative for Ethiopia

Mr. Chaiban, I would like to start by thanking you on behalf of the ECA Staff Union for accepting to be interviewed by the UNECA Staff Voice, despite your busy schedule inside and outside of the country. You have a major responsibility, since dealing with the needs of children whether at the family, national and/or global level entails not only finance and other support but also high emotions which cannot be measured or costed. By way of briefing, the magazine, initiated by the UNECA Staff Union, is mainly to enhance collaboration between staff and management, to provide in the best services possible to the UN Member States, who are their clients and paymasters. This is primarily done through dialogue, negotiation and working together, each side assuming its own responsibilities and coming up with useful, concrete results.

The first issue of the Staff Voice has been printed and distributed here in Addis Ababa to all international organizations, embassies, the African Union (AU) the ECA subregional offices and to all United Nations system organizations, including the Regional Economic Commissions. Your personal copy was delivered to your office. The second issue, now in the pipe-line, mainly focuses on “Delivering as One UN”, the concept of coordinating the efforts of all UN system organizations located in Addis Ababa. One way of making this feasible is through the use of Common Services with the aim of reducing costs and eliminating duplication of programmes.

**Q1. My first question to you, Mr. Chaiban, is how long have you been with UNICEF and what has**

***been your experience during this period?***

TC: I have been with UNICEF for 14 years. I started in the Sudan, Operation Lifeline, a cross-border operation into then SPLA-held areas of South Sudan and from there, I moved to the Regional Office in Nairobi as a technical advisor on emergency preparedness and response. Since then, I have served as UNICEF Representative to Sri Lanka, Sudan and Ethiopia.

**Q2. What is your opinion about the concept of “Delivering as One UN”?**

TC: Delivering as one is essential to demonstrate how all agencies can work efficiently and effectively together. It takes the best of the competencies that the United Nations have to offer (in terms of technical cooperation, support to delivery

and management competencies) and brings all that capacity together to work in support of national development strategies.

It also allows the various UN agencies to build synergies with other actors and so that the Organization can bring about that unique transition between policy and practice in support of national development.

**Q3. What do you think about the possibility of creating a Federation of UN Staff Associations (FUNSA) in Addis Ababa? Would this be**



*Ted Chaiban,  
UNICEF Country Representative for Ethiopia*

***welcome as a parallel development to the One UN concept being pursued by the Secretary-General?***

TC: I think the possibility of creating a federation of UN Staff Unions is an excellent idea to complement agency-specific staff associations that deal with individual agency

issues. Such a federation could deal with common system-wide issues. A point of common agreement for all Staff Unions at the Addis Ababa duty station together is the erosion of local staff salaries (and pensions), due to the depreciation of the Ethiopian Birr. A federation can take up this type of issue more comprehensively with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and UN management at the global level.

**Q4. What is your view on the current practices of Common Services**





## **at the Addis Ababa duty Station?**

TC: There are areas such as safety and security, travel, telecommunication and certain aspects of procurement in which, working together, we can achieve economies of scale and cost-effectiveness. In other service areas, it might be useful to turn to the private sector in terms of provision of services to the UN. I would also like to note that Common Services is useful, not only to Addis Ababa, but also to field offices in such places as Gode, Dollo Ado, Jijiga, and other offices in the regions of Ethiopia where the UN has common premises.

## **Q5. My question here is more about the substantive part of your responsibility. What is the specific situation of children in Africa in general? In terms of improved health, education and other areas of need, do we see any positive changes?**

TC: Overall, there has been a significant improvement in terms of reduced mortality and morbidity, increased access to education and creation of a protective environment. Many African countries, including Ethiopia, are on track to achieving many of the MDGs. The areas of progress are many. Under-five mortality has reduced as a result of vaccination, early treatment of common childhood illnesses, such as pneumonia, diarrhea, not

to mention malaria. Equally important is the progress that has been achieved in sanitation.

Countries now have increased access to basic education with focus on gender equity, though quality needs to be improved. In many countries, this progress is also accompanied by eco-

nomic growth, which presents more options in terms of domestic investment in children's rights.

## **Q6. Drought and other problems in the Horn of Africa have caught the attention of the world. What is the current situation of children in this part of Africa?**

TC: Regarding the Horn of Africa, I would like to focus on Ethiopia which responded early, and very successfully, to the drought in 2011. As early as November 2010, the government of Ethiopia's Somali Region had sounded the alarm bells that 2011 was going to be a difficult year. The federal authorities issued an updated humanitarian requirement document in April 2011. More importantly, the Federal Government and its partners, including UNICEF, had invested in a number of systems that reduced vulnerability and protected women and children against drought. These include the Productive Safety Net and Health Extension programmes and the deployment of mobile health and nutrition teams in the Somali and Afar regions. Those measures saved many lives, demonstrating a high degree of resilience with regard to the situation of children in Ethiopia. We need to combine efforts more often in cooperation and

replicate such systems elsewhere.

## **Q7. With UNICEF being a field-oriented organization, you must have staff serving in dangerous duty stations. How is the safety and security situation handled and how do you coordinate with organizations like UNHCR and WFP that have similar responsibilities?**

TC: We have many UNICEF and other UN colleagues serving in dangerous and difficult situations who deserve our respect and appreciation for the work they do everyday in support of UN ideals. UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, OCHA and other UN agencies who have staff in such locations work together under Department of Safety and Security (DSS) coordination to ensure that basic security and communication procedures are in place to ensure staff safety and security. Relying on area security management teams, we have done our utmost to ensure staff safety and security which, is the first and foremost responsibility of UN Representatives.

## **Q8. Any messages that you would like to pass to your readers?**

TC: I feel privileged to work for the United Nations, which is the only multi-cultural international civil service organization dedicated to peace and development of humankind. The ultimate asset of the UN is its people. The dedication and commitment we share in varied environments addressing life-and-death, development and peace and justice issues combined with the multinational and multicultural dimension of the Organization makes the UN rather special.

Thank you for your valuable time and we wish you success in your future challenges.

*Interview by Seble Demeke*

## Youba Sokona

Coordinator of the African Climate Policy Centre, Co-Chair of IPCC WGIII



*Youba Sokona  
Coordinator of the African Climate Policy Centre,  
Co-Chair of IPCC WGIII*

Thank you Dr. Sokona for accepting to be interviewed by UNECA Staff Voice.

**Q1. Would you kindly tell us briefly about your background and how long you have been involved in the work related to climate change?**

YS: Well, I am a citizen of Mali and I have been involved in climate change issues since the late 1980s in the process of the preparation of the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992.

I started my career in teaching at the Ecole Nationale d'Ingenieurs of Bamako in Mali in the early 1980s. After the second oil shock, I moved

to Senegal at the organization Environnement et Developpement du Tiers Monde (ENDA-TM) to establish an energy programme as an African node of a Cooperative Programme on Energy and Development (COPED) supported by European Economic Commission. The Programme consisted of independent research institutions from Africa, Asia and South America assisted by two European research centers on energy. The work of the consortium focused on energy and development nexus. I then moved to Tunisia as Executive Secretary of the Sahel and Sahara Observatory (OSS) dealing with land degradation and transboundary ground water resources management in Circum-Sahara.

When the UNECA, African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Union Commission (AUC) initiated the Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) Programme as a joint initiative to deal with climate issues in the continent, I was appointed by ECA to set-up and coordinate the African Climate Policy Centre. The ClimDev-Africa Programme brings together the political leadership and convening power of the AUC, the knowledge and technical skills of the UNECA and the financial expertise of AfDB.

I was a Lead Author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group III for the Second and the Fourth Assessment Reports. In 2007, IPCC, along with Vice-President Al Gore of the United States of America, received recognition for its contribution on climate change and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Following that, I was elected as a co-chair for preparation of the fifth assessment report. All those who contributed to the different reports, including myself, received individual recognition of the Nobel Peace Prize. This was a great honor, not for any of us individually, but for the field of climate science and all those that have dedicated their lives to researching, and addressing, this defining issue of our time.

**Q2. What are the responsibilities of ACPC?**

YS: ACPC is one part of the ClimDev-Africa Programme which at a fundamental level, aims to construct a solid foundation in Africa for Africa's response to climate change. These responses can only be effective if they are based on solid science and observational infrastructure; strong working partnerships between government institutions, private sector, civil society and vulnerable communities; and knowledge frameworks that support and help integrate the actions required to deliver development in the context of climate change.

The centre has been functioning as an entity since November 2010. The centre starts with development first in the context of climate change and has three areas of activity, specifically: knowledge generation and sharing; advocacy and consensus building; and, technical cooperation, capacity mobilization and development. The goal of ACPC is to undertake these activities towards development and improvement in the lives of the majority of Africans.

The ACPC strives to ensure that its activities are demand-driven, focused on African questions, issues and options and as such the work of the Centre

is relevant to African policy makers, civil society and business leaders, and society as a whole.

The Centre is a knowledge hub. One of the fundamental problems everywhere in the world and in particular in Africa, when facing climate change related challenges is how to shift attitudes from being passive to being pro-active. To do this, it is fundamental to have information and knowledge so that we can make evidence based decisions in advance of issues becoming a problem and as such be proactive. This is one critical area we need to move on.

The second thing is that climate change is global problem and needs to be addressed collectively. This necessarily involves engagement in the international climate change negotiations process. As such the ACPC is providing technical and scientific support to African Group of Negotiators. From a strategic point of view it is important that we have evidence with which to support our positions and further our interests.

Thirdly, the way we conceive our development agenda and implement it has been rendered irrelevant by climate change. There is a need for a fundamental rethink of our development agenda. Coupled with this there is a need for capacity mobilization within African countries and institutions including the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) towards addressing development in the context of climate change. In that endeavor, the ClimDev-Africa Programme and the Centre are mobilizing existing capacity across the continent from three key communities, consisting of the: policy, practice and research communities. Most of the time there is a lack of interaction between these three communities

and as a consequence we, as Africans, have not had the rich dialogue that we should have had on climate change and development. Our annual forum for Climate and Development in Africa brings these three communities together for an interactive, informed and deep dialogue on key climate change and development issues for Africa.

The ACPC has also established a fellowship programme for young African researchers in different disciplines including climate science, agriculture, energy, economics, policy, water, and other areas. The fellows are recruited specifically to work on key issues identified in the work plan of the Centre and Programme. They have the capacity and we give them the opportunity to deepen Africa's understanding of its climate change and development options. As such, the fellows serve at the UNECA headquarters for at least one year

and are subsequently deployed to the different Sub-Regional Offices (SROs) to better serve member countries and build the link with the RECs.

***Q3. The first conference on climate change was held in 1979, followed by the Earth Summit which took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. In 1997 the now famous Kyoto Protocol was adopted, creating awareness about climate change world-wide. In 2007 a warning was issued by the IPCC that our planet was warming up beyond human control. What do you think are the positive outcomes of all these climate change conferences?***

YS: These conferences help a lot, both in terms of setting out an international

architecture for addressing climate change, which is a global problem, and also in raising awareness on climate change issues at various levels and in particular in Africa. To adequately address climate change issues, Africa needs to be very active in negotiations and at the same time understand the various outcomes of the negotiations and how these may or may not assist us in achieving climate resilient and low carbon development. For more than five years Africa is negotiating with one voice through the African Group of Negotiators and the Committee of African Head of States and Government on Climate Change. These initiatives have been very effective in bringing Africa's concerns to the negotiations table.

It is important to note that despite an awareness of climate change at the highest political level, there has been very limited concrete or meaningful actions implemented by governments, their institutions, or the private sector. In many cases there are only projects with limited alignment with national policy, and policy is not informed by the lessons

from these projects. The ClimDev-Africa Programme and the ACPC help to link these things, and through our work with the AGN and others, bring these things into the international arena and into domestic policy. Domestic policies and interventions are necessary, because regardless of what happens in negotiations, we fundamentally need to find innovative and unique development paths as the global carbon space is shrinking and a certain amount of climate change is already locked into our future.

***Q4. How many of these climate changes are being caused by human activities and how many of them by nature?***



YS: Although climate is changing and is supposed to change, the major problem is that of human-induced changes. The way we produce, live and consume is as though our Earth's resources are infinite while climate change is simply telling us we are approaching a threshold beyond which we cannot go. If there are three people cutting a hectare of dense forest for their basic needs, it will not change things much, but if there are millions of people doing the same for more than basic needs, you end up transforming your forest into a desert in a very short time.

**Q5. What does climate change mean for ordinary Africans?**

YS: Paradoxically, you don't need Science to tell Africans that climate has changed. You ask anyone who has lived in the horn of Africa in the Sahel or in the mountains of Kilimanjaro and they can testify that the climatic conditions in which they grew up have dramatically changed. But what they do not know is how to cope with the speed and the magnitude of the changes which threaten their very livelihoods.

**Q6. Is there an awareness programme designed to educate ordinary Africans on the preservation of the environment?**

YS: Various awareness programmes have been designed and implemented through different channels by governments, NGOs, bilaterally and multilaterally and the critical problem remains what are the alternatives? This is a very important question.

Unless we understand the issues or have positive options available for people, what use is awareness raising and how can advocacy be meaningful? By the same token, once we have understood an issue and have meaningful

development options, there is a need to raise awareness on these things.

**Q7. What is the purpose of the Rio+20 Earth Summit and who are the main partners of the United Nations in organizing the Conference? What is the expected output?**

YS: At Rio+20, the global community will assess progress towards understanding and implementing sustainable development and in particular what the role of green growth and institutional frameworks are in achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication. There are many issues to be explored in this context, including the issue of universal access to energy. Mr. Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, has launched the "Sustainable Energy for All" initiative with three objectives to be achieved by 2030. These are: ensuring universal access to modern energy services; doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix. The ACPC in collaboration with TERI and UNDP, have prepared articles for a special issue of Energy Policy on energy access in Africa and South-Asia. This issue will be launching at the Rio+20 event. In this the ACPC is highlighting the hurdles Africa needs to overcome, and ways Africa can achieve these objectives.

**Q8. What are the challenges as far as climate change is concerned?**

YS: I see four main challenges or prerequisites regardless of whether you come from a poor country or a very rich country. These are:

- 1 The political will and vision at the leadership level;
2. The institutions to deliver the vision,
3. Finance to support the institutions

in delivering the vision, and this finance can be from domestic and international sources;

4. The linking of short term and long term development issues so that there is tangible progress while at the same time long term issues are addressed and not lost. We need to address current needs while at the same time incrementally working towards long term goals.

**Q9. What can each individual national/world citizen do to stop the advance of climate change?**

YS: We have to change our lifestyle and the nature of our production and consumption patterns. The way we consume and produce, we are turning into a consumer society without creating alternatives. The Rio Summit in 1992 discussed the issue but we never resolved it. No decision has been reached because we did not explore it seriously enough. We have an opportunity to revisit this issue at a personal level and at the global level under the discussion of the green growth.

Q10. Any message that you would like to pass on to your readers?

YS: Our future is in our hands. We have no right to compromise the future of our children. In Africa, we have a tremendous opportunity to convert adversity into opportunity as our future is open with limited lock-in. We have the unprecedented opportunity to lock in climate resilient low carbon development, which a number of our countries are doing, or we can take another route. The choice is ours.

Thank you again for your valuable time.

*Interview by Seble Demeke*

## Ali Todaro, Chief General Services Section (GSS)

Addis Ababa is the seat of several UN (UNDP, UNICEF, UNEP, UNESCO UNFPA, UNHCR, WFP, UNIDO, FAO, ILO, ITU, WHO, World Bank) and other international organizations, including the African Union. The United Nations Conference Centre (UN-HCC) hosts about 49 international conferences and 84 smaller meetings annually. There are over 100 embassies and nearly as many intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations located in the city. Due to these facts, inter-secretariat cooperation in the area of administration and operations management would be most desirable to achieve greater cost-effectiveness. You are one of the senior staff on the ECA side who is responsible for a smooth cooperation and coordination among the UN organizations.

### **Q1. Could you therefore tell us briefly about your background and how you reached your current position at ECA?**

AT: I am Ali Todaro, a citizen of Somalia, and the incumbent Chief of the General Services Section (GSS) in the Division of Administration. I was educated in Somalia and in Italy and graduated in economic development and management. I have served the ECA with dedication for nearly three decades. During the first four years, I was seconded to the ECA-UNCTC Joint Centre on Transnational Corporations in the then Trade and Development Finance Division under the sponsorship of UNDP. For the next 24 years I worked at progressively higher levels of responsibility, both in line and staff functions, including 10 years at the

Office of the Executive Secretary as Special Assistant and Secretary to the Commission.

### **Q2. The GSS is one of the largest offices in the Division of Administration. Could you briefly tell us about the responsibilities of the Section?**

AT: The General Services Section's primary responsibility is to deliver effective and efficient services to internal and external clients in the functional areas of procurement (goods, services, and contract management); travel, protocol and visa; logistics (shipping and transport); inventory management and stores; ancillary services and registry, cafeteria operations, servicing the Local Committee on Contracts, the Property Survey Board and the day-to-day management of the ECA-Ethiopia Headquarters Agreement. In my work relations with the team of at the GSS, my core leadership value is to fix of problems rather than assign blame, in a bid to further achievement of the development mission of ECA in the service of Africa—for the buck stops with the final leader, to paraphrase President Harry Truman's famous insight.

### **Q3. How many staff members do you have in your Section and how do you communicate with them?**

AT: There are 60 staff in the GSS, including professionals, GS category and temporary personnel. I communicate with staff through formal and informal means and systems of communication. The aim is to foster greater collaboration within the Section with a particular emphasis on cross-unit interaction to help support build-



Ali Todaro, Chief  
General Services Section (GSS)

ing synergy and collaboration within the section.

A monthly management review is also conducted to serve as a report card on unit services affecting the working environment of ECA and the well being of staff, coupled with a weekly Section meeting to bring the units together for brainstorming, updating and exchanging views, monitoring work progress and discussing different challenges at hand. Central to this is people management: continuous training for team building, developing an IT platform for knowledge management and communities of practice, providing the initiative to promote an award system, staff and continuous career development, coupled with ethics and integrity.

### **Q4. In a large office such as GSS, staff usually have to pass several hierarchy levels before they could be given access to the “big boss”. Do the staff have direct access to you when they need to discuss their problems be it professional or personal?**

AT: I always promote an open door policy. My management style is enhancing team effectiveness

through participatory environmental leadership and active communication, appreciation of opportunity in diversity and leveraging the positive aspects of divergence to change the mindset. Working in partnership is a joint effort for a higher level output that brings about contribution of knowledge with maximum capacity towards the achievement of the Section goals.

Now Common Services

***Q5. What is the role of ECA, if any, in promoting and facilitating administrative cooperation and coordination among UN agencies in town?***

AT: The Secretary-General has committed to changing the culture of the Organization through common services, the coordination of efforts and efficient utilization of resources throughout the Secretariat – “doing more with less”. As a response, ECA and other UN agencies have taken action and developed additional common services in Addis Ababa. In 2010, the UN Country Team in Ethiopia (UNCT) approved an appropriate agenda item, entitled “Delivering-as-One Common Services”, and mandated the UN Operations Management Team (OMT) to thoroughly implement an adequate action plan and related activities. This year, the ECA acts, among other things, as the Chair of the OMT to coordinate activities and follow-up the implementation of the approved plan.

Accordingly, the OMT intends to implement the “UN Guidelines on Common Procurement” as spearheaded by the UN country teams. Particular emphasis, in this

regard, will be put on the utilization of common system contracts (LTAs) and common procurement of such items as uniforms, supplies, material, travel, logistics and other services.

***Q6. What are some of the existing common service areas at the Addis Ababa duty stations?***

AT: The area of existing common service activities at the Addis Ababa duty stations include security, facility management, UN travel management services, common premises, joint efforts to tackle Headquarters Agreement matters, surveys and value added tax as well as common protocol and logistics services.

Particular reference, in this context, must be made to the success-

ful conclusion of a UN common travel management procurement services in 2011. The exercise was coordinated through the UN Inter-Agency Selection Committee on the Provision of Travel Management Services, which had been set up to deal with all aspects of the procurement of travel management services such as developing the Statement of Work and conducting of technical evaluations. Membership was drawn from representatives of the 14 UN agencies that operate in Ethiopia.

***Q7. The UN Agencies share a number of common attributes besides the relationship agreements, which could be used to strengthen cooperation in the management of support services. How could this be***

***applied in delivering programmes and services?***

AT: If all UN agencies pool their efforts in the area of supplies, contractual services forwarding and shipping, knowledge and services, protocol, logistics, as well as common procurement through the effective implementation of the UN guidelines of common procurement, it is certain that we will improve operational efficiency and achieve significant cost savings.

Encouraging examples of this situation are:

- a) The above-mentioned UN contract on common management of travel whereby 14 agencies participate together.
- b) The collaboration of the UN Team on the whole issue of the implementation of Host Country Agreements which impacts on the effective delivery of programmes and projects are just a few examples that could be mentioned as success stories.

***Q8. There is great potential for significant cost-reduction by using common services, but what is the attitude of organizations towards common services?***

AT: Common services are logical and desirable for reaching the objectives of all UN system activities. Delivering as one presupposes pooling together services and also finding synergies among programmes and services. But the reality is far different; it will require strong, committed and dedicated leadership regardless of place in our individual hierarchy within the organizations. UNON, UNOG and UNOV have succeeded in making



common service operations a reality, for the benefit of their duty station organizations. They could be taken as models for the UN to deliver as one, while other entities should also be able to benefit from their experience.

**Q9. Any other message that you would like to pass on about common services?**

AT: With committed and dedicated leadership, common services could be made an effective tool to achieve the principles of doing more with less, reducing, if not actually eliminating overlap and increasing collaboration for the delivery of programmes as one. This was clearly stated in the Secretary-General's message on "Change in the Secretariat", describing how to create a more modern, engaged and effective Secretariat. Guidelines, green lights and clear instructions are on the table. What is expected next is delivery of services as one. The outcomes need to be followed-up within a time frame in order to measure the successes and/or challenges of the management process.

Thank you Mr. Todaro for your valuable time.

*Interview by Seble Demeke*



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**Yinka Adeyemi,**  
Senior Regional Advisor  
and  
OIC, Information and  
Communication Service

I would like to thank you on behalf of the Staff Union and myself for sparing your precious time to be interviewed by THE UNECA STAFF VOICE magazine.

The purpose of THE ECA VOICE magazine is to enhance collaboration between staff and management in providing the best services possible to ECA member States. This is primarily through dialogue, negotiation and working together, each side assuming its own responsibilities?

**Q1. What is your view on this initiative taken by the Staff Union?**

YA: Anything that provides smoother flow of information and brings management and staff together is a good initiative. I hope it becomes a magazine that people will depend on for factual information, so that we have a better Staff Union and a better understanding with management and the Staff Union. When information flows freely and regularly, fear and apprehension are reduced. When this happens, programme delivery will improve.

**Q2. You have recently been appointed as a Regional Advisor for the Economic Development and NEPAD Division. Congratulations! You are also at the same time the OIC for Information and Communication Services. How are you coping with these two huge tasks and what are the challenges?**



Yinka Adeyemi,  
Senior Regional Advisor and  
OIC, Information and Communication Service

YA: I am a senior regional advisor on NEPAD and my primary job is to assist member States, the Regional Economic Communities, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders with the implementation of NEPAD priorities. Of course, I do this largely through advisory service and technical support.

It is also true that I am in charge of information and communication at ECA. It is a temporary arrangement. This is a challenge because my first job requires me to travel while the OIC responsibility requires me to stay here in the office, largely. ICS may be one of the most under-rated sections here. It has a small but highly dedicated and motivated staff. Working together, we have done interesting things. Our web staff has tripled. We are restructuring the whole architecture of the ECA websites. Before the 2012 Conference of Ministers, our new website will be inaugurated.

We have increased our outreach in Ethiopia, via radio and billboards and will soon do the same in a few African countries... letting people know what we do and how our work can improve the livelihood of people. Our SROs now have communication officers who have come to Addis for orientation. This was a first of its kind. We are professionalizing ICS by bringing in people with various skills not only in writing, but really those who know communication, in all its facets. The net result is very good to ECA.

**Q3. NEPAD is a programme of AU. How do ECA and AU collaborate in making NEPAD effective?**

YA: The context of the question is very good. As you know NEPAD began as a Secretariat. But in January 2010, here in Addis Ababa, the full integration of NEPAD into the structures and processes of the African Union was completed and the NEPAD Secretariat transformed





into a technical agency, called NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, charged with planning and coordinating regional and sub-regional projects, frameworks and programmes.

How do we work with the AU in support of this? NEPAD is really the programme of the AU and our work is to support their programme. We are mandated to do so by UN/RES/57/7, which recognizes NEPAD as the development framework for Africa. One way the UN works with the AU and NEPAD is through the Regional Coordination Mechanism. As you know, this is the way we deliver support to the AU and its NEPAD programme. This mechanism minimizes fragmentation and transaction costs in our support programmes. For ECA, NEPAD is critical. We are probably one of

the very few UN agencies with a dedicated section to NEPAD. In fact, the “N” in our flagship Division --- EDND stands for NEPAD. We are committed to the task of

NEPADIZING ECA so that in one way or another ECA outputs will be linked to NEPAD priorities. We also support them through knowledge management, and communication, and by providing short-term consultancy in macroeconomics and communications etc. Apart from all of that, we take part in the NEPAD Steering Committee meetings ---with representatives of African Heads of States and take part in APRM country missions. We also support the African Plat-

form for Development (ApDev).

***Q4. Do you have any messages to pass to your readers of “UNECA Staff Voice” and/or any other issue which will help to make Staff Management collaboration more effective?***

YA: The message is clear. Every publication needs a reliable leadership. If it will serve its purpose and achieve its potentials, it has to fulfill the needs of staff members. The staff should also support it by reading it and writing feature stories and simply by passing it to other people.

Thank you for your time and contribution.

***Interview by Seble Demeke***



## Amareswara Rao, Chief, Human Resources Services Section (HRSS)

Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed by the Staff Voice magazine.

**Q1. Could you kindly tell us briefly about your background the various positions you have held from your entry level to your current position?**

AR: I started with the United Nations in 1984 as a UN Volunteer in Sri Lanka and continued to serve in many other countries, including UNDP Country Office in The Gambia and UNV HQs in Bonn. In the recent past, my experience was in Syria, Afghanistan and Darfur, the Sudan and now I am here in ECA. Since 1992, my area of responsibility has been Human Resources. Human resources issues are pertinent both to staff members and management. I dealt with those issues at management level as well as on policy orientation.

**Q2. The work of OHRM has been reformed recently. What does this reform entail? Why the reforms?**

AR: Human resources are the key in any organization dealing with the professional and personal lives of staff members. There should be a balance and match between the system's efficiency and staff career development.

The human sources reforms brought major change: GA resolution 63/250 agreed on streamlining of contracts and integration between headquarters and the field.

Further, GA resolutions 65/247 and 65/248 covered three main areas, including rewarding commitment through issuing of continuing contracts and introducing the Young Professionals Programme. Before, there were different contractual modalities. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, as part of his vision for a dynamic, adaptable and global workforce, has been vigorously pursuing a mobility policy for the Organization.

**Q3. As the Chief of Section of HRSS, what are the areas under your direct responsibility?**

AR: There are, I will say, four different areas:

1. Provide human resources policy advice to the management and staff
2. Support managers in staff selection;
3. Ensure administration of benefits and entitlements as per the Staff Rules and Regulations;



Amareswara Rao,  
Chief, Human Resources Services  
Section (HRSS)

4. Guide staff learning and development efforts of ECA in which performance management is a key component of HR.

**Q4. What are the areas and skills required to join ECA?**

AR: ECA is a knowledge-based institution and there is a need to have specialized staff. We talk about economists, gender specialists, trade and governance specialists etc. We are looking for experts with subject matter specialization. ECA also needs qualified support staff



in areas such as finance, human resources and procurement, for supporting the implementation of the mandate of ECA. There is one group of people responsible for directly implementing the mandate and another that supports those implementing the mandate.



Staff who are working in Administration, e.g. Finance and HR need to understand the mandate of ECA; otherwise, they cannot relate their contribution and performance to the mandate of the organization. When individuals come to the UN, they must come with a commitment to serve the organization and dedicate their life to that commitment. The UN is not like any other organization. It is a multilateral organization having 194 Member States with a commitment to the world.

**Q5. What are the alternative modalities to serving ECA e.g. part-time, volunteer work and other kinds of training?**

AR: In addition to being recruited as a staff member through a competitive process, there is an internship programme. In 2011, ECA had 123 interns coming from 22 different countries. That programme provides an opportunity to interns to contribute to the work of ECA and to learn about the UN system.

Another programme is Fellowships: these are tied to substantive programmes. They are highly focused

‘positions’, specific to certain areas such as in gender, statistics, climate policy, governance etc., and are limited to a period of time: Fellows join ECA, deliver their output and return to their respective countries.

In addition, there are consultancies for preparing conferences, drafting conference papers and undertaking highly substantive tasks that are important for the implementation of the mandate.

**Q6. What kind of opportunities for advancement do employees, professionals and general services have at ECA?**

AR: Professional advancement under the new staff selection system should be through the competitive process for all professional and higher level posts and from G5 and above under the general services category. While ensuring that all the applicants have been given equal opportunity, including external candidates, 72% and 41% of the selection decisions made against general services posts resulted in the promotion of ECA staff during 2010 and 2011 respectively.

We implemented a pilot mobility project last year and are one of the few offices that have taken practical steps on internal mobility of staff: we reviewed staff members at P-4, who required a lateral move for being eligible to apply to P5 level posts for consideration and went through a detailed consultative and competitive process: the result was eight staff members had moved between HQs in Addis and the ECA sub-regional offices and among the regional offices themselves.

There was also a Division of Administration (DoA) task force which came up with a number of possibilities for mobility at the General Service level. The draft report has been shared with the Section Chief of DoA for comments. Once finalized, the proposals will be forwarded to the Director of DoA for review and submission to the Executive Secretary for consideration of approval. We believe that the options proposed will have a positive impact for the GS staff.

One of the plans for this year is a career support programme that holds priority for HR. We will help

staff to look at their career paths and see what the organization can do to help them in terms of training and other activities.

**Q7. The Local Salary Survey (LSS) issue seems to be a major concern to the Staff and this was brought to the attention of the Secretary-General by the UNECA Staff Union representative during his last visit. What is all this about? Could you explain briefly to the staff what is going on so that they know what is on the table and what to expect?**

AR: There are two issues here:

1. The depreciation of the Ethiopian Birr; and
2. The high inflation rate.

Although salaries increased in 2010 and 2011, staff believes that it does not correspond with the high cost of living resulting from the local currency inflation rate. The request of the staff is to peg the salaries to the dollar. There are some policy problems which might limit what can be done.

**Q8. What other issues do you think are of major concern to the staff at present?**

AR: For international staff, a major concern is the limitations for their spouses to find employment in the area where their contribution and participation could be in the interest of the society. e.g. English and French teaching, nursing and other medical fields are cases in point. It creates a problem for their families to be together and could also result in making the duty station attractive to qualified experts.

**Q9. I believe there are different recruitment and promotion panels for both categories of staff. How do these and other panels in the Commission work and are staff informed where to go in case of problems?**

AR: There are two central review bodies (CRC and CRP) that are operational at ECA HQs. They ensure that the process is fair and transparent. All the bodies have Staff Union representation. Currently we have a highly committed Staff Union. They are very much policy oriented, they understand the issues and work with us as real partners. Working with them is excellent. We consult with each other continuously and we support each other in the interest of the staff and the organization.

**Q10. What is the vacancy rate at present?**

AR: It is at about 15% and the target is to achieve 5%.

**Q11. How long does it take for ECA to recruit a middle-level professional?**

AR: In the ideal situation, from the time the starting from initial HR assessment after the deadline of a JO to the point of selection it should take 69 days. The timeframe must be the same for all the posts. But in ECA the reality is that it takes much longer than that. We are trying to reduce it to an acceptable level.

**Q12. Permanent and/or Continuing appointments. There is a need to clarify this concept in the simplest form possible in order for the staff to understand who is included and who is not entitled. Could you kindly do that for them in this interview?**

AR: People who have met certain criteria would be considered for continuing contract. Right now, OHRM is finalizing an ST/AI (staff administrative instruction) to guide the review process. There was a one-time exercise in 2010 whereby about 300 staff members of ECA were awarded permanent appointments. Once the administrative instruction is out, we will review staff eligibility and send our recommendations to OHRM for a secretariat-wide review and approval process. People who meet the set criteria would be awarded continuing contracts. We see the exercise being done during the first half of 2012.

**Q13. What is your view on the different training programmes provided to the staff?**

AR: We have training programmes: substantive and technical. We get the financing from OHRM for the substantive and technical training programmes and there is also a component within the ECA budget for training which includes language training for staff. Some countries give scholarships for ECA staff in IT, HR and project management.

The resources available are very limited in comparison to the need. We are currently developing proposals for alternate resources/strategies to make-up for the gap.



**Q14. Mission assignment – what is the selection process? Do Staff Union representatives have a say in the selection?**

AR: There is a generic job opening process for peace-keeping. Staff need to go through the competitive process and once successful they are placed on a roster based on occupational group. It is a centralized assessment with the selection decision made at the mission level. Field Central Review Bodies also have staff representation.

**Q15. Basic Staff Safety and Security – Is there a staff/management consultation on this issue, in particular when staff are assigned on mission to dangerous places?**

AR: Basic and advanced security training is mandatory for all staff members. Once staff members arrive at their duty station, they are also provided with comprehensive training.

**Q16. Is there a staff/management meeting on a regular basis? If so, what are the areas discussed at such meetings?**

AR: We meet regularly as issues arise and we actually have a plan for two things:

1. An open forum where Staff Union and HR present thematic subjects which are issue-oriented. For instance, each session would be on a specific theme.
2. Joint SU and HR visits to various divisions to brief and hold discussions on the transparency of decisions taken on specific staff matters.

3. The Joint Negotiations Committee was established in 2010. Already, three meetings have been held and an additional one scheduled for March.

We have an ideal relationship with the Staff Union. This productive relationship between the Staff Union and management is essential for achieving the mandate of the organization.

**Q17. Any other issues you would like to raise at this point?**

AR: I want to congratulate the Staff Union for publishing the Staff Voice

magazine. I believe that the purpose of this is to make the issues of the staff known. I think it is a very useful venture but it has to be timely.

Thank you again. I am glad to discuss with you some of the issues and concepts which hopefully will help staff to understand things better. This is the main purpose of the Staff Voice magazine, to be a forum of discussion between staff and management.

*Interview by Seble Demeke*



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## Marcel NGOMA - MOUAYA,

Chief, Documents Control, Referencing and Contractual Services Unit (DRCU)

MNM: First of all, I should like to associate myself with what others have said before me in hailing the UNECA Staff Voice as a great initiative. I do hope that the publication of the staff magazine will not be discontinued or stopped.

### **Q1. What are the responsibilities of the Documents Control Unit?**

MNM: The Documents Control responsibilities are being carried out by a dynamic and dedicated team of four staff members, namely, Hiwot Martinez, Reference Assistant, Getachew Tegegn, Documents Management Assistant, Henok Legesse, Documents Management Supervisor and myself.

The Documents Control Unit is the focal point within the Publications and Conference Management Section (PCMS) for all matters involving the planning and processing of documentation. It is responsible for ensuring that rules and procedures governing the control and limitation of documentation are adhered to. It processes all requests for documentation services and monitors the workflow for each document requiring the attention of PCMS.

In this regard, the Documents Control Unit works closely with all requesting offices (clients) and service providers (editors, translators, text processors and the print shop) in order to deliver the required services to the client's satisfaction. This involves negotiating production deadlines for each request for documentation services. These deadlines will be met depending on

the available capacity or resources and submission times.

### **Q2. Is there any challenge that your Unit faces?**

MNM Late submission of documents is one issue of particular concern to PCMS. Often documents are submitted to PCMS very late. In the biennium 2010-2011, overall compliance with submission guidelines for pre-session documentation (10 weeks before consideration) stood at 21 per cent. It is clear that most of the submissions did not comply with the 10-week rule. 79 per cent of documents were submitted late, and there were also unexpected submissions of lengthy yet urgent documents.

This situation puts a lot of pressure on the Section responsible for processing these documents. It is to be noted that the current documentation processing capacity in PCMS is not sufficient to meet all the Commission's editing and translation demands efficiently. As a result, documents are processed on a rush basis, compromising their quality. In addition, documents submitted late cannot be issued on time in all the official languages of the meeting, and so they cannot be sent to member States within the prescribed time frame (6 weeks before the beginning of meeting).

### **Q3. What measures could be taken to avoid the late submission of documents in the future?**



Marcel NGOMA - MOUAYA,  
Chief, Documents Control, Referencing and  
Contractual Services Unit (DRCU)

MNM: In order to prevent a recurrence of this situation there are four solutions that could be implemented immediately.

The first solution is early planning by author divisions in the preparation of each document with a strict timetable, including activities such as editing, translation, text processing and printing. Documentation forecasting is an important planning tool that author divisions need to be serious about.

The second solution is to encourage author divisions to comply with the established UN regulations for the control and limitation of documentation (ST/AI/189 and its addenda, especially addenda 20 and 23 governing the maximum length of documents and the timetable for their submission).

According to these regulations, a parliamentary document should not exceed 8,500 words. To allow enough time for processing, a parliamentary document should be submitted to PCMS at least 10 weeks before the beginning of the

meeting for which it is intended. Other bulky documents such as studies, reports and flagship publications should be submitted for processing at least three months in advance.

The third solution would be to put in place a task force, consisting of representatives of author divisions, PCMS and OPM, to oversee the implementation of the submission guidelines and establish an accountability mechanism.

The fourth one is to continue raising author divisions' awareness about the benefits of timely submission of documents requiring PCMS attention. The Documents Control Unit spares no effort to that effect. It is important to understand that the timely issuance of documents processed by PCMS depends crucially on author divisions improving timely submission.

***Q4. Documents control is an essential service to ensure that correct documents are processed and distributed to the users/clients. Does your staff receive the necessary training to keep up with the fast-changing management system of documents control?***

MNM: Training is an important process of improving the skills, capabilities and knowledge of staff members for doing a particular job. In the Documents Control Unit, training is one of the actions used to help staff perform their duties better. Each new staff member is systematically trained in order to become acquainted with the



business processes and best practices of the Unit. If any updates and amendments take place in the business process or technology, training is given to cope with those changes. For instance, during the last biennium, four important training sessions were organized for Documents Control Unit staff related to the new referencing methodology, the implementation of a computer-assisted translation tool, IMIS and the Documents control and performance monitoring system (DCPMS). I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Human Resources Services Section for financing one of the above training sessions.

***Q5. Does ECA use an electronic document management system e.g. for sharing documents with managers, editors and translators?***

MNM: The effectiveness of modern documents management depends in large part on the use of a functional IT solution. Given the fact that the current documents management system has displayed some shortcomings, the Documents Control Unit, in collabora-

tion with colleagues from the UN Office in Vienna, is going to introduce a new tool called the Documents control and performance monitoring system (DCPMS). This is an integrated LAN-based system for documentation management. It has more functions, including workload forecasting by the requesting offices, and is expected to improve documents management at ECA. The introduction of this tool is expected before the end of 2012, and will be followed by training for all stakeholders. The training will concern the following users: administrative assistants, staff responsible for submitting requests for documentation services to PCMS, editors, translators, revisers, text processors, print shop staff and documents control staff.

***Q6. Any message that you would like to pass to your readers?***

MNM: I would like to conclude this interview by encouraging all ECA staff to take ownership of this magazine and contribute to it. It is an important communication tool.

***Interview by Seble Demeke***



# Town Hall Meeting with the UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon

Remarks by Doreen Bongoy Mawalla  
Director of Administration

Mr. Secretary General, Colleagues and Members of the Secretary General's delegation from New York, Under Secretary General Mr. Abdou Jannet, Heads of Agencies present, other colleagues, ladies and gentlemen; I thank you all on my own behalf and on behalf of my fellow staff members due to retire from the services of the United Nations in 2012, for the honour of the recognition and gratitude bestowed on us, today.

Mr. Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen, serving the United Nations is certainly one of the most noble ways of serving humanity; and, those of us nearing the end of our service, can only be proud to have been part of the global efforts to establish and maintain international peace and security, promote development and social progress, and, better life for all peoples of the world. As we prepare to retire, we cannot help but, reflect on both the good and challenging times that we have had as staff members, working on the many complementary agendas of the UN family, the experience of which molded us into what we are, today. While reflecting on our time at the UN, we are filled with melancholy and gratitude, for the opportunities in personal and professional development that the organization has facili-



# Contributions



tated for all of us. We thank God for giving us the strength, health and wisdom. We thank our families for the support and encouragement. We thank our colleagues for holding our hands all through the past several years.

Mr. Secretary General, as we reflect on our service at the United Nations, we remember with sorrow, our fallen colleagues – those heroes and heroines who paid the ultimate price in the most noble service to humanity. On behalf of my retiring colleagues present, and indeed, on my own behalf, I dedicate the honour you bestowed on us today, to the esteemed memory of all persons

who lost their lives and/or sustained critical injuries, in serving this great organization - the United Nations.

Mr. Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen, I take this opportunity to implore my colleagues, still in service, to continue to strive and work harder towards the fulfillment of the United Nation's mandate by "doing more with less"

As we depart the scene, Ladies and Gentlemen, we take this opportunity to wish our Secretary General and his team and all staff, success on the very useful reform programmes that Mr. Ban Ki Moon has initiated. We pray that Mr. Ban's

second term register much bigger successes for all staff and for the Organization; and, may we see him each year here in Addis Ababa to honour retiring colleagues.

In Conclusion,

Let me just echo what the Secretary General said to retiring ECA Staff members last year, that "Retirement is an opportunity to be re-wired for a better new phase, in life"; And, this group intends to do just that!

As we say in Swahili: Asante sana, shukran, merci beaucoup, thank you very much; and Amasegnalehu

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# La Granite Médicale et Chirurgicale (GMC)

by Fasil Debebe,  
Administrative/Finance Officer  
UNHCC – UNECA



*Fasil Debebe, Administrative/Finance Officer UNHCC – UNECA*

## Background

“La Granite Médicale et Chirurgicale” (GMC), is a third-party independent insurance administration firm owned by “Group Henner” with headquarters in Paris, France. It has regional offices in Nairobi and Tunis, for English and French-speaking countries respectively.

MIP claims processing was outsourced to GMC from 1 May 2010 by instruction received from the Assistant-Secretary-General and Controller’s inter-office memorandum dated 7 August 2009 on the basis of which DOA issued Circular No. 022 dated 2 November 2009 to the general service staff of ECA. Insurance and Disbursement Services, Accounts Division, OPBBA then confirmed the GMC implementation date to be effective 1 May 2010. (UNDP, WFP, UNFPA, UNIDO and WORLD Bank MIP claims had been outsourced effective 1 January 2004). MIP claims for locally recruited staff members were processed at UNHCC until the date of outsourcing to GMC.

MIP rules regarding enrollment and reimbursement of benefits, however, remained unchanged after outsourcing to GMC.

As stated in the Secretary-General’s inter-office memorandum, the

benefits for outsourcing to GMC of claims processing were:

- More effective and efficient processing of both regular and hardship claims by specialized experts
- Establishment of healthcare networks having direct billing arrangements with GMC
- Assured confidentiality of claims
- Dedicated website available to all participants providing information regarding MIP provisions, claim forms, listing of GMC medical network and direct billing facilities
- Capacity for fraud prevention and detection
- Summary level management report, etc.

## GMC Implementation

Before its implementation, GMC had held a town hall meeting with ECA locally recruited staff members and retirees in which SROs had also participated through video conferencing. A representative from GMC was present in the town hall meeting to formally introduce its implementation and clarify questions raised by staff.

The first requirement was for HRSS to provide GMC with eligibility files

for ECA staff and their dependents. Based on those eligibility files, GMC issued a Membership Guide Booklet and GMC Cards for staff members and their dependents. MIP claims were sent to GMC Nairobi for processing for expenses incurred after its implementation.

## Claims reimbursement - What staff need to know

Although MIP claims were outsourced to GMC, the rules and regulations regarding enrollment and benefits remained unchanged. The modality for sending MIP claim envelopes is through the ECA diplomatic pouch system as part of the normal weekly pouch to UNDP Nairobi. However, staff remained at liberty to send their claims through private means.

Staff were required to inform GMC of their bank details (where they prefer their reimbursements to be transferred). UNSSCA is one of the choices staff are currently using. Staff members receive a statement of explanation of benefits showing details of calculations of claims for which reimbursements are made. All hardship cases, where expenses exceed the annual maximum reimbursable limit, are handled by GMC.



Any query regarding reimbursement of claims can be addressed to GMC by email: [unmip.nairobi@henner.com](mailto:unmip.nairobi@henner.com) or by directly calling their customer service on + 254 724 634 085.

The GMC website is available on <http://www.henner.com/un/mip> where the Membership Guide, MIP forms, medical network access and other information could be found.

## In-patient care

In general, when local hospital or diagnostic laboratory services are required, staff should present their GMC Cards and Direct Billing Cards (to be downloaded from GMC website) and a UN identification card.

In case of hospitalization (in-patient care) Prior Agreement Forms (PAFs) are requested. In the case of planned hospitalization, the PAF must be sent to GMC at least 5 days prior to admission. Yet, in cases of emergency hospitalization, the PAF must be sent to GMC within 3 days following admission for issuance of the letter of guarantee of payment to the hospital.

GMC will review the proposed services and ensure that they are in line with the benefits under MIP, thus enabling the issuance of a Letter of Guarantee to the medical facility.

## Out-patient care

For out-patient care, members are requested to pay their 20 per cent co-pay portion for consultation of doctors and the hospital will then bill the rest of the invoice directly to GMC.

## Dental treatment and optical equipment

There is no direct billing to GMC for dental and optical equipment. Members have to pay for such treatment and later claim reimbursement from GMC.

## Out-of-country-care

The UN MIP rules indicate that services and medications provided outside the country of the staff member's duty station except on official duty travel and medical evacuation travel will be covered on the basis of Reasonable and Customary Costs prevailing within the country of the staff member's duty station. However, if care is not available at the duty station, members can address to GMC confirmation by the UN physician of the non-availability of such services. Expenses would then be limited to the reasonable and customary costs of the nearest country where care is available.

There are also certain medications GMC does not reimburse. Cases in point are over-the-counter medicines, pain killers and immunization (except for children up to the age of 19). These types of explanations are usually provided on the GMC Explanation of Benefits.

The whole list of reimbursable and non-reimbursable drugs can be downloaded from GMC website.

## GMC Medical Network (GMC-MedNet)

If hospitalization takes place in a hospital GMC has an agreement with, GMC will arrange direct billing which prevents members from paying invoices up front.

Some hospitals out of the GMC network could accept a direct billing arrangement but the procedure remains the same.

## Medical evacuation

Medical evacuation travel has to be approved by the HR office in agreement with UNHCC. A Medical Evacuation Form should be sent to GMC along with a medical report. The request is then reviewed by the Medical Advisory Board and upon receipt of its approval; GMC would send a guarantee of payment letter to the hospital. Medical expenses, incurred on medical evacuation, will be reimbursed on actual costs. Reimbursement of medical expenses will be based on the reasonable and customary costs of the place of medical evacuation.

## Challenges met and how to overcome them

Several teleconferences have been held among UNHCC, GMC Nairobi, GMC Head Office in Paris and the UN Insurance Section, New York in an attempt to find solutions to staff complaints. In the course of time, some complaints have been addressed while some cases still remain unsolved. A few of those challenges are cited below.

### • Focal person at the duty station

GMC failure to open an office or appoint a focal person in Addis Ababa has created inconveniences to staff. Whenever staff need explanations or clarifications on issues related to GMC, there is no one on site with whom they can talk. In some cases, their queries by email do not get due attention. Some staff do not even get that opportunity because of technology challenges

and language barriers.

This critical issue has been raised several times with GMC but has yet to be addressed.

- Delay in reimbursement of hospitalization and laboratory test bills

Some local hospitals and diagnostic laboratories have complaints regarding reimbursements by GMC for medical treatment given to members. Because of outstanding bills, staff are asked to pay cash upfront. In order to solve this problem, UNHCC has been conducting regular follow up with GMC to settle hospital bills without delay. Despite improvements hospitals like Hayat and BRASS have decided to cancel their agreements with GMC. Others are also threatening to follow suit if the situation does not improve.

- Wire transfers through CBE

At the initial stage when GMC was implemented, virtually all the wire transfers by GMC to the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in the name of members were never received. UNHCC, in collaboration with CBE, ECA Branch, tried to investigate where the bottleneck could be but to no avail. However, staff were advised to give their UNSSCA bank details to GMC, which later solved the problem.

- Payroll deductions in US dollars

At the initial stage of the outsourcing, GMC used to reflect the 20 per cent co-payments in f US dollars, contrary to the finance policy for locally recruited staff members. This was also negotiated by UNHCC and was converted to the currency in which salaries are paid.

- Loss on exchange rate fluctuations

Because of the time lapse between billing and salary deductions, the loss on exchange rate due to birr devaluation increases the actual amount that is deducted from staff through payroll. The loss cannot be avoided as long as the birr keeps losing value each month. Besides, it is very unlikely that billings and reimbursements can coincide in the same month due to the sheer amount of time it takes to process reimbursements.

In the mean time, UNHCC has been discussing this issue with the Finance Section and GMC but, so far, no solution has been reached. GMC has, however, recently informed UNHCC that it will raise the matter with its head office and get back to ECA.

- Currency of reimbursement

Given the local conditions of health facilities, many staff members take the opportunity of undergoing medical treatment while traveling abroad and incur expenses in foreign currency. However, their claims are reimbursed in the local currency of their duty station. The justification provided by GMC that reimbursements are made in the currency in which subscribers contribute to MIP, still remains a challenge.

- Maximum Annual MIP reimbursable limit

The maximum annual MIP reimbursable limit of any eligible patient in a calendar year is equivalent to four times the MIP reference salary in effect on 1 January. Currently, it is

about US\$ 6,000 for this duty station. It can neither be carried forward to the next year nor transferred to another family member. (It is US \$ 250,000 in the case of Van Breda)

This amount changes depending on revision of the GS salary scale at the duty station. The challenges when staff need to be evacuated for further treatment abroad requiring surgery or cancer therapy. GMC has to propose to the Controller an increase in the insurance limit above the current MIP limit.

Please note below the hospitals that have contracts with GMC:

1. St. Gebriel  
Bethel  
Bethezata  
International Cardiovascular Centre  
MCM Korean  
Girum  
Addis Cardiac  
St. Yared
2. Under negotiation  
ARSHO  
Addis Cardiac Hospital
3. Diagnostic laboratories that have contracts with GMC:  
International Clinical Laboratory  
Bethezata Laboratory  
Pioneer Diagnostic Centre
4. Hospitals that have cancelled their contracts with GMC:  
Hayat  
BRASS MCH  
ARSHO (currently under negotiation to reconsider)

Staff may consult the GMC website for their network providers.

# Fifth Joint Annual Meeting of AU and ECA Conference of Ministers

Andrew Allimadi, Communication Officer  
Information  
Communication Service

The whirlwind is over – for another year

The Fifth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance; and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; took place from March 22 – 27 this year.

There was a record attendance by ministers and senior officials this year and as usual it was a very busy conference for UN staff. What was not usual this year was the venue of the conference, which took place at the gleaming new conference facilities of the African Union Commission. The venue was inaugurated during the African Union conference in January and the main hall seats 2,500 delegates in an ultra-modern wifi-ready facility.

Organising conferences away from UNECA compound always has its own challenges, and the backroom staff work very hard to ensure that once the delegates arrive, everything runs smoothly. Issues to address include: Are there enough printers to reproduce all in-session documents on time? IS there sufficient office accommodation for all UN staff servicing the meetings and for visiting dignitaries: Does the venue have facilities for organizing an exhibition? Is there a functional cafeteria and what time



*Mr. Abdoulaye Jannet, UN Under Secretary – General, Executive Secretary, UNECA*



*Dr. Jean Ping, Chairperson, African Union Commission (AUC)*

does it close? Who will provide for the tea and coffee breaks?

And then of course there are the usual operational challenges wherever the venue may be. Will there be visa on arrival for participants? Do we have all their names and passport details? Have vehicles been provided for the ministers and other participants? Are there enough accommodation space in suitable hotels in town? Arrangements for paying DSA at the venue or at the banks? Are there enough interpreters or will some be recruited from

abroad? Where and when will conference badges be issued? Are the security arrangements adequate? Where are the press releases?

This was indeed a tireless effort, as recognized by the Executive Secretary of ECA in his message to all staff following the conference:

“The events could not unfold as smoothly as they did without your hard work, and I wish to commend you for your commitment in effectively addressing and overcoming the challenges encountered during the



preparations as well as in the course of the meetings,” Mr. Janneh wrote.

The theme of the conference, “Unleashing Africa’s Potential as a Pole of Global Growth,” is symptomatic of a resurgent continent that has advanced far away from its false image as a failing continent. In fact, the continent has become a magnet for global investments and has the potential of restoring balance to the global economy and becoming the engine for growth of the 21st century. Ministers clearly warmed to this theme and praised ECA and AUC for the detailed background papers prepared to guide their discussions.

The satisfaction of senior management is perhaps summed-up in the message sent by the Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Programme Management, Mr. Joseph Atta-Mensah, who sent the following message to staff:

Dear Colleagues:

I write to thank you all very much for your contribution to the success of the just ended CoM 2012. The commendable effort of everyone and I mean everyone is the reason for the success. I enjoyed working with each one of you in the preparation and execution of the conference.

Working with the OES, the boss, the DES, Yemi, Demba, Souad, Lade, Mestawet, Eskedar, Lydia, Aster Z, Aster Y and Emma was great. A big thank you to my colleagues in OPM; George, Pacome, Sofia, Brucktayet, Fekerte, Dinknesh, Hirut, Yordanos, Robbi, Ayalew, Talla, Hermela and Yeneabeba.

Emmanuel, Adam and Bart, I can not say it any better than PM Meles. He loved the issue paper. Mentioned it

about 20 times. Great work to all in EDND. A big thank you to all those who served on the drafting team, to many to mention their names.

Etienne, Marcel and all at PCMS, your patience with me and George on the ministerial statement, report of experts and resolutions was extraordinary. Charles, Wendosen and all in the print shop should be commended for getting the documents printed in record time.

Gerard, Yemescratch, Frehiwot, Yaya and team of CCU your are the most hard-working staff at ECA, responsible for bringing a large number of ministers to the conference.

Konstantin and his protocol team, Mulu and the Travel Unit, Tesfaye and Transport Unit, Nana Yaw Okai and his security team, Lashea and the procurement unit, Ali Todaro all deserve notable mention for their service beyond the call of duty. Yinka, Mercy, Andrew, Aloysius and the rest of the communication team were responsible for getting the great stories of the conference to the rest of the world. To commissioner Maxwell and his team at the AUC were fantastic. ECA-AUC collaboration for the conference was flawless.



*The new complex of the African Union Commission (AUC), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*



*The Air of Freedom*

I am extremely proud to be associated with each one of you. You all and others not copied on this email because I do not know their names ensured that the conference went without a hitch.

To all the Directors, thanks for the different roles you played in ensuring the success of the conference. I hope somebody will through a party for these hard working men and women of ECA. What about OES taking me on this offer?

Cheers, Joe

(Note from the editor: The staff are still waiting for the party!)

## **Miles Hastie,**

Legal Officer. The Office of Staff Legal Assistance in Addis Ababa

### ***What is OSLA?***

OSLA replaced the former UN Panel of Counsel. OSLA began operating on 1 July 2009. We are a group of lawyers based in Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Beirut, Geneva and New York who provide legal assistance to current and former staff members (including of the ECA), at all grades, addressing employment concerns. OSLA is an independent part of the UN Secretariat: it does not report to your managers or the UN Administration. Our funds and posts come directly from the General Assembly. We have a website here: <http://www.un.org/en/oaj/legalassist/>

### ***What kind of help does OSLA provide?***

OSLA provides you with information about your legal rights or obligations, advice on how best to resolve your problems, and, if appropriate, represent you before the UN courts (the UN Dispute Tribunal and UN Appeals Tribunal). Unfortunately, we can only help UN staff: we cannot assist your colleagues on service contracts, or interns, UNVs and similar arrangements. For more information, speak to us.

### ***What kind of issues does OSLA often address?***

Staff members and former staff members approach us about personality conflicts, harassment concerns, performance evaluations, contract non-renewals and terminations, disciplinary matters, pension or medical benefits, and the like.

If you have trouble understanding any of your rights or obligations under the UN Staff Regulations, Rules, or any administrative issuances, we can help. Not all disputes, such as personality conflicts, are legal disputes: but if we cannot help, we will try to find someone who can and refer you.

### ***What should I do if I have a problem?***

If you are unhappy with someone's decision or the way that (s) he has acted, you know who the person is, and you feel comfortable doing it—speak directly to him or her. It's direct, efficient and professional. If you are having trouble getting answers, you are not satisfied with the answers you receive, or you have trouble speaking with the person, we may be able to offer more advice. But please remember: there are deadlines for legal challenges which you are responsible to meet... If you do not come to us quickly, we may not be able to help you, even if you are right and the Administration is wrong (or you have asked for

something and the Administration has not responded). The most common deadline is 60 days to challenge an administrative decision. But deadlines can be as short as 14



*Miles Hastie,  
Legal Officer. The Office of Staff Legal Assistance in Addis Ababa*

days (for performance rebuttal). Speak to the decision-maker to get a clear answer, and then speak to us, promptly.

### ***How does OSLA work?***

If you just want brief advice, or do not know if you have a case, see me in my office (I have moved—see below), telephone me (+251 (0)115 443197, or x33197), or email me ([hastiem@un.org](mailto:hastiem@un.org)). Everything you say or write will be confidential. I will advise you on how to proceed and that advice will be confidential. If you know you want to launch a formal

challenge, fill out the forms here: <http://www.un.org/en/oaj/legalassist/forms.shtml> and send them to [osla@un.org](mailto:osla@un.org). OSLA will determine whether your case has a “reason-

able chance of success” in the formal (legal) system. If it does, we will represent you. If it does not, we will attempt to explain why and suggest, if possible, other means of resolving your concerns.

#### ***How do the UN courts operate?***

The UN courts address challenges to “administrative decisions” and disciplinary measures. To challenge an administrative decision, there is an initial step you usually must take: you must write to the Management Evaluation Unit (meu@un.org) within 60 days, describing the decision and why it was wrong (unlawful). If you are unhappy with the MEU response or have a disciplinary case, you proceed directly to the UN Dispute Tribunal with an “application”, within 90 days. A professional Judge will let you submit documents, may let you call or call witnesses provide written and oral arguments and then make a ruling. The Dispute Tribunal



can often reverse the decision and award financial compensation. The process may take 12 months. We can explain it all to you and may be able to provide you with assistance writing submissions or representing you in a legal process.

#### ***Where is OSLA in Addis?***

The OSLA Office in Addis Ababa moved on 8 March 2012. I am now located on the ground floor, beneath the walkway that runs between the New Building and the Library and Cafeteria. Feel free to stop by!

## **Video Conferences with Sub-Regional Offices**

### **Department of Administration (DOA)**

During the course of the year 2011 the Office of the Director of Administration (ODOA) convened several Video Conferences (VCs) with the five Sub-Regional Offices (SROs) namely, North Africa (Rabat), West Africa (Niamey), Central Africa (Yaoundé), East Africa (Kigali) and South Africa (Lusaka).

The VCs were led by the Director of Administration, Ms. Doreen Bongoy-Mawalla, with participation of Chiefs of Sections of the DoA on one side and SROs staff members on the other.

The purpose of the VCs was to assist our colleagues away from UNECA HQ on various administrative matters such as procurement, finances, human resources, IT, facilities management, security, health and others. It was also used to review and moni-

tor implementation of commitments relating to administrative issues, and to identify and tackle bottlenecks. The VCs were carried out around interactive discussions that allow in-depth and dynamic dialogues and they are expected to enable the SROs deliver on their enhanced roles and mandates.

The VCs with SROs will continue on the same note in 2012. In order to improve customer satisfaction, DoA is planning to conduct similar, albeit not through the VCs, interactive sessions with other substantive divisions of the UNECA.



# How does the Local Salary Survey Committee Work?

Aschalew Tulu, member LSSC, WHO

The Local Salary Survey Committee (LSSC) comprises representatives from UNECA (lead agency) and other UN agencies operating in Ethiopia. The committee works under rules defined by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and follows regulations of the methodology for conducting a survey of the best prevailing conditions of employment at duty stations other than headquarters and similar duty stations – survey methodology II. The rule can be accessed at the ICSC website for further reference.

As this is a continuing process, certain comparators are selected to serve as good parameters for determining the best prevailing conditions of employment and instituting changes which can only be made after a comprehensive salary survey.

The LSSC meets regularly to work on two major salary surveys: COMPREHENSIVE and INTERIM.

**COMPREHENSIVE** – As the name implies, this part consists of a major survey conducted every four to five years to track changes in current salaries of national staff members at GS and NO level. For this survey, preparation starts at least six months before the planned year of the survey. This is the best time to secure change of the major comparators used for the survey in order to achieve

a good survey result. A notification is sent to UNHQ to secure approval for the survey and the assignment of a survey specialist for the period of the final survey.

During the survey period, once the committee has completed preparations, assigned members alert the comparator institutions to receive the survey specialist who will be accompanied by the UNECA representative. During the visit, the survey specialist gathers the information required for the comprehensive survey. As this is a major survey, the data collection process from selected comparators is extensive. It is also at this time that a change of comparator is allowed.

Once the survey has been completed, the survey specialist is debriefed by LSSC members before departure from the duty station. Usually, it takes four to six months to receive the survey results.

**INTERIM** – This survey, conducted on a year or two-year basis, is intended to address changes that occur in-between comprehensive surveys. Like with comprehensive surveys, clearance must be secured from UNHQ to conduct an interim survey. The minimum period to conduct the interim survey is ONE year unless emergency situations warrant a shortening of this period. For interim surveys, the



*Aschalew Tulu, member LSSC, WHO*

existing comparators are assessed by LSSC members and the findings sent to UNHQ for further processing. The outcome also takes as much time as that of the comprehensive salary survey. The advantage of the interim survey is all about reflecting any changes made by the comparators since the last comprehensive salary survey as well as to maintain contact with the comparator institutions in-between periods of the comprehensive salary survey.

The direct involvement of all staff members in the selection of comparators as well as in the entire process through the UNECA representative as well as direct involvement in LSSC work is highly encouraged. It is always better to get the right information from the LSSC about the current status of any of these surveys at any given time than to use the rumor mill.

Thanks.

## ECA's subregional office in Southern Africa gets a new Director

ECA Press Release No. 30/2012



*Ms Beatrice Kiraso  
Director, ECA subregional office in South Africa (SRO-SA)*

Lusaka, 16 March 2012 (ECA) – Ms Beatrice Kiraso, the new Director appointed for ECA's subregional office in South Africa (SRO-SA) has reported for duties, substantively filling a position that has been vacant for close to two years.

An Economist by training, Ms Kiraso, a Ugandan national, brings considerable expertise and experience spanning over 20 years in finance, budgeting, procurement and regional integration.

She served as Deputy Secretary General for the East African Community (EAC), specifically appointed to fast track the integration process towards a political federation, a position she will have held for six years before joining ECA.

Ms Kiraso was an elected Member of Parliament in Uganda for ten years from 1996-2006 where she served in several capacities including as Chairperson of the Budget Committee and Chairperson of Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Previous to this, she

worked as Procurement Manager and Finance Officer at the then Government Central Purchasing Corporation and Ministry of Finance respectively.

She holds a Masters Degree in Public Policy from Harvard, Kennedy School of Government, USA and a Bachelors Degree in Economics from Makerere University in Uganda.

Her vision for ECA, in particular SRO-SA is to position it as a key resource centre that offers policy options. "In the coming 2-3 years, I believe ECA-SA will be at the centre of the tripartite agenda of SADC, COMESA and EAC, offering researched data to guide the process", she said. ECA will also spearhead a bench-marking exercise to establish the various capacities of the different agencies involved in integration in order to minimize duplication of efforts and get maximum value for money. "ECA should be a great resource, working with AU and regional communities in order to realise the goal of an African Free Trade Area" she added.

Ms Kiraso feels equipped for her new role drawing from her vast experience at the helm of the integration process at EAC, which is a customs union also implementing a common market while negotiating a monetary union and strengthening its political integration process. "It is through such initiatives at the sub-regional level that Africa will develop its own internal capacity to enhance production, competitiveness, value addition and employment creation as well as become one large market and investment zone."

Welcomed by SRO-SA staff, Ms Kiraso expressed appreciation to Mr Sizo Mhlanga who held forte as the Officer-in-Charge of the Office for a supportive and helpful hand towards her transition from EAC to ECA.

Member countries of SRO-SA include: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

## A reviving message on Work Ethics

Tamra Tekeste

Meeting Service Assistant DOA/PCMS/CCU

Greetings! As the saying goes “Some things are easier said than done” .....Well I personally believe that it applies to the story that I am planning to share with you here-under. I am saying this because I believe that all of us know or have at least heard about the terminology work ethics somewhere somehow, but when it comes to applying it into the workforce well I must say that’s where the challenges lie or in other words practicing it certainly requires knowledge.

Thus, according to encyclopedic references work ethic is defined as a set of values based on hard work and diligence. It is said to be a belief in the moral benefit of work and its ability to enhance character. Thus, a work ethic may include being reliable, having initiative, or pursuing new skills. Workers exhibiting a good work-ethic in theory should be selected for better positions, more responsibility and ultimately promotion.

So, the concept of work ethics can simply be defined as sets of formal and informal standards of conduct that people use to guide their behavior at work. These standards are partly based on core values such as honesty, respect, and trust.

Hence, the huge question would be how to apply it or at least create awareness of it in the workforce. I know for a fact that all of us here employees of the UN truly count as we are all working together as a team to meet with the organization’s

goals. Thus, I believe that we should work on exchanging salutations or greetings in the morning and evening when we leave office. It’s also important to look-out on our personal hygiene as it is crucial to be accepted in our working environments. We should look presentable and be dressed and groomed appropriately. It is also very important to know how to communicate with our colleagues and with our bosses that is the languages that we should use. It’s also crucial to learn how to manage emotions in the workforce and try to solve conflicts among colleagues as much professional as possible.

In fact, I would suggest that the Staff Union should give forums or training sessions on all of the aforementioned topics that is on how to develop work ethics to all of us on a monthly basis.

Because unless and otherwise we practice work ethics, we may be regarded as failing to provide fair value for the wage the employer is paying us and chances are that we won’t be promoted or placed in positions of greater responsibility.

Secondly, In order to truly understand the concept of “unity in diversity” as it is one of the core values of the UN system, I believe that there should be a get-together event organized by the Staff Union, let’s say every six months preferably on Friday afternoons so as to share knowledge and experiences per-



*Tamra Tekeste  
Meeting Service Assistant  
DOA/PCMS/CCU*

taining to different countries and nationalities working in the UN.

Let’s always put in mind that “Knowledge is power” so I vehemently believe that exchanging facts among staffs of different nationalities and culture will truly enable each and every one of us to achieving the goals of our commission.

Thus, this get-together event will create strong relationship among UN staff of different nationalities or it will build up a melting pot environment, that will enable us to have a positive attitude toward our bosses and colleagues which will intern enhance our level of productivity in our daily tasks. It will be a medium for us to exchange view points on how to manage emotions in the workplace, use problem solving and critical thinking that will benefit us and mostly our organization.

To cap it all up, I strongly believe that all this will foster a more satisfying and productive working environment and will intern enable us to build and sustain our association’s reputation within the communities in which we operate.



## Discussion held between GMC and UNECA Staff Representatives lead by Kidist Belayneh, Vice Chair, UNECA Staff Council.

The Staff Union has been approached by several staff members some with specific problems and others with general concerns on the functioning of GMC and its effectiveness to respond to the staff medical needs. Taking this into account the staff Union organized a meeting with those staff who are directly responsible for the processing of staff medical bills as well as those who are involved at the policy decision level. Furthermore, a teleconferencing with the Nairobi office of GMC took place and a question and answer session was conducted, the results of all the communications held are indicated below to give a clear picture of the situation on the

questions and concerns brought to the attention of the Council. The communication held and the findings are not exhaustive and staff members are welcome to communicate directly with GMC or bring their concerns to the Staff Union.

Discussions and exchange of information held with GMC, Nairobi by the UNECA Staff Union Representatives first via telephone conference followed by e-mail confirmation are as follows:

UNECA staff representative: This is in reference to our telephone conference of this morning. I thank you very much for your briefing and

clarification on several issues which are of concern to ECA staff. I believe it will be helpful if you would kindly re-confirm the points we discussed over the phone as follows:

### **UNECA query no. 1. billing:**

Recovery of advanced co-payment from staff members' salaries has been a point of confusion. In order to clarify this confusion and provide explanation of benefit and/or statement it is essential to send bills to staff members prior to recovery by finance. For example, some recent cases of staff members have not received the statement before and after recovery.

The view point of Finance on recovery of advance co-payment is that, their recovery spread sheet only provides names, index number, and amount to be recovered and claim number without any further information. It would therefore, be appreciated if information such as the name of the provider, currency used and the detail of services



Photo courtesy of International Women's Day

*ECA Staff being served by GMC. Do all staff understand their rights and obligations?*

provided such as laboratory and general check up etc . would be included. This will help Finance to provide information when they are approached by staff members.

## **HENNER-GMC response**

It is our standard procedure to send a refund statement also known as “Explanation of benefits statement” with every payment made to a member or to a provider, for information, the day after a statement is processed. This is sent by email or by post based on the member’s choice.

## **Suggested action points**

All members are encouraged to provide Henner-GMC with their email addresses to receive the refund statements on time. Members can also view their statements on their personalized profile at the dedicated website, [www.henner.com/un/mip](http://www.henner.com/un/mip). In cases where the statement is not received, members should contact Henner-GMC to re-issue the statements for verification.

**UNECA query no. 2:** statements downloaded from the GMC website by the Finance section on recov-

ery of advanced co-payment from individual staff members does not give details except for names, index number, amount to be recovered and claim number, without any further information. It would therefore be appreciated if better detailed information such as the name of the provider, currency used and the details of services provided such as laboratory and general check up are included without jeopardizing the confidentiality of the claim process. This will help Finance to provide information when they are approached by staff members

## **HENNER-GMC RESPONSE**

The co-pay files issued to the Finance section of every UN mission have been designed to provide only the necessary finance information. Due to reasons of confidentiality Henner-GMC is not authorized to provide further details. However, these files provide the member’s name and index, the statement or claim number which is the key reference, the amount of co-pay and the name of the provider of the treatment.

## **Suggested action points**

Members with queries should check their individual refund statements with the statement number obtained from finance as a reference to obtain further details, or contact Henner -GMC for clarification

**UNECA query no. 3.** - Verification: We would like to stress that GMC should verify recovery in local currency prior to sending the statement and/or bill to Finance. Is there any action taken by GMC regarding this process? If not, what is going to be done? This information is essential and it has to be transmitted to the staff by the Staff Union and we would be grateful for your clear response.

## **HENNER-GMC response**

Henner-GMC clarifies that the currency of recovery of co-pay depends on the currency of payment to the provider, where a provider bills GMC and demands payment in different currencies. For example, UNHCC clinic bills GMC in ETB yet the clinic is paid in US\$. In this instance, the co-pay portion will be shown in US\$, i.e. the currency of payment. The co-pay files for all missions have been modified

and now display the co-pay portions in both local currency and foreign currency if needed, for easy application by the local ECA finance units.

## **Suggested action points**

Members can access the information on currency paid on their statements and the exchange rates used for further confirmation from their refund statements to confirm what is being recov-



Photo courtesy of International Women's Day

*The Staff Union believes that staff need a better explanation from GMC on several medical issues in particular on reimbursement*

ered from salary.

**UNECA query no. 4.** - Rescheduling the recovery of advance co-payment. The current procedure of 100 per cent payment by staff has become a burden on the day to day life of staff members. The alternative procedure, which was applied long ago by ECA, but does not exist right now, is that any payment that exceeds 40 per cent of the staff's salary should not be applied. Instead it should be rescheduled on installment basis. For this policy to be implemented, finance would like to receive the accord of GMC. As this does not affect in any way the GMC, we would appreciate your cooperation also in this matter.

## **HENNER-GMC response**

Henner-GMC has no jurisdiction over members' payroll deductions. The local finance section can agree on staggering co-pay deductions for members affected by huge deductions.

## **Suggested action points**

ECA finance to make a decision in this regard.

**UNECA query no. 5.** - Direct billing with local hospitals: Some hospitals are not accepting the direct billing system due to lack of timely payment by other agencies. This situation has a negative effect on ECA which pays the bill on time. The Staff Union therefore, would like to know the remedy for this problem.

## **HENNER-GMC response**

Hayat Hospital is no longer in the GMC network due to non-payment of co-pay by members from other agencies. GMC is striving to negotiate with

this provider to reopen the account.

## **Suggested action points**

Members can continue accessing services with other providers currently in the medical network.

**UNECA query no. 6.** Focal person at the duty station: Failure by GMC to open an office or appoint a focal person in Addis Ababa has created inconveniences to staff. Whenever staff need explanations or clarifications on issues related to GMC, there is no one on site with whom they can talk. In some cases, their queries by email do not get due attention. Some staff do not even get that opportunity because of tech-

nology limit and language barriers. This critical issue has been raised several times with GMC, UNHCC and the Union but has yet to be addressed. The Staff Union therefore would like to see its implementation as soon as possible. Likewise, we request that GMC should provide training on what the statement of benefits is all about. This will also help in processing claims by staff. The current experience is for pertinent information staff needs to go to the GMC website. There are very many staff members who are not capable of searching through the web. The Staff Union hopes that is sufficient justification for having a focal person on the spot.

## **HENNER-GMC response**

Henner-GMC confirms that this is not possible at the moment because of the critical size of the team required. Each GMC team is made of several competencies which enable

it to ensure continuous service in compliance with the standards of performance requested by UNHQ. GMC has a regional rather than a local scope, with two offices based in Africa. This regional scope makes for maintaining good quality service, close proximity and competitive administration fees.

## **Suggested action points**

GMC will increase its visits to Ethiopia to follow up on issues facing members during the period that we do not have a focal person on the ground. Henner-GMC will also remind members about the procedure for accessing the website and understanding the explanation of benefits statements in the newsletter.

## **UNECA query no.**

**7 Exchange rate fluctuation:** The outstanding issue of loss on exchange rate fluctuations is causing great concern due to the loss that staff incurs in the process. What kind of a remedy does GMC offer to this problem? This is happening due to the time gap between billing and salary deduction. Please let us know what action could be taken to correct the situation.

## **HENNER-GMC response**

The exchange rate applied by GMC for providers is the prevailing UN rate on the day of payment. However, UNHQ authorized the local office to deduct from members based on the historical rate (as per our meeting dated 28/06/2011).

## **Suggested action points**

UNECA Finance to confirm to Staff Union directly if this is taken into account.



## Setotaw Yimame, Staff Representative United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

It is nice meeting you and thank you for accepting to be interviewed by the Staff Voice magazine. I enjoy meeting and talking with Staff Representatives of the different United System Organizations stationed here in Addis Ababa. There is so much to discuss and to learn from each other. First let me explain to you briefly the purpose of the magazine, which is the first of its kind initiated by the ECA Staff Union. It is mainly to enhance the collaboration between staff and management in providing the best services possible to the UN Members States who are the clients. This is primarily through dialogue, negotiation and working together, each side assuming its own responsibilities and coming up with useful concrete results.

The first issue of the Staff Voice has been printed and distributed here in Addis Ababa to all International Organizations, Embassies, the African Union (AU), as well as to ECA Sub-regional Offices and to all UN Organizations, including Regional Economic Commissions. Your personal copy was delivered to your office. The second issue is now in the pipe line for which you are being interviewed.

### **Q1. How many staff members are there in the Addis Ababa Office?**

SY: There are 352 staff members both professional and general services including those in the field.

### **Q2. How long have you been a staff representative?**

SY: I have been here for two years. There will be another election which is on the processes. In the last two years the focus was 2008,

2009, 2010 and 2011. There was a global UNICEF moral survey. Each representative in their countries were requested to find out the survey and improve the situation. Our responsibility was to implement the result of the survey. One of the recommended issues was to improve staff and management relations for the last two years we have a very good relation between staff and management. There are Joint Consultative Committee committees where staff and management are represented. They report to the Deputy Rep, the HR manager as well as to the operational manager. We met quarterly and discussed management issues. One action point was decided, we take it to UNICEF CMT, chaired by the Representative. Here the section chiefs and Staff Associations are represented to make the participation broader. 15 elected staff participated.

The JCC is chaired alternatively by the staff and management. This approach has enabled the relations to function smoothly. We call quarterly staff meetings and everything is transparent.

Challenges: We have 7 field offices and they all have their own staff representatives with whom we communicate on regular basis. We hold yearly meetings with some of the offices and with others twice a year as it becomes expensive to have it for all on yearly basis. Chief of Field Operations and staff representatives meet and discuss issues at the field level. On professional development, career development, is followed by the career development committee and staff is represented. We have to look into the fairness of



*Setotaw Yimame, Staff Representative  
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)*

the whole system. Every Friday, we also have social events whereby staff meets. This meeting is hosted every month in each floor of the UNICEF office. Annually we have staff family outing every year. Here the management and staff contribute to organize the event. This is also done at the field level and all this effort is to create a healthy working environment between staff and management.

The Staff Constitution was amended last year. Staff agreed that all staff members are members of the Staff Association. Originally, we have Staff Association in Nairobi and New York. They meet annually. The next meeting which includes 22 country offices and their staff representative will meet in South Africa.

### **Q3. What are the major concerns of UNICEF staff in Ethiopia?**

SY: One is on the usual salary issue because of the inflation and devaluation in abstract terms there was salary increase but does not mean much. Salary is not pegged to the dollar or the European currency and this has been brought to the attention of the

UNICEF headquarters. We held meetings with other staff unions and the response was unless the terms of ICSC are changed there isn't much that could be done. This is a very serious issue.

**Q4. Is there a system whereby you coordinate your activities with other organization's staff representatives?**

SY: Not regularly. The only issue that brought us together was the salary issue. It is very important to get together with the staff representatives in Addis Ababa. To do this we need a defined Terms of Reference.

**Q5. What are the areas that staff reps in Addis Ababa focus and coordinate their action towards the**

**benefit and entitlements of staff?**

SY: Only the salary issue.

**Q6. Is there an established practice and/or mechanism whereby staff reps meet with management? If so how often?**

SY: There are several committees which includes among others training and career development. Recently the global 2011 staff survey was organized on line. There were 8 to 10 members to look critically in each question to see what needed to be improved. The management was pro actively involved. Discussions with management were held in the areas of local promotion, classification, training on how we should train our staff. This is done by the Staff association and discussed with management. In the CMT meet-

ing, HR reports and raises that one because it is a career issue. Recently there were policies of guidelines for social activities in consultation with management. Staff Association organized a collected towards the drought in the Horn of Africa and over all Birr 894,000 was collected and donated to the Ethiopian Red Cross Society.

**Q7. Are there any other issues you would like to raise at this point?**

The issue that I would like to raise is the One UN policy should also apply to bring together the staff associations as well and not only the management.

*Interview by Seble Demeke*



UNICEF Staff gathering

# A PEOPLE-DRIVEN UNION, BUT HOW?

Denis Atabong, Staff Representative, African Union (AU)

### THE QUESTION

In what ways can the African Union be said to be driven by the peoples of Africa? What voice do ordinary Africans have in the decisions of the Union? How can ordinary Africans participate in shaping the Union? These questions are necessary, because it would be too much of an assumption to say that since decisions at the African Union level are taken by individuals representing their countries, some of whom have been elected, their decisions therefore reflect the wishes of their people or do represent those wishes.

### THE AFRICAN UNION WORKING HARD FOR THE PEOPLE

Of course, popular participation is much more effective and easier at national level than at the African Union level. Within the nation, civil society organisations, political parties, the private sector, media groups, and other non-state actors all help, to some extent, to mitigate the actions of politicians and give decisions a more people-oriented dimension. This is severely restricted at the African Union level, where it is principally politicians who are making decisions.

From the range of activities undertaken by the African Union, it is unmistakably clear that the African Union is doing a lot for the people, even if at this moment, many people

do not yet see it. The Union is frantically dealing with infrastructure and energy, social affairs, peace and security, agriculture, communication, health, and what is more, unifying and harmonizing policies across the continent. The integration agenda in itself is a commendable idea, and many regions are forging better and closer trade links amongst their citizens. Common principles of action now bind African countries, and gradually peace and development are becoming a reality, even if much still has to be done. All of this can only benefit the people. Even if there are some who still doubt the usefulness of the Union, we should tell them that there is a planting season and a harvesting season. It will not be too long before the grassroots also begin to harvest the fruits of the Union.

The issue of popular participation has been on many minds since the creation of the OAU. The first remarkable attempt at concretising the issue of popular participation was the International Conference on Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, Arusha, 1990. It gave birth to the African Charter on Popular Participation. This was a rare collaborative effort between African people's organizations, African governments, non-governmental organizations and

the United Nations agencies, in the search for a collective understanding of the role of popular participation in the development and transformation of Africa. It was an in-depth conference which examined popular participation at all levels and laid down some indicators by which to assess progress in this respect.

The AU has also made some efforts in this direction, notably through ECOSOCC, the Youth Charter and the Charter for Democracy and Good Governance. The African Union recognizes the civil society and non-governmental actors through the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, ECOSOC's role, among others, is to forge partnerships between governments and all segments of the civil society; to promote the participation of African Civil Society in the implementation of the policies and programmes of the Union, and promote and defend a culture of good governance, democratic principles and institutions, them that there is a planting season and a harvesting season. It will not be too long before the grassroots also begin to harvest the fruits of the Union. recognizes the civil society and non-governmental actors through the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, ECOSOC's role, among others, is to forge partnerships between governments and all segments of the





## WORKING TOWARDS POPULAR PARTICIPATION



civil society; to promote the participation of African Civil Society in the implementation of the policies and programmes of the Union, and promote and defend a culture of good governance, democratic principles and institutions,

ECOSOC does not participate in the decision-making process. Even as an advisory body, it does not see any texts before they are adopted, and has not been known to stand up for any of the shortcomings noted in the various AU protocols. It stands aside of Union processes! Decision-making in the Union is still something entirely reserved to politicians, exactly the mistake that was made in all African countries in the first fifty (50) years of independence. That mistake led to the collapse of almost all African coun-

tries. We are repeating the same mistake at Union level today!

### **GOOD, BUT MORE CAN BE DONE**

All of these efforts are praise worthy, but fall short of the role that the ultimate stakeholders of the Union, the people, should play. The question of who owns the African Union and what ownership implies must be thoroughly examined. The people have, so far, not been consulted on any Union issue whatever, be it by referendum or any other method. The envisaged participation seems to be a favour made to the people by their leaders than a recognition of the absolute right of the people to shape their own destiny. The conception of the Union as an inter-governmental institution rather than an African Peoples'

Organisation has helped to severely weaken the role assigned to the people by the architects of the Union. Politicians are only too happy to keep thinking of the Union as an inter-governmental institution! Almost every protocol, be it the one establishing the Court or the Peace and Security Council, is crafted as if intended only for state actors, with the damage that while politicians do as they like, the people have very little means of either laying their problems on the agenda of the Union or changing its decisions. The role assigned to the people must be commensurate to the position of the people as the owners, the beneficiaries of the Union and the ultimate arbiter of Union actions.

We fully recognize that it is not practical to consult the people on every

issue. That is not what we are demanding. The idea is that even when the people are not consulted, the people should always have the possibility to disagree and to challenge what the leaders have done in their name. Ownership by the people must be seen within this context of letting the people finally decide whether a decision of the Union stands or falls.

Consequently, the efforts towards popular participation do not necessarily mean that the Union is people-driven. To be people-driven, we must see the participation of the people in its processes; we should see the consultation of the people in decision-making; we should see popular enthusiasm in its activities; to be people driven, we must see real possibilities for the people to challenge and even overturn the decisions they disagree with. The Union should not simply be perceived as a thing for

Heads of State,  
Government  
officials and  
AU staff, or as a  
gift of African  
leaders to their

ignorant people. The people should drive the Union, not that it should be driven by the leaders to the people. How is the Union opening up for the people to get involved in what it is doing? How does it ensure that the people for whom it is working can override its decisions or overturn them? How does it account to the people, the true owners of the Union?

Whatever is the case, the Union needs to prove that it seriously considers the people as the owners of the Union, the beneficiaries of the Union, the sponsors of the Union and finally as the ultimate stakeholders thereof. This cannot be simply a slogan, but must be

translated into meaningful participation.

## WHY THE ISSUE IS IMPORTANT

The place of the people is important in the Union and all its instruments because it has become a known fact today that the people lose control of their leaders as soon as elections are over. Therefore we cannot conclude that because the people chose the leaders, the leaders necessarily represent the people. All over the world, the people are protesting and revolting against their elected leaders; asking a greater say in the decision-making process. We have also noticed that institutions tend to drift away from their original agenda with time. It is only the participation of the people that can bring institutions and their leaders back on track. Even more pertinent is the fact that the

people are the ones putting down the money to enable the institutions work. The fact that politicians collect and pay the money to the African Union in the name of the state changes nothing in this.

The checks and balances, between the institutions, if any, cannot replace the role of the people themselves. The people must constitute themselves into the watchdogs of what their leaders are doing. It is real human beings in flesh and blood that matter after everything is said and done; it is real human beings who bear the brunt of wrong policies; who are killed in conflicts; who starve to death; who are rendered homeless; who are displaced; who are denied

justice; who suffer untold violations and abuses. They must be given the right to correct what is wrong in the actions of their politicians.

## SOME WAYS TO GET THE PEOPLE INVOLVED

1. Establish a people-approval rating system: We can establish a system by which ordinary African citizens can rate the African Union, by either showing their approval or disapproval, especially on different positions taken by the African Union on peace and security issues. This can be done through the internet and/or through opinion polls using different media. Whichever system is used, what matters is to find a way by which to get a feedback from African citizens. This will permit the African Union to at least know how the people for whom it says it is working feel about its actions. On the other hand, the people would have some satisfaction that by showing their approval or disapproval, they can orient the actions of the Union.

2. Empower the people through the various protocols to challenge the decisions of Union: When all is said and done, politicians may always just do what they want. The only last possibility left for the people in such circumstances is to be able to oppose such actions of the Union in a competent court of law. If the people have no way of making an input into the decision-making process, they should be able to oppose the decisions themselves! Unfortunately, the people are extremely minimized in the various AU protocols, which are written

with very little consideration for non-state actors. It should be one of the functions of ECOSOCC to fight to give non-state actors a greater say in these protocols, especially the right to challenge AU actions in court. The lone court available currently is the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, whose protocol also nearly excludes non-state actors from accessing the court. The empowering of the people would require a revision of these protocols and other instruments in which the people were previously marginalized.

3. Diversify the composition of the decision-making organs of the Union: All decisions going up to the AU Assembly are debated

only by politicians at the level of the Permanent Representatives Committee. This is what all African countries went through in the first fifty years of independence, with the attendant disaster. If we are to have other opinions other than those of politicians going up to the Assembly, the composition of this organ needs to be diversified. We can include in it experts, the civil society and the private sector. The formula for this diversification can be worked out.

4. Rotation of the leadership of the African Union Commission: What if the leadership of the African Union Commission rotates between the private sector and politicians? So far it has gone

only to politicians. Shouldn't we give ourselves all the latitude to experiment which option better drives the continent? It would be quite interesting to see the difference in the approaches and which of the options delivers better. At least, it would be a way to let the non-political side of Africa show its worth.

5. Involve the African public in AU Summits: Even as a token, the first day of the Summit may be devoted to popular participation with dance and other activities from the host country. This is only a token action, but it has the effect of bringing the people closer.



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Fax: 0116615522



# International Women's Day Celebration

Remarks by Mulutsega Legesse,  
Vice-President of the Executive  
Committee of UNECA Staff Union

Dear Colleagues and invited guests,

On behalf of the UN family in Ethiopia, I would like to say Happy Women's day and extend a warm welcome to all staff members present here to celebrate this historic day.

International women's day has been observed since the early days of the 1990s. The continued women's oppression and inequalities were driving women to become more vocal and active in campaigning for change. Then in 1908 15, 000 women marched through New York

City demanding Shorter hours, better pay and voting rights. It is the fruits of such revolution that made it possible for us to enjoy today's gender equality. Now it is our turn to continue the revolution for our daughters to enjoy more freedom and equality.

Deputy Executive Secretary, Mr. Abdlla Hamdok expressing his view on gender equality during the International Women's Day Celebration

However, Gender-based discrimination shadows all cultures, and is often manifested in the laws, policies, and practices of institutions. For example, in many countries women are not afforded the same inheritance rights and property rights as men, nor are they allowed to testify in court,

even where constitutional guarantees provide for equality and laws protect women's rights, discriminatory practices by law enforcement and security services. Moreover, courts, lawyers and social services can serve as major obstacles to women's security and access to justice. Customary and traditional norms and practices, including informal justice mechanism may perpetuate gross violations of the rights of women and this may also underpin gender discrimination in work places.

It will not be totally wrong to say, that despite many UN declarations and conventions, several decades have passed and the strong policy statements have been ineffective and the desired goal of 50 percent women at the UN system wide level has not yet been achieved. The current picture in ECA is such that women occupy only 36% in higher and professional level. Now the question is every year we celebrate the International Women's Day, the 8th of March, how should we go about bringing a tangible change to improve the status of the advancement of women in the Secretariat.



*Mulutsega Legesse,  
Vice-President of the Executive Committee of UNECA Staff Union*







**Staff enjoying the International Women's Day Celebration at the ECA compound**



**One of the best music moments during the celebration**



I believe that:

1. There is a need to a new human resources management approach which will take the situation into account;
2. A new accountability and responsibility system which will contribute to increase Secretariat effectiveness in increasing the status of women and hence achieve the long standing policies for the gender equity system wide.

It is in this context that, as women employees of the United Nations, through the staff union, wish to take this opportunity to air out some of the concerns and recommendations following internal consultations of the female staff members of ECA.

## **Support to higher education for female staff**

- We need an education fund for women. “Female Higher Education”, “Short Term-Training at Higher Level Standard”, should be considered for Female Staff, at any age, as long as they are active Staff Members, and servicing the UN. Just to point out the recent training opportunity, from India, while the consideration of a high rate of female is appreciated, the age limit that was put forward had disqualified many women who had devoted their time to the organization and executing family obligation. The requirement for any organization to serve after receiving training is two to five years. The age limit requirement that was put forward with this particular announcement did not take into account the Commission’s training rules and did not factor

staff with long years of dedicated service. As learning is a continuous process, we believe that the organization will benefit from the service of those with long years of experience. Therefore, an equal opportunity should be extended without age limit as long as the staff serves the organization for two to five years after the training.

## **Gender mainstreaming as a key strategy in our work**

- We need to urgently work towards gender parity in recruitment and retention of staff. One “threat” from misguided approaches to gender mainstreaming is the tendency for gender issues and women to become invisible again. This is due to a misguided notion that mainstreaming means that it is no longer necessary to refer explicitly to women or men, their different needs and priorities, or the different impacts that programs may have on them. This potential return to gender blindness is reinforced by the belief in some quarters that we have already “arrived” in an era of gender awareness.

## **Female staff welfare - Need for a gender committee**

- Committee to deal with female staff grievances – The current gender committee is male dominated and this is acting as a deterrent to female colleagues with concerns of all types of harassment to lodge in their complaints. Complaints. It is suggested that a balanced committee should be constituted to deal with such issues and concerns;

## **Work Life Balance and challenges in the use of flexi times**

- You will agree with me that today the role of a woman is more fundamental than it has ever been. Women play a crucial role in the society, from raising a family to achieving sustainable social and economic development. Hence, the need for a work life balance does not only promote a positive work environment at the United Nations but also contributes towards empowerment of women from a wide perspective.
- It has also come to the knowledge of the staff union that staff is finding it difficult to use flexi-time. The challenges are not necessarily due to the regulations of the UN but rather the attitude towards those who seek to utilize this to enhance their work time. Flexi time should be used as a tool to deliver high quality timely results to clients, while also helping staff achieve balance in their work and personal lives. Raising awareness on flexible working arrangement among managers and staff will eliminate the problem.

It is our sincere hope that the management will consider these concerns and provide a more gender sensitive working environment for our female colleagues as we all work towards supporting the process of gender and women’s empowerment in Africa.

On behalf of the staff union and all the staff of UNECA, we commit to working together for the welfare of our staff and seeking for ways to deliver better on our mandate.

Happy celebrations for International women’s day.



# What is CCISUA?

CCISUA — the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System — is a federation composed of UN system staff unions and associations committed to an atmosphere of constructive co-operation to provide equitable and effective representation of staff at all levels. CCISUA primarily represents their interests in inter-agency bodies that make decisions and recommendations on conditions of service.

## Objectives

1. To promote the common interests of international civil servants of all categories whose staff unions/associations are members of CCISUA;
2. To provide a means for staff representative bodies with common concerns to consult with one another both formally and informally with a view to reaching consensus on issues affecting conditions of service and staff welfare;
3. To permit those staff unions, associations, and other staff representative bodies of the system to address advisory and decision-making bodies with a

united voice and in particular to participate actively in the work of ICSC, HR Network, HLCM, CEB, the Pension Board, the Administrative Tribunals and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly.

4. To assist each other in finding solutions to common problems and in monitoring the implementation of decisions affecting the staff both at Headquarters duty stations and offices away from headquarters.
5. To co-operate with other staff groupings with a view to formally achieve common positions on matters affecting staff welfare;
6. To adhere to the spirit of solidarity and support for each member whenever needed.

## What is a staff union?

A union is a group of workers who form an organization to:

- Gain more respect on the job,
- Gain better wages and benefits or maintain them.
- Establish more flexible policies to accommodate work and family needs,

- Counterbalance the unchecked authority of managers, and
- Speak out to improve the quality of working conditions and lives.

Under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Staff Regulations, (8.1 and 8.2) staff representative bodies are authorized to initiate proposals on issues concerning staff welfare and working conditions, general conditions of life and other personnel policies. Staff-management consultative mechanisms are also established at the local and system-wide Secretariat level.

Managers are not allowed to discriminate against or fire workers for choosing to be active in the union. However, there are infractions of this rule and staff representatives do experience subtle or overt harassment and intimidation for their activities, especially when taking time off to attend meetings or when supporting unpopular positions on serious issues. Representatives are working towards strengthening the penalties for managers who resort to such tactics.

A wider range of people than before is becoming active in unions today. Staff members at all levels, both men and women, are supporting the work of the staff union. Unfortunately, this

UN	Staff	Council	(NewYork)
UNOG	Staff	Coordinating Council	(Geneva)
Field	Staff	Union	(Jerusalem)
ESCWA	Staff	Council	(Beirut)
UNOV	Staff	Council	(Vienna)
ECLAC	Staff	Council	(Santiago)
UNON	Staff	Council	(Nairobi)
ESCAP	Staff	Council	(Bangkok)
ECA	Staff	Council	(Addis)
ICTY	Staff	Council	(TheHague)
UNICTR	Staff	Council	(Arusha)
UNU	Staff	Council	(Tokyo)
UNHCR	Staff	Council	(Geneva)
UNICEF Global	Staff	Association	(NewYork)
International	Staff	Association of	UNESCO (Paris)
International Labour Office	Staff	Union	(Geneva)

is still not enough and more effort should be made by staff to confirm their support of their elected representatives in paying their monthly dues and thus present a front of solidarity to the management.

Staff representatives are leading the campaign to establish and improve policies that address both the work and life needs of staff members. With the administration, for example, staff representatives played an integral role in the establishment of

current policies on flexible working hours, family leave and paternity leave. Your representatives have also been able to partially stop the erosion of wages and benefits. They are continuing to do so and your support is primordial.

## WHAT IS FICSA

### The Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA)

Founded in Paris in 1952, FICSA is a federated group of 29 staff associations/unions from organizations belonging to the United Nations common system. Nine staff associations/unions outside the common system have associate status. Fifteen staff associations/unions are consultative members and twenty-five Federations of United Nations Staff Associations (FUNSA) are observers. The diversity of membership ensures that all staff in the field and at headquarters duty stations have the opportunity to exchange views and information about conditions of service; seek the Federation's assistance and support when difficulties arise; and organize collective action.

### Aims

FICSA fosters the development of the international civil service in accordance with the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter and the constitutions of the specialized agencies. The Federation:

- Defends staff rights
- Ensures that equitable conditions of service for all common system staff are maintained at a level which will ensure the recruitment and retention of the most

qualified people

- Contributes to building a positive image of the international civil service

### Council and Offices

A Council of member association/union representatives meets annually to define the Federation's policy. Each year the Council elects an Executive Committee, (consisting of a President, General Secretary, Treasurer and four members) and four regional representatives who are responsible respectively for implementing the Federation's policies and representing the Federation.

The Executive Committee draws up the annual programme of work, based on the decisions and recommendations adopted by Council. Standing committees specialize in General Service Questions, Professional Salaries and Allowances, Conditions of Service in the Field, Social Security/Occupational Health and Safety, Staff-Management Relations, Human Resources Management and Legal Questions.

The Secretariat in Geneva has four staff members. The New York Liaison Office, which maintains contacts with the representatives of the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York, has two staff members.

### Actions

FICSA's annual and ongoing programmes of work include the following activities:

- Representing the interests of international civil servants in inter-agency bodies and legislative organs of the common system
- Coordinating activities at the local level and exchanging information on conditions of service
- Informing all staff on issues affecting their conditions of service
- Organizing training seminars, workshops and working groups on specific aspects of conditions of service
- Advising member associations/unions on staff-management relations
- Producing position papers on the technical aspects of conditions of service
- Coordinating industrial action
- Supporting the use of the appeal process (internal appeals and Administrative Tribunals) in cases of non-observance of terms of appointment
- Formulating strategies to prevent violations of rights
- Participating in cost-of-living surveys that determine post adjustment and salary scales
- Advocating staff positions with Member States representatives
- Providing guidelines on how staff associations should deal with organizational reform

Source: [www.ficsa.org](http://www.ficsa.org)

## The UN's new performance appraisal tool "E-Performance" has launched

Posted: Monday, 2 April 2012, New York

| Author: DM



The Secretariat has just launched Inspira "E-Performance", a new performance management e-tool which will replace ePAS.

For the performance cycle April 2012 - March 2013, staff in ALL duty stations will be required to initiate their annual work plans in Inspira E-Performance. The steps in ePerformance are fundamentally the same as ePAS.

The tool can be accessed through **inspira.un.org**. To help you access and navigate E-Performance, attached is a user-friendly 3-page

### "Quick Guide" and a detailed handbook.

Users will also benefit from a series of training tools and aids that will be released to all duty stations shortly. Additionally, through a network of performance management Focal Points, staff briefings and trainings are underway in different duty stations.

Meanwhile, the ePAS system will be closed down on 31 December 2012. Please make sure you complete all

of your outstanding documents in ePAS by the end of this year as you will no longer have access to that system. We will keep you informed on the archiving plans for ePAS, effective 1 January 2013.

Should you need any further assistance, please feel free to contact your Human Resources/ Executive Office or the OHRM Performance Management team via **performancemanagement@un.org**.

*E-performance Handbook*

## Your feed back on how to improve the SVM will make a difference

"Once again, I offer my sincere congratulations to the staff union for the launch of this important publication, and I give my pledge that administration will continue to provide its support on subsequent editions". Madame Doreen Bongoy Mawalla, Director of Administration

"First of all, I should like to associate myself with what others have said before me in hailing the UNECA Staff Voice as a great initiative. I do hope that the publication of the staff magazine will not be discontinued or stopped". Marcel Ngoma - Mouaya, Chief, Documents Control, Referencing and Contractual Services Unit (DRCU)

"I want to congratulate the Staff Union for publishing the Staff Voice magazine. I believe that the purpose of this is to make the issues of the staff known. I think it is a very useful venture but it has to be timely". Amareswara Rao, Chief, Human Resources Services Section (HRSS)

"I thank you so much for your kind words of appreciation and so I am glad to know that you like my article. This will strongly encourage me to write more articles in the coming future. Please allow me to also thank and appreciate the great work and wonderful initiative of the Staff Union members who have established and are now publishing the UNECA Staff Voice magazine as I regard it as a very important forum for all of us to voice our opinions on any issue that could be related to the UN system or not as you have said it. This will indeed enable



### Staff Union: New Fitness machineries at UNECA Gymnasium

Posted: Wednesday, April 04, 2012

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Staff Union Office is proud to announce the arrival of new fitness machineries for the UNECA Gymnasium Center.

We would like also to announce the minor price change on our Gymnasium facility starting from 01 April 2012 as follows: -

**Staff Union Members ETB 175.00**

**AFICS Members ETB 175.00**

**Staff of Affiliate Institutions ETB 225.00**

**Non Staff Union Members ETB 275.00**

**Agencies: ETB 275.00**



We take this opportunity to thank all Divisions and Sections who helped us in this procurement and delivery process. This is made possible only through a collaborative team effort. Once again thank you!!  
UNECA Staff Union Office.



*Our ECA Staff Union colleagues are always ready to help specially in keeping us fit*

### Traffic Accidents Reported on 03/23/2012 01:51 PM by ECA Security

It is a fact that our city is crowded with cars and people using the same streets as motorists and pedestrians. This is a challenge to all who are driving a car. The ECA Staff Union therefore, appeals alongside with the ECA Security to you to reduce speed, beyond what is specified by law, in order to save lives.

Our MOTTO should be to be a model with no traffic accident involving the UN plate Vehicles. The Staff Union will follow this responsibility and reward those drivers who have not been involved in an accident by featuring them in our Staff Voice magazine. A thank you note will also be provided, by the Executive Secretary and the Chairman of the Staff Union together, in recognition of the achievement made by ECA drivers. This way we can set a standard and become a model for the entire international community having the privilege of driving CD plate cars.

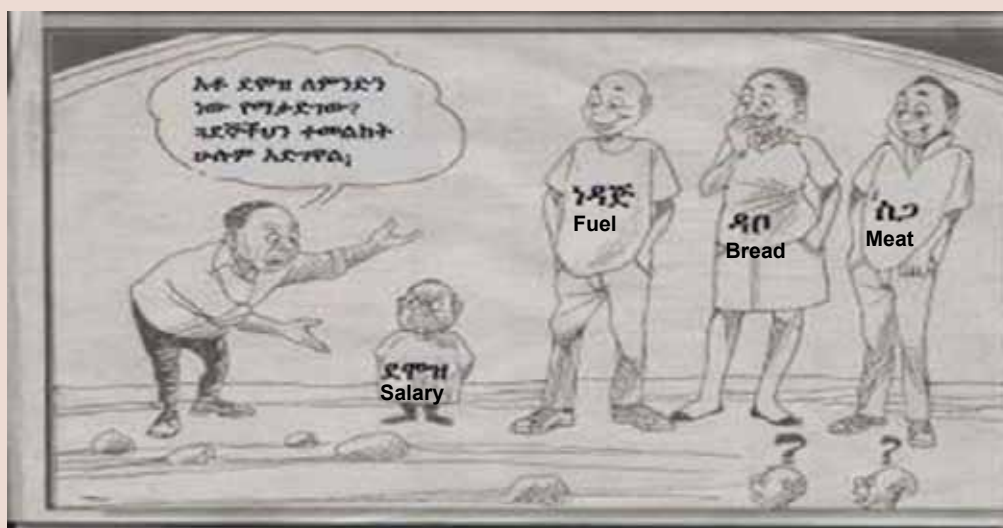
UN CD PLATE CAR DRIVERS MOTO NO ACCIDENT FOR 6 MONTHS.

## Cartoons contributed by ECA Staff on the erosion of local staff salaries and pensions



What I am asking is whether the indicated figures on the sheep are the real purchasing price or a registration number for running competition?

Chat 1 : Quel vent t'emmène Worké ?  
Chat 2 : C'est pas le vent qui m'a emmené, la hausse des prix, je donc venue pour emprunter de l'argent.



Mr. Salary, why are you not increasing with your size? Look at your friends; they have all increased in size!!!



**The launching of the UNECA Staff Voice magazine was made colorful and enjoyable by Bon Café and Lalibella Hotel/Restaurant**



**The ECA Flower Shop located in the old building inside the Rotunda was a full partner in the launching of UNECA Staff Voice magazine.**



## Staff-Management Committees

13 February 2009

- I. THE JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE (JNC)
- II. THE CENTRAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (CRC)
- III. THE CENTRAL REVIEW PANEL (CRP)
- IV. THE CLASSIFICATION APPEALS COMMITTEE (CAC)
- V. THE JOINT MONITORING COMMITTEE (JMC) for PAS
- VI. THE PANEL ON DISCRIMINATION AND OTHER GRIEVANCES
- VII. THE UN HEALTH CENTRE COMMITTEE
- VIII. THE PAS REBUTTAL PANEL (PRP)



## Integrity and honesty are among the most important CORE values of the United Nations

Note of Appreciation ECA agent finds \$1000, says happy owner got his money back



*Ms Enani Kalile*

Ms Enani Kalile has worked as a cleaner at the UN Conference in Addis Ababa as an office cleaner for 4 years. But she remained mostly unknown to the professional staff until this morning when she found US\$1000 in the toilet and handed the entire amount to the security as any other lost and found item.

News went round the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) like wildfire, much to her greatest surprise as according to her, “I have simply done what I think is normal”, she told ECA’s Information and Communication Service, recounting what had happened.

“This afternoon (Wednesday 18 January) I went to clean the men’s section of the toilets near Conference Room 2 at about 1:40 pm on schedule before the next session of the meeting after lunch”.

“After cleaning the toilets, I moved on to the hand-wash basin where I found this bunch of folded papers left conspicuously next to the tap”.

“I opened the papers because that is what I usually do before throwing garbage away into the dustbin. When I saw a bunch of US\$100 notes on opening the papers, I was surprised but not moved”, she said.

“Instead, my first reaction was to feel really sorry for the person who had left it there. I then counted the notes and there were 10 of them - that is US\$1000. There was no name on the piece of paper and I knew the person who had left it there would be very anxious”.

“As usual, I took it to the security agents on that floor. I trusted they would hand the money in to the rightful owner”, Enani continued, adding that “I don’t believe I can put into proper use any money I haven’t earned genuinely. I just do not think it can help me, even though we are always in need of money”.

For Enani, “this is just natural, because in our work, we find lots of documents, cell phones and other valuables all the time, and each time, we hand them in to the security officers for onward transmission to the owners”, she says.

Few of those occasions have had the publicity this one got, “essentially because the visiting MP who had left the money went on telling other members of the Pan African Parliament who were holding their 6th Ordinary Session at the UN Conference Centre in Addis Ababa.

Makane Faye, Chairperson of the ECA Staff Union Council says he had been pleasantly surprised by Enani’s conduct. “Imagine how many people would readily hand in 20 months of their salary to the security if they found that amount in the restroom”, he wondered.

Indeed, US \$1000 is the equivalent of what Enani earns in 20 months from Bethlehem Cleaning Services, who have employed her for the last 8 years.

This is why Makane thinks Ms Enani deserves praise and even an official recognition by the Staff Union or the Commission, although he does not exactly know the kind of compensation. “What is true is that her action provides another reason why UNCC is the trusted venue for most major conferences in Africa”, he says.

As for Enani, she explains: “I do not expect anything in return. Actually, as a Christian, I feel an immense sense of inner satisfaction by using the little I earn honestly from the services I render to Bethlehem Cleaning Services”.

# THE TRIUMPH OF DEMOCRACY IN SENEGAL

By Chika Onyeani, posted March 25, 2012

Lovers of democracy in Africa in general and the Senegalese people in particular should be jubilating about the election results in Senegal. For the second time in the history of elections in Africa, Senegal has demonstrated a triumph of democracy. In 2000, Senegal began a trend in Africa, which is not being followed but by a few leaders in the African continent. In that year, a sitting African president lost an election to an opposition leader for the first time in Africa. The president who conducted that election was President Abdou Diouf who had governed Senegal for 20 years, just like his predecessor, former and late President Leopold Senghor.

The opponent in that election was President Abdoulaye Wade. During that election, President Diouf scored 41.3% of the vote, while one of the opposition contestants, Mr. Abdoulaye Wade scored 31.8% of the vote, making him the second person with the highest votes. The opposition parties coalesced around Wade, who went on to defeat Diouf 58.5% to 41.5% after the run-off. Not only did Diouf publicly concede losing the election, he also called Abdoulaye Wade to congratulate him and offer his assistance and services. Senegal's unbroken record of democracy stands unequalled in Africa and beyond!



*Above, new President-elect Macky Sall and below, outgoing President Wade*

While Africa continues to suffer bad news in places like Somalia, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, there is every reason to rejoice in the few leaders who believe in democratic ideals. We have to recall that in August of last year, veteran opposition leader, Mr. Michael Sata defeated President Rupiah Banda. Africa's pride was heightened when President Banda conceded defeat, called on Mr. Sata to congratulate him and went on national television to urge all Zambians to unite behind the newly-elected President. "Zambia must not go backward. We must all

face the future and go forward as one nation." It was again a triumph of democracy. Increasingly, it is becoming apparent that a core of African leaders are beginning to realize that they cannot perpetually rule, that Africans are not interested in dynastic presidencies, as some leaders, including Muammar Ghaddafi and Hosni Mubarak tried to impose their children on the populace.

It seems the same scenario of 2000 has happened again this year. However, unlike the 2000 election, which took a few days before the decision was known, today's election

only took a few hours after the polls closed before Mr. Wade conceded. In fact, it was estimated that Macky Sall could be looking at garnering almost 70% of the votes tallied.

The results could be regarded as deflating to President Wade's ego, a referendum of total rejection of his presidency. However, there are people who might not see it that way. Basically, President Wade had broken faith with the Senegalese people (after he had promised not to run for a third term), to do so after getting the Constitutional Court (of which he appointed all the members), to rule that he was eligible to run for a third term. Wade had boasted that he would win on the first ballot; instead, he scored less than 35% of the vote to Macky Sall's 26%. Any of the opposition leaders who had trailed him could have decisively defeated President Wade. The country appeared to be fatigued with his rule and obstinacy. Despite appeals from world leaders, including emissaries from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Mr. Wade decided that the law he had championed in 2001, limiting Presidents to two terms, did not apply to him.

Well, it would appear that the Senegalese decided to teach President Wade a lesson that he would never forget in the waning days of his life. He could easily have vacated the presidency with the greatest pride of accomplishment, especially on the international arena where his Omega Plan had been a plank in NEPAD and where he had made some impact in championing the cause of the African Diaspora. Under the presidency of President Wade, the Senegalese in the Diaspora had become a force to be reckoned with in the communities they reside. The Senegalese practi-

cally restored Harlem to its glory with their industriousness. They have become the pride of Africa in Harlem, where Senegal is the only African country with a Consular office as well as a building for the Senegalese Association in America. Wade was the only African leader to have ventured to Harlem to hold functions there. He was the first world leader to travel to Libya to support the Libyan Transitional National Council. He has been a force in championing the cause for a United States of Africa.

The individual who defeated Mr. Wade was a protégé of his. Mr. Macky Sall was born on December 11, 1961, in Fatick and professionally a geologist, before becoming a politician. Mr. Sall held many ministerial positions under Mr. Wade, including Secretary-General of the PDS Regional Convention in 1998, PDS National Secretary in charge of Mines and Industry; Special Advisor for Energy and Mines from April 6, 2000 to May 12, 2001, as well as Director-General of the Petroleum Company of Senegal, from December 13, 2000 to July 5, 2001. He was entrusted with more responsibilities including Minister of Mines, Energy and Hydraulics before being transferred to Minister of State for the Interior and Local Communities. He became government spokesman before being appointed Prime Minister. After taking charge of re-electing President Wade in 2007, he was denied reappointment to the post of Prime Minister but moved to the Senate where he became Senate President having scored 143 out of the 146 votes to win.

Mr. Sall fell out of President Wade's favour after the Senate summoned the President's son, Karim, for questioning regarding the construction sites in Dakar for the

OIC Summit planned to take place there in March 2008. This action was perceived as an attempt by Sall to weaken the chances of Karim succeeding his father as President of Senegal, and hence the enmity of President Wade. In retaliation, one of the PDS members introduced a bill in the Senate which reduced the tenure of the Senate President's term from five to only one year. Mr. Sall resigned in protest and eventually formed his own political party of Republican Alliance. He joined the other opposition parties in opposing a third term for President Wade, but while others were campaigning to boycott the February 26th election, Sall campaigned vigorously earning the second position behind President Wade and earning a run-off against him.

I want to end this by saying that I am quite proud of President Wade for holding a free and fair election. In my estimation, he stands very high for not succumbing to election gimmickry to stay in office. Every Senegalese should be proud of Abdoulaye Wade in particular and themselves in general for the peaceful maturity they demonstrated during this period of what had seemed like uncertainty. But they all stood tall, though earlier marred by violence, to reclaim their honour as the epitome of democracy in Africa. It is a great lesson that they continue to practice and teach that other Africans should emulate. I salute President Wade for honourably exiting the presidency, Mr. Macky Sall for humbly coming into the presidency and the Senegalese people for their unrivalled democratic maturity.

**Source:** *The African Sun Times*



# Celebrating Ghana@55 at the African Union complex

Statement by HE  
Thomas Kwesi Quartey,  
Ambassador of Ghana  
to Ethiopia.

On 6 March 2012, as he welcomed invitees (including members of UNECA Staff Voice) to the celebrations, the Ambassador noted that, four days earlier, on 2 March, the people of Ethiopia had celebrated the 116th anniversary of their victory at Adowa under Emperor Menelik II. For that unique achievement of an African victory, Ethiopia would remain a source of pride to Africans everywhere. Legend (corroborated by the Biblical narrative) had it that the Queen of Sheba or Makeda, as she was known to Ethiopians in the 10th century BC, had traveled to Jerusalem to learn from King Solomon's wisdom and statecraft. According to the Book of Kings, she had communed with him of all that was in her heart. On her return, she had given birth to Menelik I, thus founding the Solomonic dynasty from which Ethiopian rulers, for at least two millennia, had derived their legitimate authority. As the 225th monarch in that lineage, Emperor Haile Selassie I had maintained that spirit of resistance.

Inspired by Ethiopia's example in 1936, a young teacher hailing from a small village that bordered the then Gold Coast and la Cote d'Ivoire, had graduated from Achimota College and traveled to the United States to seek higher education...in philosophy, history, theology and politics at



*The Statue of President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana – "Africa must Unite"*

the Universities of Lincoln and Pennsylvania. He had seen a continental nation imbued with all the energy of a democratic republic and his young mind was shaped not only by the studies he had pursued but also by his experience of racism, poverty and hunger. He had imbibed the ideas of Marcus Garvey and, in 1945, traveled to England to study law. Together with Padmore, Dubois and such collaborators as Peter Abrahams, Ras Makonnen, Jomo Kenyatta, Kenneth Kaunda and Nnamdi Azikiwe, they had organized the fifth Pan-Africanist Congress in

Manchester and called for African freedom. He had returned to his native Gold Coast where the nationalist movement was stirring, taken it by storm and called for Self-Government Now. The masses had responded, followed him and Ghana had made history in 1957

by becoming the first black African nation south of the Sahara to achieve independence. To Nkrumah, that independence was meaningless unless it was linked up with the total liberation of Africa. In April 1958, he had invited representatives of independent African States to Accra, followed that in 1960 by convening the All Africa People's Conference and advocated the development of an African Personality, suppressed during the colonial era. Emphasizing the bonds uniting Africans (their shared history, culture, experience and aspirations), Nkrumah had believed that the spirit of African people could only flourish in freedom and unity. They were to seek first the political kingdom and all other things would be added. Accordingly, he had actively supported freedom fighters, called for Mandela's release, the abolition of apartheid and an end to the Vietnam War.

Not surprisingly, having stepped on some very big toes, Nkrumah had been overthrown on 24 February 1966, vilified, his Party disbanded, his ministers arrested and detained. His statue in front of parliament House had been knocked down and his books (including *Africa Must Unite*) burnt by no less a personage than the British headmaster of the very Achimota College Nkrumah had attended. According to declassified information, immediately after the first OAU Conference, the then British Ambassador to Addis Ababa had written in 1963 to the Foreign Office that Nkrumah's political kingdom seemed irreconcilable with the independence, prosperity or unity of others....and scruples he had none. How then could such a lethal rogue be contained? Since he was the enemy, determined to complete their expulsion from an Africa that

Nkrumah aspired to dominate absolutely, blacks must be found and provided discreet if legitimate support, to oppose him. All that was then. Times had changed. Now, Nkrumah's statue adorned the new African Union headquarters and the stone that the builders (of empire) rejected had become the chief cornerstone. While his books had been physically destroyed, his ideas had prevailed and Africa was slowly but surely making its way to integration and unity.

Ghana itself, in 55 years, had made its fair share of mistakes in governance but having learned there from, had conducted a series of elections where Government and opposition had alternated according to the wishes of the electorate. Slowly but steadily, its national economy was growing and foreign direct investment continued to flow in as democracy and the rule of law were consolidated. Ghana continued to contribute to peace-keeping efforts



in Africa and beyond. With neighboring Cote d'Ivoire, it was beginning to harmonize the production and marketing of cocoa. African Unity had always been the cornerstone of Ghana's foreign policy. As guest of honour at Ghana's 40th independence anniversary in Accra, President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere of Tanzania had declared that without unity, there was no future for Africa. While unity would not end Africa's weakness, Africa could not even begin to end that weakness until it united. More recently, yet another African victory had been achieved by the Zambian Chipolopolo. In the beautiful African Cup of Nations tournament organized by Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, Zambia's magnificent and historic victory had wiped tears

from African eyes as they had first shot down the Black Stars of Ghana (with one copper bullet as it were) and gone on to prevail (needing eight copper bullets this time) against the stubborn Elephants of Cote d'Ivoire. In that spirit, the Ambassador of Ghana had invited all guests to toast the health of President Girma Wolde Giorgis, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, Africa's international partners and drink to the advent of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.

*Summarized by Habteselassie Ebenezer Nii Amu First-Quao, English Editor, UNECA Staff Voice magazine.*



# United Nations Women's Association

## Français

Créée en 1962, l'Association des Epouses des Fonctionnaires des Nations Unies (UNWA) est une association de volontaires, à but non lucratif.

Son objectif majeur est de promouvoir des actions de bonnes volontés, d'offrir à ses membres des occasions de partager des activités d'intérêts

communs et d'apporter leur soutien aux organisations de la communauté internationale qui s'occupent des projets d'aides sociales en faveur des catégories les plus vulnérables de la société, notamment les femmes et les enfants.

Depuis sa création, l'association n'a pas cessé de mener des activités de mobilisations de fonds telles

que des œuvres ou des ventes de bienfaisance, des Gala, des soirées dansantes, des bazars, des déjeuners etc..... dont les recettes sont destinées à porter assistance aux nécessiteux. Elle participe également à la promotion et à la fabrication de produits artisanaux.

L'UNWA a bien souvent organisé des programmes de sensibilisation, en travaillant conjointement avec des programmes de l'Organisation des Nations Unies.

Peut devenir membre de l'association toute femme ayant un lien officiel avec l'ONU soit par son travail, soit par son conjoint ou ses institutions spécialisées.

L'Association est composée d'un bureau exécutif de six(6) sous-comités.

Parmi les bénéficiaires de l'assistance d'UNWA, on peut citer :

Le Gemini Trust, Bethlehem Centre. Salam Children's village qui a reçu une assistance financière. UNWA a aussi fait don de machines à coudre et à tricoter à un Project de femmes basé à Makinissa, Addis Ababa. En outre UNWA a porté assistance à Voltaire Convil for Handicapped children and Adults (VCH).

L'hôpital Fistula d'Addis Ababa, Jérusalem Association, Salam Children's Village, Mother Teresa's Home for children with AIDS; Sister Joseph's Kidane Mhret orphanage; Friends of Blind of Addis Ababa University; St Francis Orphanage; Circus Ethiopia; Daughters of Charity; Alert Hospital Abeder School; Children Heart fund







of Ethiopia Cheschire Hoe; women's Association from Addis kidane Baptist Church; Good Shepered Children.

### **English**

Since its inception 1962. The United Nations Women's Association, a non-profit Organization made up of Volunteer members, has been dedicated to assisting the most Vulnerable amongst us-women and children UNWA is working to improve the lives of Future generations.

The main objectives of the Association are to promote goodwill and provide opportunities for its members to share common interests and Assist Organization in the community engaged in welfare projects for women and children. For this purpose, the Association accepts financial gifts, property, and sponsors. With the proceeds of these gifts, its conducts Benefit performance or sales and

money rising Activates of all kinds. Membership is open to dependent spouse of the staff or UN agencies, UN women staff. Female staff or dependent spouse of the International agencies staff members in Addis Ababa. Annual Associate membership fee is Birr 100.

UNWA is comprised of an Executive Committee and six subcommittees.

Since its creation, UNWA has registered significant impact in its activities, which includes promoting the development and the handicrafts sale, financial assistance to help the needy and the less privileged, particularly women and children in Addis Ababa. Of the various organizations that have received the association's subsidy are the Gemini Trust, Bethlehem Centre, kitchen potters and Salem children's village. Selma children's village, UNWA has also donated sewing and knitting machines to a project in mekanissa, In addition UNWA also assisted the voluntary council for Handicapped

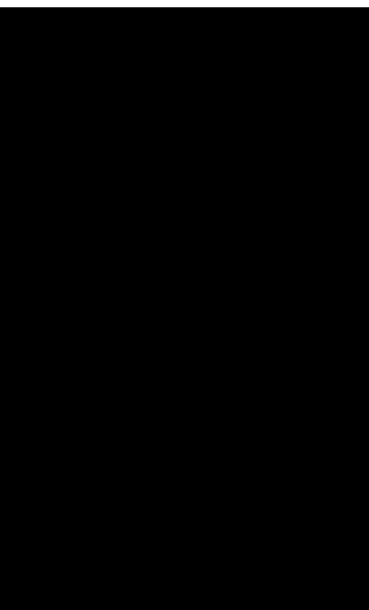
Children and Adults (VCH) in purchasing a clay making machine, molds and a roasting machine. The Addis Ababa fistula Hospital and other beneficiaries include Jerusalem Association; slam children's village; mother Teresa's Home for children with AIDS; Society for mhret orphanage; friends of Blind of Addis Ababa University; St Francis orphanage; Circus Ethiopia; Daughters of Charity; Alert Hospital; Abeder school; children Heart fund of Ethiopia; Cheschire Home; women's Association from Addis kidane Baptist church; Good shepherded children.

The UNWA office is currently located on the six floor of the ECA New Building, Room Number 6SC4. Our mailing address is ECA Africa hall, P.O.Box 60043, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. E-mail: [unwa@eca.org](mailto:unwa@eca.org) Telephone: 251-5443154 or 5443249,51-72-00, ext, 33154 and 33249

## The Secretary-General met with staff from the UN System organizations











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