

Tuesday 28 February 2017

Dear Executive Head,

In these times when resources are tight and we are urged to do more with less, staff look to you to ensure that the resources you do have at your disposal are put to good use. To this end we remain concerned at numerous instances in Geneva where posts remain unadvertized sometimes months after the incumbent has left to take up another position or has retired.

This situation:

- prevents effective succession planning, in particular for a retiring incumbent who is unable to pass files and handover notes to a successor;
- creates uncertainty for staff under the supervision of the vacant post and generates risks in terms of fundraising and programme continuity;
- raises unfair expectations among staff who may temporarily fill the post for an extended period of time with no guarantee of finally being selected;
- slows down overall staff career development as posts take longer to be filled; and
- generates questions among member states as to the actual necessity of the vacant post if the organization appears in no rush to fill it.

With regards to staff vacating a post to take up another position, staff understand that the replacement may not have been selected in time for a handover, although they do expect that the post be immediately advertized.

However, where posts become vacant through the incumbent retiring, staff expect the post to be advertized in advance given the retirement date is already known.

To this end we would like to draw your attention to ST/AI/2010/3 on staff selection, which requires the advertizing of “job openings relating to positions expected to become available as identified through workforce planning or forecasting, for example due to the retirement of the incumbent within six months or for meeting future requirements.”

Further, Section 4 of ST/AI/2016/1, covering posts under the new mobility system (currently Polnet and Itecnet), goes further, stating that “job openings for positions whose incumbents are reaching the mandatory age of separation pursuant to staff regulation 9.2 shall be advertised no later than 12 months prior to the expected date of mandatory separation of the incumbent.”

On behalf of staff in Geneva, and while aware of the administrative load you currently face, we nevertheless look forward to your support on this matter, if this isn't already the case in your department.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Richards

Executive Secretary, UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

Executive Heads of Departments with staff based at UNOG (ECE, ISDR, JIU, OCHA, ODA, OHCHR, OIOS, UNCTAD, UNOG, UNRISD)