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A GENEVE

**Conseil de coordination  
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UNITED NATIONS OFFICE  
AT GENEVA

**Staff Coordinating Council**

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Geneva, 12 July 2019

**Subject: Urgent call for a single salary scheme for all international civil servants in Geneva**

Dear Secretary-General,

Allow me first to thank you for your efforts in ensuring that our Organization remains relevant, efficient and capable of delivering on its mandates during this period of complex global challenges.

I wish to draw your urgent attention to the current situation of staff in the professional and higher categories working in the Secretariat and its subsidiary bodies in Geneva.

On 3 July 2019, the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT), declared illegal the 5.2 percent pay cuts recommended by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), which were introduced in 2018 following the ICSC cost-of-living survey conducted in Geneva in 2016.

The ILOAT ruled that the ICSC had erred in its methodology and that organizations were wrong to apply its recommendations. While this judgement is applicable only to the staff of specialized agencies, namely ILO, WIPO, IOM, ITU and WHO, its findings are relevant to all common system organizations and concern the methodology overall rather than Geneva specifically.

Specialized agencies have committed to implement this judgement, creating in effect two salary schemes in the same duty station. As a consequence, staff working at the same grade and level in the Secretariat and its subsidiary bodies in Geneva will be remunerated at a salary significantly less than their colleagues employed in the aforementioned specialized agencies.

This is a clear breach of the basic principle of equal pay for equal work contained in numerous international instruments, and specifically in paragraph 2 of Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work”.

Throughout your career and particularly since becoming Secretary-General, you have been a proponent of labour rights and staff rights, saying during the United Nations

Secretary-General Awards Ceremony held in New York in October 2018 that “the staff who bring that Charter to life every day are our greatest asset”.

With this in mind, I would like to urge you, on behalf of all staff employed at United Nations Office in Geneva, to find an equitable and just resolution to this illegal and unequal situation by adopting a single salary scheme for all international civil servants in the professional and higher categories employed in Geneva.

I look forward to a positive answer.

With best regards,



Prisca Chaoui  
Executive Secretary  
UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

Mr. Antonio Guterres  
Secretary-General  
United Nations

CC: Mr. Larbi Djacta, ICSC Chairman  
Ms. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de cabinet  
Ms. Olga Algayerová, Acting Director-General, UNOG  
Ms. Jan Beagle, USG, DMSPC  
Ms. Martha Helena Lopez, ASG, DMSPC  
Mr. Ian Richards, CCISUA President