



NINTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Decisions of the United Nations
General Assembly on the report of the
International Civil Service Commission**

1. At the Governing Body's 276th Session (November 1999), the Director-General informed the Committee¹ of the principal recommendations made by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) in its annual report to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) for 1999,² as well as their financial implications for officials' conditions of service.
2. On the Committee's recommendation, the Governing Body accepted the ICSC recommendations, subject to their approval by the UNGA, concerning increases in salary scales (as well as consequential increases in related allowances/payments) for staff in the Professional and higher categories, to take effect on 1 March 2000. Subject to their approval by the UNGA, the Governing Body authorized the Director-General to give effect to these measures by appropriate changes to the Staff Regulations.³ In accordance with the practice established by the Governing Body at its 192nd Session (February-March 1974), the Director-General will report to the Governing Body on these amendments at its 279th Session (November 2000).
3. The present paper reports on the decisions taken by the UNGA at its Fifty-fourth Session in 1999 (resolution 54/238 of 23 December 1999) concerning the more important recommendations contained in the ICSC report.

¹ GB.276/PFA/13.

² United Nations General Assembly, Official Records, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/54/30).

³ GB.276/9/2.

Conditions of service of staff in the Professional and higher categories

(a) The Noblemaire principle and its application

4. The General Assembly again reconfirmed the continued application of the Noblemaire principle (whereby the salaries of Professional staff within the UN common system are determined by reference to those applicable in the civil service of the country with the highest pay levels, currently the United States). The UNGA also reaffirmed the need to ensure the competitiveness of conditions of service in the common system.

(b) Evolution of the margin

5. In 1991 the UNGA requested the Commission to include in its work programme a review of the differences between UN and US remuneration levels. In 1993 the Commission was asked to address the imbalance in the UN/US remuneration ratios in the context of overall margin considerations. At its 1999 session, the UNGA noted that, bearing in mind the current imbalance in the margin levels, a recommendation for a differentiated salary increase between individual Professional and higher category grades would need to be submitted at the time of any future recommendation for a real salary increase.

(c) Base/floor salary scales

6. The UNGA approved an increase of 3.42 per cent in the base/floor salary scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories, with effect from 1 March 2000. This salary adjustment will be made by consolidating post adjustment points into basic salary on a “no loss, no gain” basis. It will also result in a proportional increase in the basis of calculation for the mobility and hardship allowance and separation payments.

(d) Geneva post adjustment

7. It will be recalled that the ICSC had reported to the UNGA to the effect that, while it had sought to establish a single post adjustment index for Geneva that would fully reflect the situation of all staff working at the duty station, there were a number of complex difficulties which currently argued against establishing such an index. In addition, the wide gap between the New York and Geneva post adjustments, which had prompted the review of the existing arrangements, had almost disappeared. The ICSC concluded that there was no point in pursuing the matter further.⁴
8. The UNGA nevertheless reiterated its request to the Commission to prepare a comprehensive review of the post adjustment system as a whole with a view to its reform.

Other issues

9. The UNGA welcomed the progress made by the Commission as regards the development of an *integrated framework for human resources management*. The purpose of the framework is to guide organizations' actions in managing their human resources

⁴ GB.273/PFA/11.

effectively and to focus the Commission's work concerning human resources management on issues that are at the core of the common system. The completed framework will be presented to the General Assembly in 2000. Although the Commission had not yet finished its work on *revised standards of conduct for international civil servants*, the Assembly noted the progress made; a final draft of the standards of conduct should be examined at the Commission's session in spring 2000.

10. As regards the proposed *review of the International Civil Service Commission*, the UNGA emphasized that such a review process should be impartial and transparent, and with the full participation of the Commission. The UNGA will revert to this issue at its Fifty-fifth Session, and has requested the UN Secretary-General to provide further information as appropriate concerning the reasons for such a review, the identification of specific problems, the objectives to be achieved, the possible impact of such a review on the common system and information on progress achieved resulting from previous reviews of the working methods and functioning of the Commission.
11. The UNGA also requested the Commission to complete its *review of the methodology for the education grant* as well as a review of the purpose, scope, application of, and controls for the education grant, and to report on the results to the Fifty-fifth Session of the UNGA. This request came in the context of the Commission's study of expatriate entitlements with a view to harmonizing practices throughout the common system.

Geneva, 3 March 2000.