|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Document CWG-FHR-19/INF/3** |
| **7 October 2024** |
| **English only** |

ITU STAFF COUNCIL STATEMENT – CWG on FHR

7 October 2024

Dear Councilors,
Secretary- General and Elected Officials, and ITU colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to address this session of the ITU Council Working Groups. ITU staff greatly values the opportunity to share our perspectives and engage with you on key issues that shape our organisation.

In recent years, the global technology landscape has shifted significantly, making the ITU mandate more relevant than ever. At the same time, the Union has undergone, and continues to undergo, important internal transformations.

Amidst these changes, ITU staff has worked hard to deliver value to our members while contributing to the long-term improvement of our organization and its culture. We are confident in ITU’s ability to enhance effectiveness, resilience, and uphold UN core values of integrity, professionalism and respect for diversity.

However, achieving this requires the ITU leadership to act in two priority areas —trust and values.

– The first priority area is **re-building trust in internal justice**.

We cannot overstate the importance of maintaining a fair, transparent and trusted internal justice system that adheres to the ITU Rules and Regulations. In fact, we are concerned with recent decisions from the ILO Tribunal which have brought to light breaches in due process and flaws in our internal legal framework. These points require immediate and tangible actions to enhance our internal governance, improve procedural integrity, and strengthen internal controls. Implementing and respecting proper checks and balances will ensure a high level of integrity, fairness and transparency. Due process and consistent application of the ITU Rules and Regulations must be always upheld for ITU personnel at all levels.

As part of the ITU’s ongoing internal transformation, we have the opportunity to make meaningful enhancements in this area.

The ITU Staff Council stands ready to support the ITU senior leadership in improving the internal justice system to enhance the quality of administrative decision-making and implement effective mechanisms to prevent, address or penalize unethical behaviour and misconduct. This includes aligning administrative and legal practices with the established framework to maintain integrity of the due process.

Transparency at every stage of the process is of the essence to build trust in our internal justice and safeguard the Union’s reputation.

Dear councillors,

– The second priority area focuses on **recognizing the value and contribution of staff, exercising the duty of care and ensuring psychological safety and an adequate working environment**.

A 2023 Staff well-being survey revealed concerning trends and patterns within the ITU workforce, including widespread stress, high turnover among young professionals, the lack of recognition of expertise and experience of staff, and inadequate managerial practices. We welcomed the senior leadership's commitment to addressing these issues, and now concrete actions need to be taken to promote a safe and positive working environment.

Given the impact of well-being and mental health on employee engagement and productivity, a comprehensive staff well-being strategy in ITU is not a luxury, but a necessity.

This strategy should prioritize competency-based recruitment and promotion schemes, staff retention and development, performance recognition, and managerial responsibility, including a clear duty of care. Such an approach is not just an investment in our staff but an investment in the future of the Union.

Consistent implementation of this strategy, alongside tangible and lasting initiatives, will foster a thriving workforce and contribute to a more resilient, high-performing, and forward‑looking organization.

Ladies and gentlemen,

**The Staff Council remains fully committed to working with the ITU senior leadership team to strengthen trust in ITU's internal processes and improve staff well-being and recognition.**

We thank the members of CWG-FHR for your attention to these concerns and, in a spirit of collaboration, we stand ready to continue the dialogue on how we can collaboratively address challenges in a thoughtful, fair and transparent manner.

I would also take this opportunity to thank ITU staff for the focus and dedication they demonstrate to ITU Members and partners each day.

Thank you very much.

*Delivered on 7 October 2024, during the session of CWG on FHR, by*

 Onder Cetinkaya (Mr)
 President of the ITU Staff Council