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| ITU STAFF COUNCIL’S STATEMENT – CWG on FHR | |

Madam Chair, Honourable Councillors, Distinguished Secretary-General and Elected Officials, Dear colleagues,

As the Union marks its 160th anniversary, we are reminded that ITU’s longevity rests on responsible governance and people-centred choices. The Union’s capacity to serve to its Members relies on the dedication and skills of its staff across headquarters and regions.

It is the collective responsibility of our executive leadership and staff at all levels to make the best use of available resources you entrust to us.

Because delivery depends on our people and finite resources, in our view three staff-centred priorities deserve special attention right now: these include staff policies, our regional presence and the HQ campus.

**The first topic we wish like to raise today is staff policies.**

Sound, predictable policies underpin performance and well-being. With zero nominal growth in the contributory unit over decades, colleagues are effectively delivering more with less financial resources while at the same time supporting various transformation efforts. This should be matched by robust HR processes and forward-looking workforce planning.

The Staff Council is aware of concerns among staff about their future posts and future work. The externalization of posts or functions and the recruitment of consultants to perform staff activities highlight the need for proactive measures.

Accordingly, we advocate for timely training and upskilling programs for current ITU staff, acknowledging their commitment to the organization and supporting them through this transition.

We also suggest that HR priorities should include, transparent pathways for mobility and career development, realistic prioritization that avoids unfunded mandates, and arrangements that attract, retain and develop talent in a technology-intensive sector.

Other initiatives related to wellbeing and work-life balance can be implemented promptly without the need for substantial resources.

In this context, we would like to highlight two significant pending measures: the introduction of flexible working arrangements and the establishment of a rewards and recognition policy. Consultations have been held; these are valuable mechanisms when they lead to concrete, well-articulated regulations – they should not become an end in themselves.

Colleagues would appreciate clearer decisions hopefully reflecting the views expressed by staff council, as well as concrete timelines and consistent implementation.

**Second: regional presence.**

Our regional and area offices are integral part of our work and important to the Union’s visibility.

The Staff Council has engaged directly with colleagues in duty stations beyond Geneva through dedicated workshops and through the meeting we’ve recently had with Regional Directors.

Their challenges are diverse and context specific. We encourage meaningful consultations with regional colleagues throughout the whole review process of the ITU regional presence.

We hope that the findings of the review will be translated into practical adjustments to resources, workflows and support for regional and area offices and for the well-being of colleagues stationed in these offices. We will continue to share staff insights with the administration to help ensure that the final outcome strengthens ITU’s work in the field.

**Thirdly, the Headquarters campus.**  
The Staff Council supports the campus approach and careful comparison of scenarios. This project is essential to staff well-being and to delegates’ experience in Geneva; it will shape our day-to-day working conditions.

The project has been a significant undertaking for the ITU and there is no margin for error. As design work proceeds, we ask for wider communication and structured staff involvement in design decisions: clear milestones, costings and risk management, and business continuity plans.

To minimize disruption during construction, we need a clear, realistic change-management plan. Our shared aim is a modern, safe, inclusive and sufficient workplace that meets today’s standards and enables excellent service throughout the transition and beyond.

Dear Councillors,

Across all three areas, greater transparency and earlier staff involvement will improve outcomes and build ownership. By aligning new and old mandates with means, pacing change responsibly and investing in people, we can deliver durable efficiencies and the results our Members expect.

We appreciate the engagement and commitment demonstrated by senior management to strengthen trust and foster open communication throughout the Union. As the Staff Council, we recognize that it is equally important to cultivate and maintain this trust with our colleagues. Achieving this depends on the level of transparency, clarity, consistent application of regulations, and meaningful consultation. Recent UN-wide financial shocks, including the UN80 process, showed that abrupt measures quickly erode confidence and hinder reform.

To your deliberations and ITU’s executive leadership, the Staff Council seeks to contribute a constructive, unifying perspective grounded in operational realities. From Member States to management and staff, the Union is the sum of its people – our effort, dedication and commitment to connecting the world. We invite Councillors and management to incorporate staff-related factors into the decisions before this Working Group, so that the Union’s mission will thrive in the years ahead.

Thank you.

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