



FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS
FÉDÉRATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DES ANCIENS FONCTIONNAIRES INTERNATIONAUX
FEDERACION DE ASOCIACIONES DE EX-FUNCIONARIOS INTERNACIONALES

CONSIDERATION BY THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE 2017 PENSION BOARD REPORT

The UN General Assembly's Fifth Committee had its first formal meeting of the Assembly's 72nd session on 5 October 2017. Its programme of work through December 2017 will be dominated by budget matters. The Committee will consider within the two budget agenda items (item 136 for 2016-2017 and item 137 for 2018-2019) the report of the UN Joint Staff Pension Board (A/72/383) which includes two key recommendations: the appropriation for 2016-2017 would be reduced by \$5,091,100 to \$174,964,400, while the initial appropriation for 2018-2019 would increase significantly and be set at \$195,230,800. These figures reflect Pension Board deliberations, but can and may well be altered by the Fifth Committee in light of its own consideration on the basis of ACABQ recommendations. The ACABQ held hearings on the matter in the morning and afternoon of Monday, 4 October. The Board proposals, following normal practice, were presented to the ACABQ by the Chair of the Pension Board, Annick Van Houtte, at closed meetings of the Advisory Committee. The Fund was also represented by the Deputy CEO, Paul Dooley, and the Secretary-General on the investments side by the RSG, Carol Boykin. Numerous questions were posed and answered orally or will be answered in writing. The ACABQ will prepare its report and make its recommendations, bearing in mind the schedule of the Fifth Committee which will hold its formal meeting on the budget of the Pension Fund on the morning of Thursday, 9 November; that date may change as indicated by past practice.

The budget proposals, as amended by the Pension Board, may be considered ambitious given the fact that significant growth is proposed at a time when austerity is in the air. They are nevertheless made in light of the continuing steady and unrelenting growth in the numbers of pension beneficiaries to be serviced. After the formal introduction of Pension Fund budget proposals in the Fifth Committee, informal consultations will follow, likely on 14 and 30 November which should lead to the adoption of a consensus resolution in December that authorizes the new budget for 2018-2019. Although the UNJSPB adopted its budget recommendations in July by consensus, we can expect some push-back and lobbying in the Fifth Committee as some seek slower growth. FAFICS will maintain firm support for the new budget, bearing in mind the demonstrated need for greatly strengthened client services in the Pension Fund. Better client service requires dedicated new resources to cope with growing needs as beneficiaries increase year by year.

Those who wish to follow progress can access the Fifth Committee website using the following URL, www.un.org/en/ga/fifth/index.shtml. The formal meeting of the Fifth Committee on 9 November may be accessed online via webtv.un.org at which time it is expected that the Chair of the UNJSPB will present the Board report (A/72/383), and the ACABQ Chair will introduce the Committee's related report and recommendations. Member states will provide their views (for the most part through regional group statements), after which the item is likely to be sent for informal consultations to produce a draft resolution text approving a new budget.

Other pension matters not yet documented include consideration of new appointments to the Investment Committee under agenda item 115, appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs

and other appointments. In this regard, it is recalled that the UNJSPB at its July session was unable to fulfill its role in reviewing prospective candidates for the Investment Committee as no communication had been received. The RSG subsequently made proposals for consideration by the Board's Standing Committee. These will likely result in the Fifth Committee receiving and reviewing proposals for two new members of the Investment Committee.

OTHER PENDING ACTIONS

The UNJSPB at its July session agreed by consensus to recommend to the General Assembly that the Secretary-General reappoint Mr Sergio Arvizu for a term of three years. FAFICS was and is part of this consensus. The current term ends as of 31 December 2017 with an announcement expected in due course.

The post of Representative of the Secretary-General for investment of the assets of the UNJSPF (RSG) was advertised over the summer. Selection procedures are in progress and we are informed that eight candidates have been interviewed by a panel which includes a representative of the UNJSPB. We can expect an announcement in due course as it is considered important to avoid any gap in occupancy of this post.