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FÉDÉRATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DES ANCIENS FONCTIONNAIRES INTERNATIONAUX
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London, 8-13 July 2010**

REPORT OF THE SESSION

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REPORT OF THE SESSION

Agenda item 1: Welcome address and opening of the session by the FAFICS President

1. The thirty-ninth session of the Council of the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) was held from 8 to 13 July 2010 at the London headquarters of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) under the presidency of Andrés Castellanos. The list of participants appears in appendix 1. The formal opening of the session was preceded on 8 July by meetings of the Working Group on Pensions Issues chaired by Oscar Larghi and the Working Group on After-Service Health Insurance and Long-Term Care chaired by Michael Davies. The FAFICS Bureau met immediately prior to the formal opening.

2. The FAFICS President declared the session open on 9 July and cordially welcomed the participants to London.

3. Mr. Ethimios Mitropoulos, Secretary-General of IMO, welcomed participants to the vibrant and historic city of London and to the headquarters of IMO, the organization in the UN system responsible for the regulation and security of shipping. This was the third time that IMO had hosted meetings of the FAFICS Council. Since the last occasion, in 1990, the HQ building had undergone a multi-million dollar refurbishment. He was confident that the resulting facilities would meet participants' needs.

4. He said it was especially gratifying to welcome FAFICS in the year of its 35th anniversary; the fact that the Federation was still thriving proved its value. For his part, as retirement drew closer, he was becoming more aware of the new challenges that would arise with the absence of a routine, the loss of contacts and less-ready access to information.

5. He noted that the Council had a long agenda, including a review of the financial status of the Pension Fund following the recent global economic downturn. This event had also affected the shipping world and IMO was currently grappling with its fallout.

6. The agenda was also challenging, but he was sure that with its collective expertise and experience, the Council was equal to the task. He wished the meeting every success.

7. Dr. David Axford welcomed participants to London on behalf of the British Association of Former UN Civil Servants (BAFUNCS), the host organization. He explained that he had been asked to stand in at short notice for Sir Richard Jolly, the BAFUNCS President who had been delayed en route to the opening session. He hoped that the amenities and hospitality organized by BAFUNCS would prove satisfactory; these arrangements had been coordinated by Michael Davies, Chairman

of the BAFUNCS Executive Committee, in close collaboration with the FAFICS Secretariat and with IMO.

8. Had Sir Richard Jolly been present, he would surely have alluded, among other things, to the United Nations Careers Project (UNCRP), a compilation of the UN memories of former staff who retired in the United Kingdom. These records, housed in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, were available to the many academics interested in the history of the UN system. The project had made a good start in the 1980s, and was now being updated and expanded to include General Service staff, the earlier focus having been on the Professional category.

9. He hoped that participants would enjoy their stay in London and, time permitting, also visit some of the many beauty spots outside the capital.

10. The President of FAFICS warmly thanked the IMO Secretary-General and BAFUNCS for their welcoming words and for the excellent facilities and hospitality extended to FAFICS.

Agenda item 2: Moment of silent meditation or prayer

11. Council observed a minute of silence in honour of those retirees who had died over the past year. The President paid tribute in particular to the late Mr Farouq Mawlawi, founding President of AFICS-Lebanon; he also wished to honour the victims of the Haiti earthquake, which had wrought such widespread devastation and caused the greatest loss of UN system staff in the Organization's history. Among the victims was Lisa Anne Mbele-Mbong, daughter of the Vice-President of AAFI-AFICS, Samuel Mbele-Mbong.

Agenda item 3: Adoption of the agenda

12. Council adopted the revised provisional agenda (document Council 39/2010/D.3/Rev.1) with the addition of a sub-item under item 17: Report of the Regional Meeting of the United Nations Associations of Former International Civil Servants in Latin America and the Caribbean (AFICS AL/C). The agenda as adopted is contained in appendix 2. The list of participants is reproduced in appendix 3.

Agenda item 4: Election of a Presiding Officer

13. Council elected Anton Doeve, President of FFOA, to preside over the session.

14. Enid Steward-Goffman was elected Rapporteur.

Agenda item 5: Report by the President

15. Mr Andrés Castellanos said he was particularly pleased to welcome participants to the current session, which coincided with FAFICS commemoration of the 35th anniversary of its founding. He likewise welcomed the representatives of two of the associations that had met the statutory requirements for FAFICS membership in the past year (AFICS-Mauritius and AFICS-Kiev). With their admission, and the pending admissions of the associations in Somalia, Malaysia and Senegal, the Federation would have achieved the target of 50 member associations that he had set on assuming office in 2008. He was equally confident that by the end of the year, the Federation would have met the other part of that target, namely 20,000 affiliates. Discussions were ongoing with several other associations with a view to their joining FAFICS once statutory formalities had been completed, while efforts to assist seminal groups of former international civil servants in Japan, Benin and Fiji, to cite a few, were gradually bearing fruit.

16. On behalf of the Federation, he continued to keep in close contact with FAFICS key partners. He was most grateful to the Secretary and CEO of the Pension Fund and his senior staff for their ongoing support and advice on pension issues, both in general and on specific issues affecting FAFICS members. Other important contacts that had been maintained included: the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC); the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Investments; the Director of Investment Management; the Focal Point for FAFICS and AFICS (NY) in the UN Department of Management, and the Chief of the UN Health and Life Insurance Service.

17. Over the past year, he had accepted invitations from AAFI/AFUS-France and AFUNPI- Bangalore to attend their annual assemblies, as well as from UNPA New Delhi to attend a special meeting convened at his request as he was passing through New Delhi en route back to New York. He was most grateful for the courtesies extended to him on those occasions, which had given him the opportunity to acquaint himself with issues of specific concern to them besides those of more general application. He wished to thank AFICS (NY) for the opportunity to address its annual assembly which this year had marked the Association's 40th anniversary. In addition, FAFICS was particularly indebted to AFICS (NY) for the ongoing provision of office space and administrative and logistic support and services. Likewise to AAFI-AFICS, for the support given to the FAFICS secretariat and to the Bureau during its meetings in Geneva.

18. The President paid tribute to the work of the FAFICS secretariat staff in both New York and Geneva. He was particularly grateful to the Secretary for his extraordinary assistance and support. Continuous contact and consultations had been maintained with all office holders, with the convenors of working groups and the Emeriti. Two Bureau meetings had been held during the year. According to an innovative practice which he had introduced, the Emeriti Presidents and the Emeritus Vice-President had been invited to attend these meetings; although only one had been able to attend, he and the Bureau were most grateful for their wise inputs whenever consulted.

19. The President recalled that, in recent years, FAFICS had increasingly been fostering an advocacy role across its member associations in support of the UN

principles, goals and programmes, in accordance with its own statutes. The success of these efforts depended, however, on two factors: first, the dedication and enthusiasm of member associations and their individual members in promoting the Organization's values and achievements at all levels, and secondly the degree of acceptance, respect and support accorded by UN system organizations to associations and their members, including offices in the field. Unfortunately, it was apparent that a series of instructions from executive heads to field offices to give full support to associations of former international civil servants were not always being followed. He was grateful to the President of AFICS (NY) for recently arranging a very useful meeting with the new Director of Human Resource Management in UNDP to seek her assistance in reissuing the UNDP Administrator's 2001 instructions to Resident Coordinators in that regard.

20. Despite negative experiences by some associations, the President encouraged all members to continue and enhance their advocacy for the UN system.

21. A disturbing development at the last UN General Assembly had been the adoption of resolution 64/241 requesting the UN Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Chief Executives Board, to submit in 2011 a comprehensive report addressing the issue of unfunded liabilities for ASHI plans. As a result, the FAFICS Bureau had requested the Working Group on ASHIL to prepare a report on the situation, including recommendations for action by the Council at its current session.

22. The Working Group on Pensions Issues would be reporting to the Council on a range of issues reviewed at its pre-session meeting. These included: the two, quite distinct, problems of erosion of purchasing power in Argentina and in Colombia; the issue of certificates of entitlement for surviving spouses, and the report of the Pension Fund's Working Group on Plan Design. In this latter connection, the President noted that the FAFICS delegation had been the only group with a clearly defined mandate, as agreed at the 38th Council and reflected in the report of that session.

23. Among the challenges and constraints confronting the Federation in the medium or longer term, the President signalled the following issues, some of which were long-standing:

- The elimination of the remaining 0.5 per cent reduction in the first adjustment to UN pensions due after retirement;
- Voting rights for FAFICS representatives to the Pension Board;
- Broader participation by FAFICS member associations in the annual Council sessions;
- The need, in his view, for a meaningful increase in the annual contribution of member associations;
- Ways of increasing the staffing of the FAFICS secretariat, including through volunteer assistance. To that end, he had asked Josiane Taillefer, then a

member of the Executive Committee of and now one of the Vice-Presidents of AFUS-France, to become an advisor on FAFICS secretariat requirements;

- Improved information to members of associations, with an emphasis on explaining what was realistically achievable, as well as the timelines for decision-making.

24. Another outstanding issue was bank charges on UN pensions. Further to discussions at the 2009 Pension Board, a reminder questionnaire had been sent to non-respondent member associations. As this had not produced any results, he had explored alternative avenues with the President of the UN Federal Credit Union, including the use of ATMs. He was pleased to inform Council that the UNFCU President had confirmed that there were ATM money-changing facilities in 37 countries where FAFICS member associations were located. Details would be circulated by email.

25. An important new topic on the Council's agenda was gender balance in the governance and representation of FAFICS. He was confident that the Council members would contribute to the discussion in a positive and collegiate spirit.

26. Reverting to the subject of FAFICS' 35th anniversary, he commended to Council a valuable comprehensive chronology of the beginnings of FAFICS prepared by the Secretary. That document would form part of a special commemorative publication to be issued later in 2010.

27. The question of travel costs for FAFICS representatives to attend Council sessions required collective priority attention. It was regrettable that some associations could not afford to attend the one and only annual meeting of the Federation. In discussions with the President of UNFCU he had requested a grant from that institution, in order to facilitate attendance by at least one or two associations that had either never, or at best once, attended a Council session. A grant of \$ 2,100 had been accorded to FAFICS and this had enabled AFICS Thailand and AFICS Kenya to attend the current session. He was very pleased to welcome those participants and expressed gratitude to the UNFCU President for this generous gesture.

28. In conclusion, the President wished participants a successful session. The full text of his report is reproduced in appendix 4.

29. The Council took note of the President's comprehensive report with appreciation.

Agenda item 6: Admission of new members

30. The Secretary informed Council that since the 38th session, three associations meeting the FAFICS criteria for membership, namely Somalia (UNPAS-Somalia), Mauritius (AFICS-Mauritius) and Ukraine (AFICS- Kiev), had applied for membership of the Federation.

31. The situation regarding UNPAS-Somalia was rather exceptional. It had contacted the FAFICS secretariat as far back as August 2004 regarding membership. Good progress had been made towards its admission, in particular by assisting it in drawing up Statutes. However, a fresh outbreak of violence in December 2006 had brought matters to a halt: two of the Association's focal points had been forced to seek refuge in Kenya. Nonetheless, the focal points were still active on behalf of UN pensioners in Somalia, keeping in touch with each other and with the FAFICS secretariat by emails and telephone conferences. Under these circumstances, the Secretary recommended that UNPAS be admitted as an associate member, with the possibility of assuming full membership at a later stage should the situation improve. Council approved this recommendation and AAFI-AFICS undertook to pay the annual membership fee of the newly-admitted associate member.

32. Council likewise approved the admission of AFICS-Mauritius and AFICS-Kiev as regular members.

33. During the session, Council was informed that a newly-created association in Malaysia (AFICS-Malaysia), with which the President had been in contact, had ratified its Statutes and submitted them for review by FAFICS. The Statutes had been found to meet FAFICS membership criteria, and the Secretary recommended that AFICS-Malaysia be admitted to the Federation on the basis of this oral report. Council approved the admission of AFICS-Malaysia, which included Singapore and Brunei.

34. All newly-admitted members were greeted with a round of applause as a sign of the Federation's welcome and support.

35. The President informed the Council that after several years, FAFICS had succeeded in persuading ASAFI-Senegal to introduce the changes to its constitution needed for it to qualify for admission as a member association. The amended constitution and application for membership were expected to arrive shortly. He recommended that, upon their receipt, the Bureau be authorized to proceed with the admission of ASAFI- Senegal, thereby reducing the waiting period for their admission. Council endorsed this recommendation.

36. Council noted that following the extensive discussions at the 38th session on the application received from the Association of Retired GATT-WTO Staff Members, further meetings had been held with the Association. At a meeting in February 2010, agreement had been reached on a compromise text for changes to the membership articles of the Association's Statute; this had been initialled by all parties. However, the text had not been accepted by the Association's General Assembly, and the Association had now formally withdrawn its application for membership of FAFICS.

37. AAFI/AFICS informed Council that the GATT/WTO Association remained a voting member of the AAFI/AFICS Committee.

Agenda item 7.1: Pension issues in general

38. Council took note of a report on the 56th session of UNJSPB and its outcome (document Council 39/2010/D.7.1) prepared by the President and other members of the delegation to that session, which had been introduced in the Working Group on Pension Issues and had formed the backdrop to the Group's pre-session meeting. Council considered the Working Group's report (document Council 39/2010/CRP.5/Rev.1) which ranged over a mix of issues assigned to the Group, several of which were also for substantive discussion by the Council. It endorsed the Group's conclusions and recommendations.

Agenda item 7.1 (i): Report of the Working Group on Plan Design

39. Council considered this item on the basis of an advance summary report prepared by the alternate representative to the Working Group (document Council 39/2010/D.7.1(i)). It noted with satisfaction that the FAFICS input to the Pension Board's Working Group on Plan Design had been extremely effective and that the priorities agreed by the Council at its 38th session had been well reflected in the Working Group's report (document JSPF R.31). That showed how important it was to have a clear mandate. Council commended its team on the Working Group for their work, while urging them to redouble their efforts to ensure that FAFICS' top priority was also placed at the top of the Working Group's list of priorities.

40. As a matter of principle and consistency, Council considered it was important not to lose sight of the priorities agreed at its 38th session, viz (in descending order of priority):

1. Eliminating the 0.5 per cent reduction in the first adjustment due after retirement
2. Maintaining the defined nature of the Pension Fund
3. Increasing the normal retirement age up to 65
4. Returning to the 2 per cent accumulation rate for all participants and retirees
5. Enhancing the amounts payable for full withdrawal settlements for staff with less than five years of contributory service
6. Reviewing the entitlements of family members.

41. It also recognized the need to be responsive to emerging realities and changed circumstances. There were certain issues that, for various reasons, had assumed greater urgency over the past year, examples were: the need to abolish negative cost-of-living adjustments (as more countries fell into that bracket in the wake of the economic downturn), which would indeed be a prerequisite for lowering or eliminating the trigger point for annual adjustments; modification of Article 35 *bis* of the Pension Fund regulations on the number of qualifying years for divorced spouses (in light of the Board's unexpected deferral of a decision); the need for a review of the Emergency Fund; enhanced withdrawal settlements; and a reduction in the eligibility period required for participation in the Fund (Article 21) from the present six months to 60 calendar days. The fact that the Pension Fund now had an actuarial deficit could also not be ignored, but it should not be used as a reason to stall action on any

improvements. By contrast, it could be seen as giving a boost to the increase in the retirement age, which would reduce the Fund's liabilities. In a word, the picture had shifted since the 38th session, and the Federation's representatives in the Working Group and in the Pension Board itself should be given leeway in deciding when and how to press for given improvements.

Agenda item 7.1 (ii): Report of the Working Group on Pensions Issues

42. Council considered the Working Group's report (Council 39/2010/CRP.5/Rev.1) which ranged over a mix of issues assigned to the Group by the Bureau and those which were for substantive discussion by the Council itself. It endorsed the Group's conclusions and recommendations which are contained in appendix 5 to this report.

43. Council noted that the Working Group had requested its Convenor and Rapporteur to continue in their functions for another year. It endorsed this request, as well as the Convenor's suggestion that he be assisted in his work by a Co-convenor, Ms. Ana Maria Gudz Robak of AEFNUC-Cuba.

Agenda item 7.1 (iii): Review of items of interest to FAFICS on the agenda for the 57th session of the UNJSPB

44. Council reviewed a document (Council 39/2010/D.7.1(iii)) containing summary notes prepared by members of the Bureau on items of interest to FAFICS on the agenda of the 57th session of UNJSPB. Most of these items had already been discussed in the Working Group on Pensions Issues which had taken positions thereon. As the Council had already endorsed those positions (see para. 41 above), it sought, in its further discussions on the paper, to approach the topics more from a strategic angle, with a view to providing guidance to its representatives on the Board.

45. In considering the impact of the Fund's current actuarial deficit, the view was expressed that, coming as it did after six positive valuations, this relatively minor deficit should not be taken out of proportion: it would be important to await the results of the next actuarial valuation, due at the end of 2011, before reaching conclusions on longer-term trends. It was also recalled, however, that the Pension Fund secretariat had not been optimistic on that score. Council agreed that it should request projections of trends and of the effect of an increase in the retirement age on the actuarial balance of the Fund.

46. In reviewing the solutions under study by the Board to address wide fluctuations in the local currency track benefits of Professional staff, the Council considered it should take a two-pronged approach. First, it should press for full involvement in the various studies on exchange rate averages being undertaken. Second, it should defend the two-track system in the strongest possible terms. That system, which had been operating for 30 years, had done exactly what it was intended to, i.e. provide stability in times of global financial uncertainty. As such, it had ensured that the Fund remained viable in terms of membership, which had not, it should be remembered, always been a foregone conclusion. The two-track system was being criticised as costly and complex: in fact, it was no more complex than any other system would be.

As to cost, that was almost entirely a function of currency fluctuations: the costs of the two-track system increased when the value of the US\$ increased vis à vis other currencies, and vice versa. That said, even at times when the dollar pension might be higher than the local track, beneficiaries often preferred to go on the local track in the interests of stability of income. The Council was firmly of the view that at a time when there was increasing pressure on the US\$ as a reserve currency, there should be no tinkering with the two-track system. As a final point on cost, it should be borne in mind that the Fund had made considerable gains in investments in euros which greatly outweighed the cost of the two-track system.

Agenda item 7.1 (iv): Proposals for the modification of certificates of entitlement

47. This item having been reviewed by the Working Group on Pensions Issues (see agenda item 7.1 (ii) above), which had been endorsed by the Council, Council reaffirmed its position on same. It also expressed support for the proposal made in discussions with the Secretary/CEO of the Pension Fund that this topic should be taken up by the CEB HR Network, including the possibility of modifying the designation of beneficiary forms submitted to the Pension Fund by organizations for new participants in the Fund. That avenue should be explored with the Executive Head representatives at the upcoming Board session.

Agenda item 7.2: Pension adjustment system

7.2 (i): Adjustment of pensions in Argentina

7.2 (ii): Actual situation of UN pension benefits in Colombia

7.2 (iii): Change of effective date for annual CPI adjustments from 1 April to 1 January

7.2 (iv): Lowering or eliminating the trigger point for annual adjustments

7.2 (v): Modification of Article 35 *bis* of the Pension Fund Regulations on number of qualifying years for divorced spouses benefits

48. These five items had been covered in the report of the Working Group on Pension Issues (agenda item 7.1 (ii) above), which had been endorsed by the Council; Council therefore reaffirmed its position on these items as well as its support for a reduction in the eligibility period for participation in the Pension Fund from the present six months to 60 calendar days. It expressed strong support for the investigatory mission to Colombia and Argentina which had been mooted in discussions with the Secretary/CEO of the Fund and his staff, which might provide a breakthrough for the purchasing power problems that had long bedevilled those two countries. With regard to item 7.2 (iii), the Working Group on Pension Issues had reviewed the pros and cons of changing the effective date of annual CPI adjustments without reaching any firm conclusion on the matter.

Agenda item 7.2 (vi): Review of small pensions

49. Council considered this item on the basis of a note by the President (Council 39/2010/CRP.4) that recalled FAFICS concerns over the amount of time that had elapsed **since** the special adjustment provisions for small pensions had last been reviewed. Following discussion, Council recalled that the Pension Board had already agreed, when FAFICS had last brought this matter to its attention, that it would consider a review of this matter at the completion of the next comprehensive review of pensionable remuneration (PR) for all staff. Since ICSC was to conduct the PR review in 2010-2011, the most effective course of action would be to press the Board at its upcoming session to undertake the review of small pensions in conjunction with the PR review. A note recast along those lines (Council 39/2010/CRP.4/Add.1) was reviewed and agreed by Council.

Agenda item 8: After-Service Health Insurance and Long-Term Care (ASHIL)

50. The Convenor of the Working Group introduced the Group's report (Council 39/2010/CRP.8), noting that the major focus of the Group's work had been resolution 64/241 on ASHI funding. It was clear that the General Assembly's request to the UN Secretary-General to report in 2012 on managing ASHI liabilities could jeopardize long-standing benefits that were key components of the international civil service's conditions and an acquired right.

51. A draft resolution introduced by AAFI-AFICS had been adopted by the Working Group and was attached to the Group's report for the approval of the Council. The resolution underscored the importance of maintaining and defending ASHI schemes against attempts to undermine them and contained a number of specific requests to the FAFICS Bureau for monitoring and action.

52. Another matter reviewed by the Working Group was a proposal by AAFIB-Brazil that retirees should have the option of purchasing, at their own expense, additional full-service contributions in ASHI schemes in order to qualify for inclusion in ASHI-funded schemes. Noting that the AAFIB position on funding was identical to that already adopted by the Council, the Group had concluded that no further discussion was necessary.

53. The Working Group had agreed that there was a need to look into health care schemes for local staff, particularly the scheme organized by UN/UNDP. The Group had also discussed the issue of Long-Term Care (LTC), which had been omitted from the agenda for reasons of perception and cost at a time when ASHI funding was the foremost concern. It had concluded that it should continue to take an interest in LTC but that to counter the perception issue it should begin to refer to LTC as "non-medical components of health care".

54. Council commended the Working Group on its report and thanked Linda Saputelli for its preparation. It approved the draft resolution attached to the report, subject to editorial updating, and broadly endorsed all the Group's conclusions, expressing reservations only about the proposed re-branding of LTC, which it felt might lead to confusion. The matter should be reverted to at a future date.

55. The Council further noted that the present Convenor of the Working Group was standing down and that Roger Eggleston had agreed to take on this function. It endorsed this proposal and expressed appreciation to the outgoing Convenor for his work.

Agenda item 9: Commemoration of FAFICS 35th anniversary

56. The Secretary introduced a historical record, which he had assembled from FAFICS files and other information (Council 39/2010/D.9) to commemorate FAFICS 35th anniversary. The document focused on developments in the early formative years, starting in July 1975 when the first Council had opened in Geneva. FFOA had contributed a piece on the creation of the association and its role in the founding of FAFICS. As explained in a covering letter by the President, the historical record would become part of a publication, which it was planned to produce later in the year. This publication would incorporate contributions from FAFICS emeriti, along with a photo gallery. The Bureau would also be interested in hearing from member associations which had records relating to FAFICS' early years, as well as photos; such contributions should be forwarded to the President by 15 September 2010.

57. The President expressed his gratitude to the Secretary for producing an impressive piece of research that vividly documented the arduous road travelled by FAFICS founding fathers. Members of the Council also expressed their appreciation for the Secretary's work, which provided a fascinating insight into the early days of the Federation. It was generally recognized that, while the Federation had come a long way and could justifiably take pride in its achievements, many challenges still lay ahead. Celebration without complacency should be its byword.

58. In response to a question about the way in which associations should best celebrate the anniversary, the President said that it was for each association to mark the event in the way it found most appropriate, while encouraging all members to join in the celebrations.

59. Subsequently during the session, the President informed the Council that messages of support and solidarity with FAFICS on the occasion of its 35th anniversary had been received from emeriti office holders, the Secretary/CEO of the Pension Fund, the Chairman of the UNJSPB and the President of the United Nations Federal Credit Union. He cited in particular the extremely positive words from the Pension Fund about FAFICS and its work. These messages would appear in the final commemorative publication; they are also reproduced in appendix 8 to this report.

Agenda item 10: Improving the functioning of the FAFICS Council

60. For the consideration of this item, Council reviewed a note by the President (Council 39/2010/CRP.7), summarizing the relevant discussions at the February 2010 meeting of the Bureau. The Bureau had had before it a note by AAFI-AFICS and several other written contributions by its members. The discussion had covered a wide range of topics, including: the pattern of Council sessions (frequency, length, timing and location); functioning of the Bureau (improved communication between

members; composition of the Bureau; desirable number of Vice Presidents and their role); Pension Board and FAFICS documentation, and increasing participation of FAFICS members.

61. Appreciation was expressed for the Bureau's useful comments and suggestions. Following an initial exchange of views, however, Council noted that, given the late distribution of the note and the number of important topics it covered, it was difficult to reach meaningful conclusions on the matter. Many if not all of the subjects alluded to in the note had been discussed over the past two years and had elicited a wide variety of views. The issues now needed to be analysed and options presented for their solution, with pros and cons. Furthermore, that work needed to be available in time for discussions to take place within member associations.

62. In considering how best to take the matter forward, Council recalled that a working group had been established at the 38th session to look into these very issues; for various reasons, that group had not "taken off". It was agreed that the group should be activated, with the same membership as before, i.e. Enid Steward-Goffman (who should coordinate the group's work), Edward Omotoso and Pierre Traore. The Group should report to the fortieth session of the Council, with the report being routed via the Bureau at its winter 2011 meeting for input/comments. A member of the Bureau would liaise with the Group to ensure smooth process. This function was subsequently assigned to Katia Chestopalov.

Agenda item 11: Strengthening the participation of women in the FAFICS Council and increasing the number of women office bearers

63. AAFICS-Australia introduced a discussion paper (Council 39/2010/D.11) designed to identify the action that needed to be taken for more women to take leadership positions in FAFICS. While the Federation's Rules of Procedure referred to the need to respect both the global nature of FAFICS and gender balance, in practice this had meant a choice between regional candidates or women candidates. This practice should not become entrenched. Women in FAFICS did not want to compete against regional representatives: more women candidates were needed from all regions. It was noted in the document that in the past 36 years, 41 males and 10 females had held office in FAFICS. The period during which most women had been elected was the 1980s/1990s, but that trend had not held. That was all the more questionable given that the number of vice-presidents had increased considerably since then. To address this situation, AAFICS-Australia was suggesting that the following items be placed on the FAFICS work plan for 2010-2011:

- (a) Circulation of a survey on gender balance to all FAFICS affiliates;
- (b) Establishment of a training and mentoring programme on pensions issues; a search should also be undertaken to encourage women with pension-related expertise to take part in FAFICS;
- (c) Amendment of the FAFICS rules of procedure to the effect that groups of office bearers (Vice Presidents, Standing Committee and Board representatives) should not be drawn from one sex only.

64. In preparing the document, AAFICS-Australia had hoped, by being constructively critical, to open up an important topic for collegial discussion and thereby improve mutual understanding.

65. In the ensuing lively discussion, a wide range of views were expressed. Some considered this an important matter overdue for discussion; others, while supporting gender balance in principle, were not convinced of its relevance in the FAFICS context, where members were retired and worked on a voluntary basis. It was pointed out that as UN system organizations had been slower than many national Governments to promote gender balance, the number of professional women retirees was still well below their male counterparts; that situation would gradually improve. Others were not so sure, noting that the number of women office holders in FAFICS had actually fallen off over the last twenty years.

66. General support was expressed for carrying out a survey, which would serve to establish the facts and determine what further steps were needed. There was less interest in the proposed mentoring programme, which several again saw as irrelevant to FAFICS. Others, while not necessarily opposing some action along those lines, noted that the core business of FAFICS was to defend the rights of pensioners before the Pension Board and other bodies. Merit and technical excellence must therefore stand head and shoulders above all other considerations, including regionality and gender. That said, it was evident good sense to encourage both women and men with pension-related expertise to become involved in FAFICS; this was already being done and should continue.

67. During the discussion AAFICS-Australia made available a draft resolution, based on the action points in the paper, and incorporating several others; it later withdrew this in favour of a BAFUNCS proposal that a contact group should be set up to prepare:

- (a) a survey on gender balance to be sent to all associations affiliated to FAFICS affiliates;
- (b) a draft FAFICS policy statement on gender balance.

68. The results of the survey and the draft policy statement should be submitted to the Council at its 2011 session. Council approved this proposal and Georges Kutukdjian, Mary Johnson, Linda Saputelli and Pierre Traore agreed to serve on the group. The President welcomed the outcome of the discussions and the actions contemplated in the BAFUNCS proposal as positive steps forward in the direction of gender balance in FAFICS.

Agenda item 12: Situation of former UNJSPF participants from the former USSR, Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR

69. Council reviewed the updated information on this subject presented by AFICS-Moscow (Council 39/2010/D.12) which revealed that over the past year no progress had been made towards resolving the distressing situation affecting UN retirees in the former USSR, Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian. Appeals to various quarters,

including the UN Secretary-General and the Russian President, had fallen on deaf ears, while the Pension Board took the view that, as the Russian Government had undertaken to resolve the issue internally, the dispute was now between the retirees and the Russian Government (The authorities in the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR took the position that the Russian Government alone was responsible for the liabilities of the former Soviet republics).

70. At the 38th session, frustrated by the seeming intractability of the problem, the Council had set up a working group (composed of Katia Chestopalov, Linda Saputelli and Witold Zyss) to collect all the factual information, develop a strategy, help identify a legal advisor and solicit ideas and suggestions from the FAFICS membership. Reporting on behalf of that group, Katia Chestopalov informed the Council that the group had indeed amassed a great deal of information on the matter, with the assistance of AFICS-Moscow. That served only to underline the complexity of the matter, with several different groups of retirees and many players involved. The key to unlocking the situation was political goodwill, which it was only to be hoped would be forthcoming. FAFICS should remain active and increase the pressure at all levels. It needed to focus on developing a multi-pronged strategy. In the ensuing discussion, it was suggested that the services of a retired legal adviser might be helpful, given the various legal ramifications of the matter. The President again recalled that the Pension Fund had been instructed to monitor the situation; it should be reminded of that obligation and urged to maintain pressure on the Russian delegation to the Board. He urged AFICS-Moscow and its fellow associations to keep up the momentum, and invited all members of the Council to contribute to the work of the group in any way they could. Pauline Barrett-Reid (BAFUNCS) agreed to assist the group, drawing on her experience as former Director of the ILO Sub-Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

71. Council thanked the group for its oral report and agreed that its work should continue. Meanwhile, this continuing infamous situation should be brought to the attention of the Board at its upcoming session.

Agenda item 13: Benevolent Funds of FAFICS Member Associations and Emergency Fund of the UNJSPF

72. Member associations provided details of their benevolent funds. AAFI/AFICS followed up on cases via its Social Welfare Assistant who helped retirees with problems that arose in their everyday life; difficulties arose when people were either too timid, or too sick, to request help. AAFU/AFUS-France reported on its Solidarity Fund which was open not only to its own members, but all FAFICS members. It experienced the same problems as AAFI/AFICS in coming to grips with unreported cases. AFICS/NY provided an update report on its Charities Foundation; while the bulk of members were based in the United States, the Foundation was open to all AFICS/NY members located in over 100 countries. Applications for assistance were reviewed by an assistance review committee, whose criteria were quite liberal.

73. AAFNU-Burkina Faso noted that the majority of its Association's members were locally recruited staff on low incomes. There were many social problems and an exchange of information with larger associations on what was feasible in that context

would be welcome. AFICS-Thailand reported that in a bid to boost its membership, in 2004 it had established a benefit fund open to contributing members. In 2007 it had set up a charity fund for Alzheimer's disease. These initiatives relied on voluntary contributions and there were a few contributors. AFICS-Addis Ababa likewise noted the challenges posed by the medical requirements of low-income members.

74. Turning to the UNJSPF Emergency Fund, Council was disappointed to note that its proposal for a joint Pension Fund/FAFICS panel to review the Fund's operation had not been accepted by the Pension Board at its 2009 session. Meanwhile, there had been no discernible improvement in the Fund's response to the emergency (i.e. urgent) cases referred to it, whether in terms of prompt action, sympathy of tone or clarity of rationale. It was, however, noted that the Emergency Fund had taken innovative steps to address the problems of pensioners in Haiti following the earthquake.

75. The status report on the Fund (document JSPB/57/R15) to be taken up at the Board's forthcoming session, indicated that in the reporting period 1 May 2009-30 April 2010, 75 cases had been received by the Fund, of which a total of 13 disbursements had been made, and six of these related to the previous reporting period. The total value of these disbursements was under \$30,000; viewed against the biennial allocation of \$200,000 that was a serious underutilization of the Fund's potential. Behind these statistics was a litany of harrowing, sometimes tragic, human stories. In one case, an applicant had died before the disbursement was made. Staff who contacted the Fund to inquire about their claims were routinely ignored, although matters usually improved when a FAFICS member association intervened. Favourable comments were also voiced about the responsiveness of the Fund's new Chief of Operations. In short, the concerns expressed at the Council's 38th session remained fully valid. Council therefore fully supported the proposal of the Working Group on Plan Design that the Pension Fund secretariat carry out a study with a view to enhancing the scope of the Emergency Fund and the flexibility of its administrative requirements. That study should be presented to the Board at its 2011 session.

76. Council stood ready to work constructively with the Pension Board on this issue. Among the options suggested during the ensuing discussion were: establishment of a network/tracking mechanism to keep local associations aware of cases submitted and facilitate follow up; submission of cases through the local association under confidential cover; referral, as appropriate of cases rejected by the Fund to individual associations' benevolent funds; earmarking of resources to be used in extreme emergencies and the establishment of target timelines for completing administrative actions. BAFUNCS indicated that it was planning to hold an informal meeting with the Pension Fund officials concerned during the upcoming session with a view to improving liaison between the Emergency Fund and its own Benevolent Fund. It was also suggested that expanding the distribution of the Emergency Fund booklet would help to clarify the criteria and guidelines applied by the Fund and assist applicants in meeting documentation requirements, the latter being a major factor in delays.

77. Council looked to its representatives on the Pension Board to press for the above-mentioned study and trusted that its concerns and suggestions would be taken into account in that study.

Agenda item 14: Meeting with CEO/Secretary of the UNJSPF and the representative of the UN Secretary-General on Investments

78. Council met on 12 July with Bernard Cochemé, the CEO/Secretary of the Fund, Sergio Arvizu, Deputy CEO/Secretary, Alan Blythe, Head, Geneva Office, Frank de Turris, Chief of Operations, Dennis Liberatore, Chief, Financial Services, and other members of the Pension Fund secretariat. Also present were Warren Sach, the Representative of the Secretary-General for Investments and Suzanne Bishopric, Director, Investment Management Division.

79. Comprehensive presentations were given on the current status of the Fund and on recent developments in investment returns, by Bernard Cochemé, Suzanne Bishopric and Warren Sach.

80. Following pre-session consultations with member associations, the President had submitted a list of questions to the CEO/Secretary of the Fund. The responses to these questions were given under cover of a memorandum to the President. A number of additional questions were raised during the discussions, which, together with the responses thereto, would be consolidated in a document to be circulated at a later stage.

81. At the end of the meeting, the President thanked Bernard Cochemé, Warren Sach and their colleagues on behalf of the Council, for the presentation and discussion session; FAFICS looked forward to continuing close collaboration with the Pension Fund.

Agenda item 15: FAFICS membership increase efforts

82. The President noted that with the recent admission of several new members, FAFICS should achieve its membership drive target of 50 member associations by 2010; the associated target of 20,000 members would also, he hoped, be met by the end of the year. A broad membership base was critical to maintaining FAFICS credibility as a representative advocate for retirees in the Pension Board and other forums where pensioners' rights need to be defended. It was also essential that, irrespective of differing interests and priorities, the Federation should always speak with one voice on key issues. During the coming months, ways and means would be explored of further strengthening the working relationship between FAFICS and the Pension Board. In that connection he noted with satisfaction the proposal made by the Fund's secretariat, with FAFICS encouragement, to organize a mission to Latin America (the region with the largest proportion of FAFICS affiliates) to review inter alia the purchasing-power problems faced by retirees in Argentina and Colombia

83. During the discussion that followed, appreciation was expressed for the efforts made by the President and the Bureau to boost FAFICS membership. It was stressed that the Federation's strength in the Pension Board lay in its numbers. It was clearly important to keep up the momentum and ensure that newly retired staff and those about to retire were made aware of the benefits of joining the FAFICS affiliate in the country of their retirement.

84. AAFI-AFICS suggested two avenues that could be explored in this connection; the first was fielding joint missions by a representative of the Pension Fund secretariat and a representative from a FAFICS affiliate. Such joint missions had proved extremely successful in the past and were an effective vehicle for publicizing FAFICS. The second was through the pre-retirement seminars which some, but not all, organizations organized for staff on the verge of retirement. AAFI-AFICS proposed that the agenda of the 40th session should include an item on how FAFICS could assist in activating pre-retirement seminars at both HQ and field locations. It offered to take the lead on the topic and prepare a paper for the Council's consideration.

85. This proposal and offer were warmly welcomed and accepted by Council, which also noted the importance of outreach to staff and retirees in remote locations. Among the outreach methods that should be explored were video-based seminars, and the forwarding of letters to prospective retirees and recently retired staff (including the possibility of having letters forwarded by the Pension Fund secretariat). Another point stressed was the need for staff responsible for pensions and health insurance in smaller field offices to receive the training needed to enable them to give sound advice to staff about to retire. It was proposed that UNJSPF should consider a training package similar to that used by UNDP for salary surveys.

86. Council further noted the differing patterns of retirement versus employment: while staff might retire in the location where they had spent their careers, this was by no means always the case as many staff returned to their home country or opted to live in a third country. The needs of retirees in each case would be different, as would the facilities and information available to them. Associations' websites were an important source of information as was the Pension Fund's website. Several associations expressed interest in exchanging information on preparation for retirement. It was suggested that the importance of pre-retirement seminars should be brought to the attention of the CEB HR Network.

87. It was agreed that the various suggestions and comments would be taken into account in preparing the documentation for the Council's next session.

Agenda item 16: Review of advocacy of the ideals and work of UN system organizations

88. Council considered this item on the basis of written reports by AFICS/NY in its capacity as focal point for advocacy activities and by ARICSA (Council 39/2010/D.16) as well as by AAFICS-Australia and AAFI-AFICS (Council 39/2010/D.16/Add.1).

89. The AFICS/NY report summarized a number of events organized and/or attended by AFICS/NY, as well as inputs and reports activities, and advocacy through publications and other activities. It included a summary of the celebration of UN Day 2009 in Argentina, Addis Ababa, Mexico, Rome, Bangkok and New York.

90. In document Council 39/2010/D.16/Add.1, AAFICS-Australia reported on the celebration of UN Day 2009 in Canberra and Sydney. AAFICS-Australia would also be representing FAFICS at an upcoming conference on global health in Melbourne.

AAFI-AFICS reported that it had been active in a series of events and activities to promote the ideals and work of the UN system, including the celebration of the UN Day of Older Persons in October 2009. This event, which brought together UN system retirees and local groups, had been a great success and the Committee was now engaged in preparations for the 2010 celebration. The AAFI-AFICS Committee had also published a report commemorating the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the international civil service. Copies of this publication were distributed to members.

91. Several members gave oral reports on events organized on international days relevant to the mandate of their organizations (e.g. FFOA on World Food Day; AAFU/AFUS on Human Rights Day and International Women's Day). AFICS-Addis Ababa and AFNU-BF reported on their celebration of UN Day 2009. These associations were encouraged to provide written summaries that could be issued as an addendum to the existing documentation on the item.

92. The President was pleased to note the very varied activities that had been organized by member associations around the world. He reiterated that advocacy of the ideals and work of the UN system was an intrinsic part of the Federation's mandate, as reflected in its Statute. He wished in particular to commend AFICS/NY for the sterling work it was doing as the focal point for advocacy. In conclusion he urged members to send their written contributions on the subject ahead of the session, as this would streamline the discussions and make for a more effective exchange of information.

Agenda item 17.1: Reports on FAFICS representation and on FAFICS activities as an NGO in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council

93. Council reviewed a series of documents under this item. The first (Council 39/2010/D.17) contained reports by AFICS/NY on meetings attended by its members on behalf of FAFICS that covered FAFICS issues. These were summarized under the following headings: gender; health; human settlements; environment; peace (including disarmament); human rights; and increasing the effectiveness of NGOs. Part B of the document contained a report on the May 2010 CoNGO Board meeting at which AFICS/NY had represented FAFICS as an observer. Part C reported on the 2010 sessions of the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs (25 January – 3 February and 26 May – 4 June).

94. Document Council 39/2010/D.17/Add.1 contained a report by ARICSA on its advocacy role, which it saw as working together with the relatively small number of NGO Committees in Vienna. Given the emphasis on NGOs, it followed that ARICSA maintained close links with CoNGO and participated in the six-monthly CoNGO Board meetings when these were held in Vienna.

95. Council next considered the report of the FAFICS representatives to the 2010 FICSA Council. FAFICS had been represented by its Secretary, Anders Tholle, AAFI-AFICS Chairman Roger Eggleston and its Vice-Chairman Katia Chestopalov. They reported that the work of the Council had been excellent in parts, although FICSA's

expertise in some technical areas was lacking, as the Federation itself recognized. A major focus of concern had been General Assembly resolution 26/241 on after-service health insurance for “current retirees and active staff members”. That resolution sounded an ominous warning: retiree and staff associations/unions should look to the defence of their acquired rights. Retirees needed the help and support of active staff on both insurance and pension issues; in return they could offer active staff their goodwill and expertise in both areas. Against this backdrop of common interests, FAFICS had been able to provide information and advice on a broad range of issues, and tribute had been paid by FICSA to the tangible contribution that FAFICS had made to the Standing Committee on Social Security. The outcomes of that Committee included:

- a request to the Executive Committee to liaise with FAFICS and to monitor the situation regarding implementation of resolution 26/241;
- a request to the FICSA Executive Committee and FICSA members to advance the mandatory age of separation in all organizations to age 62 as a first step; the Committee favoured increasing the separation age to 65, without prejudice to the rights of those who wished to retire at 60.

96. Another topic reviewed had been the FAFICS contribution to the FICSA budget. In 2009, FAFICS had requested a reduction of its annual contribution. This request had not been successful. Anders Tholle, Secretary of FAFICS raised the matter again at the 2010 session, pleading with FICSA that FAFICS annual contribution to FICSA should be reduced from CHF 600 to CHF 300 per annum. He argued that FAFICS should never have been placed in a group of Associations having consultative status with FICSA, which included the staff associations of major international organizations, which were financed by contributions from active staff members. The FAFICS budget, on the other hand, was based on voluntary contributions from pensioners with far less income than active staff. Many pensioners had small pensions because they had worked as local staff in developing countries. During the past decade, membership of the Federation had increased by over 25 new member associations, mostly in developing and poor countries and FAFICS had been providing financial support for the travel of some of these associations to enable them to participate in the Federation’s work.

97. FICSA had been unable to reach a consensus on this request, even though most members saw the requested reduction as reasonable. In order to resolve the stalemate, three FICSA member associations, WHO/AFRO Brazzaville, WHO/EURO Copenhagen, and UNRWA-ASA-Lebanon had offered to absorb the total fee for 2010 on FAFICS behalf. This pledge had already been followed up and FAFICS had thanked each of them for their generous support. It was recognized that this voluntary assistance was not a permanent solution. The newly-elected FICSA Treasurer was proposing to consider a reorganization of associate membership which would separate FAFICS and the Women’s Guild/Geneva from major active staff associations. FAFICS would need to monitor the situation and press FICSA to resolve the matter.

98. Following a discussion of various options for reciprocal relations with FICSA, Council decided to maintain its earlier position that FAFICS should continue its

association with FICSA and attempt to strengthen its links with the other staff bodies, namely CCISUA and UNISERVE.

99. Council then turned its attention to a report by AAFI-AFICS on its collaboration with NGOs in the Geneva area (Council 39/2010/D.17/Add.3), within the framework of two umbrella organizations: the Geneva International Network on Aging (GINA) and Plate-Forme. With the former it was engaged in promoting the United Nations Day of Older Persons 2010, while it had joined the latter in a bid to enable the large number of UN system retirees in the Geneva area to become more involved in activities organized for seniors in the local area.

100. The President commended the valuable work being carried out by the FAFICS network of focal points in the following locations: New York (AFICS/NY), Geneva (AAFI/AFICS), Vienna (ARICSA), Paris (AAFI/AFUS-France), and Rome (FFOA). He proposed that this voluntary support network be continued, but would like to see its coverage expanded through the participation of associations in other locations where major meetings were held, such as Bangkok, Mexico, and Chile. In that connection it was recalled that the CoNGO Board would be meeting in Senegal in October 2010 and it would be highly appropriate for ASAFI-Senegal to represent FAFICS at that meeting if its membership had been approved by then. It was emphasized that guidance from the Bureau would be needed for the effective expansion of the existing network.

101. It was also stressed that a more concerted effort needed to be made to monitor developments at the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) with which FAFICS already had consultative status. A FAFICS representative should be present at all meetings where issues of importance to the Federation were being discussed, and to deliver a prepared statement of its position on FAFICS behalf. For instance, the critical issues of retirement age and the comprehensive review of pensionable remuneration were on the Commission's 2011 agenda. The President agreed to take up this matter with the ICSC Chairman at the forthcoming Pension Board session.

Agenda item 17.2: Report of the Regional Meeting of the United Nations Associations of Former International Civil Servants in Latin America and the Caribbean (AFICS/AL/C)

102. Council took note of the report on the Regional Meeting prepared by ASOPENUC-Colombia (Council 39/2010/CRP.6) and expressed its appreciation for this valuable initiative.

Agenda item 18: Administrative and Financial Questions

(i) Report of the auditors

103. The auditors had examined the balance sheet and income and expenditure account of FAFICS for the year ending 31 December 2009 (document Council 39/2010/D.18(i)). They recommended that the Council approve the balance sheet and the income and expenditure account. The Council approved the balance sheet

and the income and expenditure account and thanked André Weber and Ventura Garcia Garnateo for the conscientious manner in which they had gone about their work. Council agreed to reappoint the audit team for a further period of one year.

(ii) Proposed budget for the year 2011

104. In its review of the proposed budget (document Council 39/2010/D18(ii)), Council commended the tight management that had resulted in a zero-growth budget. It was noted that the Bureau had discussed the possibility of raising the per capita annual contribution to the Federation from \$1.35 to \$1.50 in 2011, so as to avoid the risk of future deficits; however, no consensus had been reached on the matter. In the ensuing discussion, some support was voiced for an increase, and it was also suggested that the additional income so raised should be earmarked for assistance to associations in need. Others expressed concern about the impact of an increase on small and large associations alike. It was further pointed out that, in cases where the budget as presented had been tabled with local committees and agreed with them, it would be difficult to go along with an ex post facto increase. The consensus was that the matter should be revisited at the fortieth session. Council approved the budget as presented. It appears in appendix 7 to this report.

Agenda item 18 (iii): Interim report on the management of the budget for 2010

105. Council reviewed the report on this subject by the Secretary and Treasurer (Council 39/2010/D.18(iii)). It was informed that the outstanding dues for FFOA-Rome had meanwhile been despatched to the Federation. Council confirmed that the reduced membership fee formula applicable to AFICS-Moscow would also apply to the newly-admitted AFICS-Kiev.

Agenda item 19: Election of FAFICS officers

106. The Secretary had circulated the names of all candidates standing for office in FAFICS in accordance with article 6.7 of the Federation's Rules of Procedure (Council 39/2010/CRP.2).

107. Andrés Castellanos was re-elected President unopposed and by acclamation. Many Council members expressed appreciation for his work on behalf of the Federation, with AFICS-Uruguay abstaining. The President thanked the Council for the confidence it had shown in him by re-electing him.

108. The President said he felt sure he was speaking for the entire Federation in expressing the deepest regret that Anders Tholle, its outstanding Secretary, had now firmly resolved to step down. His determination, knowledge, savoir faire, charm, and when needed, firmness, had been incalculable assets to the Federation over the past ten years. He would be sadly missed and it was only to be hoped that he would remain active in FAFICS affairs. On behalf of the Council, he declared Anders to be Honorary Secretary of the Federation – a move which the Council endorsed by acclamation.

109. Anders Tholle thanked the President for his kind words. Responding to those who had suggested that he might stay on until his successor was established, he said that his decision to stand down with effect from 1 October 2010 was firm, although he would remain in the background as long as necessary to ensure a smooth handover to his successor, whom he had identified.

110. Members of the Council then took the floor to pay tribute to Anders' prodigious contribution to the work of the Federation. They stressed his human qualities, his dignity, approachability and equable nature, as well as his kindness, patience and unstinting help and guidance. Admiration was expressed for the extraordinary length and breadth of his service in the UN system, which had made him a repository of knowledge and experience and a source of security for FAFICS members, who could always rely on a prompt and thorough response from him. His unflagging dedication to FAFICS was well-known, but he himself was a credit and honour to the Federation. Members wished him well in his "retirement", while hoping that he would remain a presence in FAFICS.

111. Roger Eggleston (AAFI-AFICS) said he had great pleasure in proposing Jayaraman (Jay) Sundaresan to succeed Anders Tholle as Secretary of the Federation. He explained that Jay had been unable to travel to London to attend the Council due to visa difficulties. Perhaps best known to participants as a former President of CCISUA, Jay had a solid background in IT and administration, which was all to the good. He was not unlike Anders in temperament and the fact that the Secretary considered him a worthy successor spoke volumes of his suitability for the role. Anders had agreed to overlap in the job to the extent possible, so there should be no hiatus. AAFI-AFICS warmly commended Jayaraman Sunderesan's candidacy to the Council, which was strongly supported by the President.

112. Jayaraman Sunderesan was elected Secretary by acclamation with effect from 1 October 2010.

113. Michael Suess (AFICS-Israel) proposed the re-election of Lydia Ontal as Assistant Secretary. She was a great supporter of FAFICS from New York, and the unassuming yet effective way in which she discharged her duties was greatly appreciated, in particular by the Secretary and the President.

114. Lydia Ontal was re-elected as Assistant Secretary by acclamation.

115. The Secretary recalled that when he had taken on the post of Secretary he had replaced a Secretary/Treasurer. Feeling unable to carry out both those functions, he had co-opted his former colleague Juan Mateu as Treasurer and the two had worked closely ever since. Juan Mateu now also felt that the time had come to step down, though he agreed to stay on and close the accounts at the end of 2010, by which time a qualified Treasurer would have been identified and elected via a Federation-wide postal vote.

116. The President expressed much appreciation for Juan Mateu's diligent work as Treasurer. He had tried to persuade him to reconsider his decision but while regretting his forthcoming departure he understood the circumstances.

117. Council reappointed Juan Mateu as Treasurer pending the identification and election of a successor which should take place before the end of 2010.

118. Council next turned to the election of seven Vice-Presidents. ASOPENUC-Colombia said that the number of Vice-President positions was considered excessive by AFICS-Uruguay; it proposed that this issue be taken into account by the Working Group on improving the functioning of the FAFICS Council.

119. Council was informed that the following ten candidates were competing for the seven positions of Vice-President:

Katia Chestopalov
S.A. Janakiram
Mary Johnson
Mario Lafuente
Oscar Larghi
Alan Prien
Linda Saputelli
Gerhard Schramek
Josianne Taillefer
Tedla Teshome

120. Oscar Larghi subsequently withdrew his candidature, leaving nine candidates for the seven positions. The Secretary announced that the Bureau had reviewed the situation and had concluded that the Council should proceed to election by closed ballot. Georges Ah-Fong and Habib Zuberi from the host delegation, BAFUNCS, were appointed polling officers and one member per delegation was provided with a ballot paper, and where applicable a proxy ballot, to be placed in the ballot box.

121. The result of the Council's voting for the seven Vice-Presidents was as follows:

Elected with the following votes:

24 Mary Johnson
20 Gerhard Schramek
19 Katia Chestopalov
19 Tedla Teshome
18 S.A. Janakiram
16 Mario Lafuente.

Requiring a run-off election:

11 Alan Prien
11 Linda Saputelli
11 Josiane Taillefer

122. The result of the run-off election, organized under the same conditions as described above, was:

14 Linda Saputelli
9 Josiane Taillefer
4 Alan Prien

123. Linda Saputelli was accordingly elected Vice-President.

124. Council noted that the newly-elected Bureau would assume office on 1 October 2010. In closing the elections, the Presiding Officer wished those elected every success in their activities on behalf of FAFICS.

Agenda item 20: Appointment of FAFICS representatives in 2011 to the 58th session of the UNJSPB and its Standing Committees and other meetings

125. The President informed the Council that in accordance with the procedures agreed at the 38th Council, the following candidates were being proposed to represent FAFICS in the above-mentioned meetings (list circulated in Council 39 /2010/ CRP.10):

Pension Board

Representatives (4)

Andrés Castellanos
Roger Eggleston
Mary Johnson
Gerhard Schramek

Alternates (2)

Tedla Teshome
Josiane Taillefer

Audit Committee (1)

Mohammed Said

126. Council confirmed these appointments, with some members expressing the hope that the consultation process would be more comprehensive in future.

Agenda item 21: Any other business

127. Mary Johnson (AFICS-Australia) said that in order to activate the collection of data on national taxation of UN pensions, which had been discussed at the 38th session, she had convened an informal lunchtime meeting of interested persons, who had agreed to exchange information by email with the aim of building up a consolidated dossier of national practice. She proposed that an item on the subject be included on the agenda of the Council's 40th session. If any other participants were interested in joining this informal network, they should provide her with their email details.

Agenda item 22: Date and venue of the 40th session of the FAFICS Council

128. The President said that discussions on the matter were ongoing, but no final decision had been taken. He would inform members as soon as possible, bearing in mind the logistic and other arrangements that would need to be made by the host association.

Closure of the session

129. At the closing session, the President expressed his satisfaction with the constructive spirit that had guided the discussions at the current session and commended the member associations on their commitment to the objectives of the Federation. He thanked the Presiding Officer for his contribution to the successful outcome of the session. Special thanks were due to the host association, BAFUNCS, for all its support and its efforts not only to keep things running smoothly, but also to make the session enjoyable and memorable. In that connection, he wished in particular to thank Michael Davies for his steadfast efforts and effective contribution regarding all arrangements in support of the Council session, in organizing the Thames boat trip and for providing a most informative commentary. He wished also to express appreciation to the IMO management for their unflagging efforts on behalf of FAFICS. For the organization of the session, special thanks were due, as ever, to Anders Tholle and Lydia Ontal, the Secretary and Assistant Secretary. He looked forward to working with the newly elected Bureau on the challenges that lay ahead, starting immediately after the Council with the Pension Board and its Working Group on Plan Design. He was pleased to have welcomed several new members to the session, with several more on the horizon. The expanding number of new associations was an auspicious sign for the Federation as it celebrated its 35th anniversary.

130. Speaking on behalf of the host association, Michael Davies said that it had been an honour and a pleasure to have FAFICS as guests in London. He thanked all those in IMO and BAFUNCS who, often behind the scenes, had helped to ensure that the meeting went smoothly. The session had not been without its challenges, but he hoped that with a collective effort, the effectiveness of FAFICS as an advocate for the rights of UN pensioners everywhere could be maintained and improved.

131. The Presiding Officer thanked the participants for all their hard work and declared the 39th session closed.

List of Participants

President	Andrés Castellanos del Corral
Secretary	Anders Tholle
Assistant Secretary	Lydia Ontal
Member Associations	
AFICS-Argentina	Oscar Larghi
AAFICS-Australia	Mary Johnson Mike Sackett
ARICSA-Austria	Peter Lillie Gerhard Schramek
AFUNSOB-Bangladesh	Ahmed Hussain Mashud Ahmed M. Mozammel Haque
AFICS-Bolivia	Teresa Calderón
AAFIB-Brazil	represented by AFICS-Argentina
AAFNU-Burkina Faso	Pierre Adama Traore
CAFICS/ACAFI-Canada	Jeanne Boisclair
AFICS-Chile	Mario Lafuente
ASOPENUC-Colombia	Helene Hasselbalch
AEFNUC-Cuba	Ana Maria Gudz Robak
AFICS-Addis Ababa	Tedla Teshome
AAFU/AFUS-France	Georges Kutukdjian Karl Hochgesand Josiane Taillefer Witold Zyss
AFUNPI-Bangalore	Sreenivas Ayyar Janakiram

AFICS-Israel	Michael Suess
FFOA-Rome	Anton Doeve Alan Prien
FOA-Turin	Rimedia Mossa
AFICS-Kenya	Lars Ludvigsen
AFICS-Mauritius	Michael Atchia
AFUNO-New Zealand	represented by AAFICS-Australia
APEFONU/AFICS-Paraguay	represented by AFICS-Argentina
AFICS-Philippines	Lydia Ontal
AFICS-Moscow	Mikhail Gunar
AAFI-AFICS-Geneva	Roger Eggleston Katia Chestopalov Odette Foudral
AFICS-Thailand	Vudhitep Tanghongse
AFICS-Kiev	Aleksey Kostomarov
BAFUNCS-United Kingdom	Michael Davies David Axford Pauline Barrett-Reid Pat Brown Georges Ah Fong Enid Steward-Goffman Habib Zubieri
AFICS-Uruguay	represented by ASOPENUC-Colombia
AFICS-New York	Edward Omotoso Fernando Astete Linda Saputelli

Adopted Agenda

1. Welcome Address and opening of the 39th session by the FAFICS President
2. Moment of silent meditation or prayer
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Election of a Presiding Officer
5. Report by the President
6. Admission of New Members
- 7.1 Pension Issues in general
 - i. Report of the FAFICS Representatives on the Working Group on Plan Design;
 - ii. Report of the Working Group on Pensions;
 - iii. Review of items of interest to FAFICS on the Agenda for the 57th session of the UNJSPB;
 - iv. Proposals for the modification of Certificates of Entitlement;
- 7.2 Pension Adjustment System
 - i. Adjustment of Pensions in Argentina;
 - ii. Actual situation of the UN Pension Benefits in Colombia;
 - iii. Change of effective date for annual CPI adjustments from 1 April to 1 January;
 - iv. Lowering or eliminating the trigger point for annual adjustments from 2 to 1, or 1.5%;
 - v. Modification of Article 35bis on number of years for divorced spouses benefits;
 - vi. Review of Small Pensions;
8. After Service Health Insurance and Long Term Care
Report by the Working Group on After Service Health Insurance and Long-term Care: update on developments at the United Nations General Assembly and at the UN Secretariat regarding ASHI funding;
9. Commemoration of FAFICS 35th Anniversary
10. Improving the Functioning of the FAFICS Council
 - i. Larger Attendance of Representatives of Member Associations to FAFICS Council sessions;
 - ii. Possible rotation of location of Council sessions at other than customary venues;
 - iii. Decision on some agenda items to be taken only every other year;

- iv. Decision on dedicating a session only to Pension and Health Insurance issues;
 - v. Length of documents for submission to the Council;
11. Strengthening the Participation of Women in the FAFICS Council and increasing the Number of Women Office Bearers
 12. Situation of the Former USSR participants from the former USSR, Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR
 13. Benevolent Funds of FAFICS Member Associations and Emergency Fund of the UNJSPF
 14. Meeting with the CEO/Secretary of the UNJSPF and the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Investments
 15. FAFICS Membership increase efforts: target 50 associations/20,000 affiliates
 16. Review of Advocacy of the Ideals and Work of the UN system Organizations
 - 17.1 Reports on FAFICS Representation and on FAFICS activities as an NGO in Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council
 - 17.2 Report of the Regional Meeting of United Nations Associations of Former International Civil Servants in Latin America and the Caribbean
 18. Administrative and Financial Questions
 - i. Report by the Auditors, including audited Income and Expenditure Accounts, Balance sheet and travel costs for the year ending 31 December 2009;
 - ii. Budget for 2011;
 - iii. Interim Report on the Management of the budget for 2010;
 19. Election of Officers
 20. Appointment of FAFICS Representatives to the Pension Board in 2011, its Standing Committee and other meetings
 21. Any other business
 22. Date and venue of the 40th session of the FAFICS Council

List of Documents

Pre-session Council documents

Doc no.	Subject
D.3	Provisional Agenda
D.3/Rev.1	Annotated Provisional Agenda
D.6	Admission of New Members
D.7.1	Report on the 56 th Session of the UN Joint Staff Pension Board and its Outcome
D.7.1(i)	Advance summary report on the Working Group on Plan Design
D.7.1(iii)	Review of items of interest to FAFICS on the Agenda for the 57 th session of the UNJSPB
D.7.2(i)	UNJSPF Pensions in Argentina
D.7.2(ii)	Actual Situation of the UN Pensions Benefits in Colombia
D.7.2(ii)/Add.1.Corr	Actual Situation of the UN Pension Benefits in Colombia (English version)
D.7.2(iv)	Lowering or elimination of the trigger point for annual adjustments from 2 to 1, or 1.5%
D.7.2(iv)/Add.1	Note by Gerhard Schramek, containing FAFICS submission on the Threshold for Cost of Living Adjustments on Pensions in Award to the UNJSPB's Working Group on Plan Design
D.7.2(v)	Modification of Article 35bis on number of years for divorced spouses benefits
D.9	Commemoration of FAFICS 35 th year - a historical document
D.11	Strengthening the participation of women in the FAFICS Council and increasing the number of women office bearers
D.11/Add.1	Note containing AFUNPI-Bangalore's comments on D.11
D.12	Situation of Former UNJSPF participants from the former USSR, Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR
D.16	AFICS-New York note containing reports on advocacy activities by AFICS (NY), ARICSA and on UN Day celebrations
D.16/Add.1	AFICS-New York note containing reports on advocacy activities by AAFI-AFICS and AAFICS-Australia
D.17	Reports of FAFICS Representatives at meetings and FAFICS activities as an NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC, assembled by AFICS (NY)
D.17/Add.1	Report from ARICSA-Vienna on activities as an NGO, assembled by AFICS (NY)
D.17/Add.2	Report of the FAFICS Representatives to the 2010 FICSA Council
D.17/Add.3	Report from AAFI-AFICS on activities as an NGO, assembled by AFICS (NY)
D.17.2	Report of the Regional Meeting of the UN Associations of Former International Civil Servants in Latin America and the Caribbean (AFICS/AL/C)

D.18(i)	Report of the Auditors, Income and Expenditure Account for 2009, Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2009 and 2009 travel costs table.
D.18(ii)	Proposed Budget for the year 2011
D.18(iii)	Interim Report on the Management of the Budget for 2010
D.19	Call for Nominations for Election of Officers of FAFICS
D.19/Add.1	Candidates nominated for Election of Officers of the Federation
D.19/Add.2	Circulation of CV's of four candidates for Vice-President
D.19/Add.3	Circulation of CV's of six candidates for Vice-President
D.19/Add.3.Corr	Corrections to one CV

In-session Council documents

CRP.1	Provisional List of participants
CRP.2	Names of All Candidates for Election of Officers
CRP.3	Summary of discussions and decisions taken at FAFICS Bureau meeting on 22-24 February 2010
CRP.4	Review of Small Pensions
CRP.4/Add.1	Draft text on Small Pensions submitted by ARICSA
CRP.5	Report of the Working Group on Pension Issues
CRP.5/Rev.1	Revised report of the Working Group on Pension Issues (this report was adopted and has become Appendix 5 to the Session Report, Page 41)
CRP.6	Report on the Meeting of Associations of Former International Civil Servants in Latin America and the Caribbean
CRP.7	Functioning of the FAFICS Council – Extract of the Record of the FAFICS Bureau meeting on 22-24 February 2010
CRP.8	Report of the working Group on After-Service Health Insurance and Long-term Care (ASHILTC)
CRP.9	AAFI-AFICS nomination of Jayaraman T. Sundaresan for FAFICS Secretary
CRP.10	Proposed candidates for representatives to the UNJSPB and Audit Committee in 2011
CRP.11	Result of first round of voting for Vice-President

Pre-session documents considered by the Working Groups

Working Group on Pension Issues

Council 39/2010/WG	Pension Issues-Agenda for the Working Group Meeting
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Working Group on After-Service Health Insurance and Long-term Care

Council 39/2010/WG-ASHIL	Situation and Discussion Paper by the Convenor
Council 39/2010/WG-ASHIL	Note from AAFIB-Brazil
Unnumbered:	AAFI-AFICS proposed Resolution for Consideration by the Working Group

Report of the President

Mr. Presiding Officer, Members of the Bureau, Mr. President and other officers of BAFUNCS, our host association,

Dear Colleagues,

I take pleasure in welcoming you all to the 39th session of the FAFICS Council beginning today, 9 July, and running through Tuesday, 13 July 2010. Indeed, this is an historic occasion for the Council as FAFICS is commemorating the 35th Anniversary of its founding.

Allow me to express the gratitude of FAFICS to BAFUNCS for the excellent facilities they have arranged for this Council session, jointly with the solid support of the management of IMO, to facilitate our work in this modern and beautiful building. In particular, I wish to give special recognition on your behalf to the President of BAFUNCS, Sir Richard Jolly, and to his BAFUNCS colleagues, Mr. David Axford and Mr. Michael Davies, and their office staff, and to Mr. Christian Dahoui, Chief of Human Resources of IMO and Mr. Alnoor Nathoo, Human Resources Officer and their staff. They have spared no effort for all necessary arrangements.

I also take this opportunity to welcome the representatives of the Associations of former international civil servants in Mauritius including other Indian Ocean island countries, and in Ukraine. With much satisfaction I can announce that with their admission, together with the Associations in Malaysia including Singapore and Brunei, in Somalia and in Senegal, FAFICS will achieve the target of 50 member Associations for which I set out to strive when I assumed office in October 2008 on my first tenure as President of the Federation. I am confident that FAFICS will have achieved as well, a total individual membership of 20,000 by the end of this year, as part of that target. In this regard, I wish to add that continuing efforts to join FAFICS have been taking place with Associations in Nigeria and Benin once our required statutory formalities have been met. In the case of Senegal we have already been notified by its President that they accept to adapt their Constitution to FAFICS admission requirements. They expect approval of their Annual Assembly before the end of the year, which will enable their leadership to request admission to FAFICS. Efforts to assist seminal groups of former international civil servants in Japan, Nicaragua, Liberia and Fiji with other Pacific islands are gradually succeeding in varying degrees. Other details will be provided during our discussion of the relevant agenda item.

On behalf of the Federation, I continue to maintain close contact with the Secretary and CEO of the UNJSP, Mr. Bernard Cochemé and its senior staff, to whom I am most grateful for support and advice on pension issues whenever necessary, whether in general or on particular problems affecting our membership. The useful general information on FAFICS and all its member Associations published yearly by

the UNJSPF in the Annual Letter of the CEO to all participants and beneficiaries is a clear indication of how the Fund regards the importance of FAFICS.

Other important contacts were maintained with the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission, Mr. Kingston Rhodes; with the ASG for Investments, Mr. Warren Sachs and the Director of Investment Management, Ms. Suzanne Bishopric; as well as with the Focal Point for FAFICS and AFICS (NY) in the UN Secretariat Department of Management, Mrs. Netta Avedon; and with the Chief of the UN Health and Life Insurance Disbursement Service, Mrs. Vera Rajic until her retirement, and Mr. Christophe Monier, her successor. Contacts also continued with the leadership of FICSA, with a courtesy call to and discussions with its Executive Secretary, during my visit to Geneva in the fall of last year, in particular the issue of reducing FAFICS's membership cost, and also through the presence of FAFICS's representatives at their annual Assembly.

In the pursuit of direct contact with member associations at their own sites, I accepted invitations from AFUS France to attend their Annual Information Assembly, which was held in Paris in early December 2009; and from the Association of Former United Nations Pensioners in India, AFUNPI Bangalore, to attend their annual assembly in early February 2010, which was held in Bangalore and commemorated their 35th anniversary. Subsequently a special meeting of the Association UNPAI - New Delhi was organized at my request in order to avail of the opportunity of a one-day stopover in that city, prior to my return to New York. Such gatherings provided me with the opportunity to address these organizations' memberships, to meet with their Executive Committees and to acquaint myself with issues of particular concern to them, besides those common to practically all Associations. I remain grateful to AFUS France, AFUNPI and UNPAI for the extraordinary courtesies extended to me on those occasions. Last but not least, I wish to thank AFICS (NY), for the opportunity once again to address their annual assembly, which this year marked the 40th anniversary of its founding. In your name and on the occasion of the respective commemorations of AFICS (NY) and AFUNPI, I wish to extend to both Associations, our heartfelt congratulations for their dedication and contribution to their memberships and to FAFICS over so many years

Expectedly, I have been in continuous contact with the Secretary of FAFICS, Mr. Anders Tholle, always supportive and ready to assist me in the discharge of my responsibilities. Similarly, I have been maintaining contact with the other members of the Bureau; the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Assistant Secretary, the Convenors of the Working Groups on Pension issues and on ASHIL, to all of whom I am most grateful for their effective support. This year, two Bureau meetings were held, the first one in February and the last one here in London this morning. According to the practice, which I introduced since taking office, the Emeriti Presidents and the Emeritus Vice-President were invited with only one, Mr. Witold Zyss, able to attend. However, the Bureau and I are grateful to them for their wise inputs on specific issues on which I have consulted them on various occasions.

Throughout its life span, FAFICS has served to identify and to promote the existence of an international community of former international civil servants with an identity of their own, bound not only by genuine and worthwhile interests but also by full

identification with both their individual UN System organization and the United Nations as a whole.

As a worldwide network looking after the rights and benefits of all beneficiaries of the UNJSPF – more so in recent years – FAFICS has also been playing and fostering an advocacy role across its member Associations in support of the UN's principles, goals and programmes, in accordance with its own statutes.

It should, however, be noted that besides the enthusiasm and activism needed from the FAFICS leadership, much of the success of the UN advocacy role to be played by member Associations, and of the use of the FAFICS network for other UN endeavours (such as FAFICS volunteering to mobilize human resources immediately after the Haiti tragedy, for which the Federation was highly commended in letters received by the President from the UN Secretary-General, the Chef de Cabinet and the UN USG for Management), advocacy efforts on our part will always depend upon and unavoidably be affected by two factors: on the one hand, by the degree of enthusiasm with which the member Associations and their individual members may be willing to contribute to defending and promoting publicly the values and achievements of the Organization, whether at local, national and/or international planes on which they interact; and secondly, by the degree of acceptance, respect and support provided by the UN system organizations to the individual FAFICS Associations and to their members at their respective sites, including UN system organization offices in the field.

Sadly however, sometimes our FAFICS Associations and their members are either forgotten or ignored, despite the fact that a recognition of the worth of the UN system retiree community has been increasingly conveyed by each and every UN Secretary-General since 1970, by the heads of several UN organizations, and over recent years by Presidents of the UN General Assembly in their statements, as well as by specific instructions from the UNDP Administrator, initially issued in 2001, requesting that field offices give full support and facilities to Associations of former international civil servants of the UN system organizations functioning in those countries.

Indeed, from time to time, we in FAFICS receive unpleasant information from some of our member Associations with requests for institutional guidance and help on how to deal with situations that should not occur but do, in most cases because of the lack of better and updated general information to field offices provided by their respective headquarters on their relations with Associations at their site. In that connection, together with Mr. Edward Omotoso, President of AFICS (NY), I recently paid a visit to the new head of Human Resources Management of UNDP to acquaint her with FAFICS and the need for her assistance in obtaining a re-issuance of the 2001 instructions by the UNDP Administrator to all UNDP Resident Coordinators. I am grateful to the President of AFICS (NY), our colleague Ed Omotoso, for arranging such a useful meeting. Despite negative experiences by some member Associations I encourage all members to continue and enhance their advocacy for the United Nations System organizations and the worth of the international civil service as the pillars on which the United Nations stands in its service to humankind.

One disturbing development that took place at the last UN General Assembly was the adoption of Resolution A/RES/63/252 regarding ASHI plans. As reported to you

last year, the question of the unfunded liabilities for ASHI plans remains an unresolved question for which the Assembly had requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his capacity as Chairman of the Chiefs' Executive Board (CEB) to submit a comprehensive report in two years to its 67th Session. Accordingly, the FAFICS Bureau requested that the Working Group on ASHIL, prepare a report on the situation, including recommendations to be taken by this Council session. At this point, it behoves me to convey my appreciation and that of the Council to our colleague Michael Davies, its Convenor, for the comprehensive report on all ASHI aspects, as submitted.

With respect to pensions, the Working Group on pension issues will be reporting to the Council on a number of issues of cardinal importance that they would have dealt with during their meeting prior to the Council. Again the Council will be seized with the unresolved problem of the erosion of the purchasing power of pensions in Argentina and also the question of the erosion of the purchasing power of pensions in Colombia, and the continued unresolved plight of our colleagues from the former USSR, Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR, who were deprived of their UN pensions by their governments. Each of these situations with their distinctive characteristics deserves our fullest attention and support as FAFICS before the relevant UN pension authorities.

Momentum to have the issue of the certificate of entitlement for surviving spouses of UNJSPF beneficiaries resolved by the Pension Fund secretariat has increased within FAFICS. In this respect I have personally raised the matter with the Secretary of the Pension Fund requesting that serious consideration be given to the modification of form P.35a, required from all pension system organizations, to have it include the name of the spouse and a copy of the certificate of marriage, as contained in the official status file of the organization where the new pensioner had worked.

As you know, FAFICS has participated, through four of its members, in the work of the Working Group on Plan Design since it was established by the Pension Board at its 55th session. An advance summary of the final report has been made available to you in order to provide you with the Group's review of the most salient pension issues and recommendations ahead of the Pension Board's forthcoming session, which will receive the full report. The FAFICS group was the only one to present specific topical recommendations in accordance with your instructions. The Working Group recommended measures concerning the following:

1. elimination of the 0.5% reduction of the first adjustment due after retirement, as part of the economic measures adopted in 1983 and effective 1 January 1985;
2. re family benefits, with minimal actuarial costs, reduction of the number of years for a former spouse to have been married to a participant to at least 5 years instead of 10;
3. Pension Adjustment System;
4. the elimination of negative adjustments;
5. the Emergency Fund;
6. enhanced withdrawal settlements; and
7. reduction in the eligibility period required for participation in the Fund (Article 21) from the present six months to 60 calendar days.

Among the challenges and constraints that FAFICS may have to face in the future, I would like to draw your attention to some that need to be resolved, be it in the medium and/or the long run:

- a. Continued insistence on the restoration of the pending 0.5% adjustment to UN pensions;
- b. Continued insistence on the unresolved issue of the pending voting rights for FAFICS representatives at the Pension Board sessions, independent of the fact that in the entire history of the Board only once has the need for a vote come up when no consensus could be reached;
- c. The inability of half of FAFICS member Associations to attend the annual FAFICS Council session because of travel costs and DSA, even at a reduced rate. This must be a priority concern to all, rather than only to those affected, since the absence of half of the member Associations in the work of the FAFICS Council affects its full functioning as the only legislative instrument available for collective decision-making by the Federation;
- d. The need to decide on a meaningful increase in the annual contributions of every member Association in order to improve the viability of operations of the Federation. For instance, even for Bureau meetings, most Vice Presidents find it difficult, if not impossible to attend, given the distance between their residence and the venue. Because of the importance of such meetings, we have managed to provide a limited sum to individual Vice Presidents in advance;
- e. Administratively, the need of the FAFICS Secretariat for increased human resources through volunteer assistance. In that connexion I had asked Mrs. Josiane Taillefer, a member of the AFUS Executive Committee and one of its Vice Presidents, to become an advisor on FAFICS Secretariat requirements, that being possible thanks to the support of the President of AFUS. Already a first visit took place in September of last year and another one in March of this year.
- f. Last, but not least, there is a need on the part of member Associations, for their leaderships to inform their constituents about what goes on within FAFICS and what is feasibly possible. Those who have joined an Association need to have a realistic view of what it takes for a proposal to become, initially, a Federation position and subsequently, what it takes to persuade others with whom the FAFICS leadership and other representatives interact on their behalf, (be it the Pension Fund individually or the Pension Board), to take action whenever an institutional change may be desirable. In that connexion I believe that we must always guard ourselves against unattainable goals. From the FAFICS Secretariat side we are trying to reach out to the entire membership with as much relevant information as possible through the recently upgraded FAFICS website. As you will observe we have expanded that website considerably in an effort to enhance its usefulness; it now includes important reports and bulletins received from member Associations.

Another issue requiring solution is bank charges on UN pensions. As you will recall, FAFICS submitted a report to the Pension Fund with information obtained from 22 member Associations, responding to a questionnaire prepared by FAFICS in consultation with the Pension Fund. The FAFICS report was transmitted in turn to the Pension Board, which expressed its appreciation to our Federation for that input to their work and requesting FAFICS to attempt once again to obtain information from member Association that had not replied. Accordingly, a communication to that effect was sent to the Associations that had remained silent, but with no positive result.

In attempting to look for other means to assist groups of colleagues having to face the unresolved problem of bank charges, I personally asked the President of the UNFCU, Mr. Michael Connery, whether there would be any difficulty for groups of beneficiaries of the Pension Fund to open an account with the UN Federal Credit Union for the express purpose of having individual pension accounts opened with them. Then, the Pension Fund would be instructed by beneficiaries individually in a given country to have their monthly pension deposited in that account for partial or total withdrawal by the beneficiary, who could withdraw her/his money through an ATM machine, provided such an electronic facility would be available in the country of residence of that beneficiary. With much satisfaction I wish to inform you that I have received confirmation from the President of the UNFCU that there are ATM money changing facilities in 37 countries that correspond to the location of FAFICS member Associations, whether through MasterCard, Maestro or Cirrus networks. The detailed list by country and accepted money drawing cards will be made available to you for information through an e-mail circular from me to all member Associations so that each one can draw it to the attention of their respective constituency, as applicable.

One important new topic to be addressed by the Council will be gender balance in FAFICS, its governance and representation, as an agenda items before us. A thorough discussion of facts and related considerations is necessary and we should all contribute to it positively, in a collegial spirit, so as to reach a conclusion with which the Council will be satisfied.

Another issue requiring our collective attention is the agenda item on the improvement of the workings of the FAFICS Council. A relevant note will be available for the discussion.

As we are all aware, this year FAFICS is commemorating the 35th anniversary of its existence as the representative voice of the entire community of all former international civil servants of the UN System organizations. Indeed we have many reasons to rejoice in celebrating this milestone. However we must continue to strive for greater fellowship among all of us on an international basis, and with an international spirit that corresponds to our very essence as former international civil servants, not only among those of us belonging to an individual FAFICS member Association but across all member Associations as a true Federation.

Before you, for your information and use, is a valuable comprehensive chronology of FAFICS since its beginning days, which was prepared by our very effective Secretary

Anders Tholle. The document will form part of the special commemorative publication that we will publish sometime in the fall of this year. It will include contributions by the Emeriti Presidents, the Emeritus Vice President, and our former Executive Secretary, Mrs. Angela Butler, as well as photographs depicting various moments in the life of the Federation.

As a proposal for our Council's commemoration and also related to the important question of increased attendance to FAFICS's annual Council session by Associations unable to participate because of airfare costs to the sites where the Council traditionally meets, I approached the President of the UNFCU, Mr. Connery, seeking to obtain a grant from that institution aimed at facilitating attendance by at least one or two Associations that either never, or only once in their years of existence have been able to have a representative attending the Council. This was done bearing in mind UNFCU's Social Responsibility Programme and its corporate responsibility to provide support to charitable or other organizations that benefit from its services and/or its membership at large, as in the case of FAFICS. Thus, economy round-trip airfares were identified from several locations to London that at the same time would have UNFCU activities. Soon after my request, a grant of US\$2,100 was accorded to FAFICS, with identified (though not conditional) priorities to enable AFICSs in Thailand and Kenya to attend this session of the Council. Today, I am very pleased to finally recognize and to welcome among us a representative from AFICS Thailand and one from AFICS Kenya. Indeed FAFICS is most grateful to the UNFCU, and to its President, Mr. Connery in particular, for such a generous gesture.

Last but not least, I wish to report to you that I have explored with UNV, the UN volunteers entity, the possibilities for them to avail of the untapped and unutilized human resources of the membership of FAFICS, a true reservoir of knowledge, experience in all professions, specializations and institutional memory. So far I have held two meetings with officers of the UNV's New York liaison office in order to explore two types of involvement – one as volunteers and the other with paid participation – on the basis of their programmes. We have agreed to meet again, either in September or October of this year to advance our discussions.

Another issue of cardinal importance that we should be examining is the overall question of travel costs for FAFICS representatives to attend Council sessions. This will continue to require collective priority attention with a view to improving the negative effect of the non-participation of all member Associations with direct representation at the one and only annual meeting of the Federation.

As FAFICS will continue to grow in membership in the years to come, we need to identify further ways and means to increase our fellowship. I join you in celebrating FAFICS' 35th anniversary. Together we can make a difference for the benefit of all former international civil servants. I wish you a successful session. I am at your disposal during and outside the meetings for whatever concerns you may have.

I thank you,

Andrés Castellanos

Report of the Working Group on Pension Issues (WGPI)

1. The Working Group on Pension Issues, established by the FAFICS Bureau, held an open-ended meeting on 08 July 2010, chaired by Oscar Larghi, prior to the opening of the 2010 FAFICS Council. Approximately 30 representatives attended. The rapporteur was Alan Prien.
2. The agenda had been circulated well in advance by the Secretary of FAFICS, after an earlier input call for agenda items.
3. The following substantive items were considered.

Briefing on the work & report of the PB's Working Group on Plan Design (WGPD)

4. An advance summary report (document Council 39/2010/D.7.1(i)) was introduced primarily by Gerhard Schramek, with assistance from his fellow FAFICS members Messrs Castellanos del Corral, Eggleston & Zyss (the latter being the rapporteur of the WGPD).

Particular items supported by the WGPI, which emanated from the report included:

- (a) the priority of the elimination of the 0.5% reduction of the first adjustment after retirement; while recognizing their earlier efforts, the WGPI urged its representatives to strive once again to have this measure placed at the top of the list of the summary of PB document R.31, page 3;
- (b) the reduction from 10 to 5 years of marriage for a divorced surviving spouse to qualify for a pension benefit, as well as 3 other related provisions: payment before age 40 if the spouse had custody of one or more dependent children of the marriage; abolishing the elimination of the payment if the divorce had occurred 15 or more years before; and, in the cases foreseen in Article 35 bis, paragraph (e), increasing the payment by three times the minimum benefit instead of twice, and four times the minimum if the marriage had lasted four years or more;
- (c) considerable support to increasing the retirement age; reservations were expressed by Colombia/Uruguay; the impact of such a change relative to early-retirement provisions was also proportionately complicated, especially from the actuarial view;
- (d) the abolition of negative cost-of-living adjustments, which would be a prerequisite to any of the 3 alternatives discussed to reducing the trigger point for such adjustments; these aspects related to and were discussed in conjunction with submissions by AAFU/AFUS-Paris (document Council

39/2010/D.7.2(iv)) and a note by Gerhard Schramek (document Council 39/2010/D.7.2(iv)/Add.1); preference was expressed for an adjustment every 2 years, even if the 2% trigger had not been reached;

- (e) reducing the entry period into the Pension Fund (PF) from 6 months to 60 days.
- 5. Mr Zyss sought further expressions of priorities which should be considered in view of the negative actuarial balance (0.38%) reported after the WGPD's last meeting, and to be considered at its next meeting on 14 July.
- 6. During these discussions, the WGPI was informed that some particular questions had been put to the CEO of the Fund inter alia: the cost of the restoration of the 0.5% deduction; and the situations brought to the WGPI in papers submitted by Argentina, & Colombia on the loss of purchasing power of pensions.

Council items assigned to the WGPI

- 7. Many of the items relating to pensions, on the Council agenda, have been considered by the WGPD & thus alluded to above, including the consideration which needs to be given to ensuring the continuation of the 2-track system; this might include a review of currency fluctuations by considering, for example, a longer period of averaging exchange rates. In particular, strong objection should be lodged regarding the lack of action by the PF Secretariat to consider exceptional measures under Para 26 of the pension adjustment system for Argentina, as had been done in the cases of Lebanon, Myanmar, Iran, Angola, Cameroon, Libya and Niger.
- 8. Regarding Colombia, and other similar situations, consideration should be given again to allowing beneficiaries on the double-track an opportunity of returning, once, to the dollar track.
- 9. Participants considered the submissions from India regarding delays in payments to surviving spouses and supported a general request to the PF Secretariat to request all member Organizations to include in form P.35 to details on surviving spouses & dependent children. These negotiations should be pursued vigorously.

Review of items of interest to FAFICS on the agenda for the 57th session of the UNJSPB

- 10. The WGPI expressed appreciation for the summaries (document Council 39/2010/D.7.1(iii)) of 7 documents going to the Board. Support was given for the suggestions, by the various authors therein, for consideration of solutions to address wide fluctuations in local currency track benefits, an amendment to suspend the Special Index, a provision to allow purchase of up to 3 years of contributory service by staff converted to part time, a review in 2011 of the Emergency Fund, and the possible revisions regarding the divorced spouse's benefit.

11. Regarding the size and composition of the PB, it was felt that a tactically passive approach initially might be best, although if the matter evolved, incremental improvements might be explored by the FAFICS delegation to the PB, while reiterating our longstanding view of the need for pensioners' voting rights.

Review of Small Pensions

12. This item was not discussed as the document was not available.

Other Business

13. The WGPI agreed that Mary Johnson would convene an informal group of those who would be interested in exchanging information on taxation issues. She would advise Council participants of the venue & time (which might be over a lunch).

Report on the Meeting of the Working Group on After-Service Health Insurance and Long-term Care (ASHILTC) held on 8 July 2010

The Council met as a committee of the whole in the ASHIL Working Group to consider matters relating to After Service Health Insurance (ASHI) and Long-term Care.

Agenda Item 1 – ASHI Funding

The Working Group complimented the Convenor of ASHIL and his informal network of colleagues on an excellent document which set out and helped to clarify the issues related to ASHI funding and liability.

It was clear that the General Assembly's request to the UN Secretary-General to report in 2012 on managing ASHI liabilities could cause significant harm to the ASHI system. It could jeopardize long-standing benefits that were key components of the international civil service's conditions and an acquired right. There was further danger that the issue of the unpaid liabilities could be used as a pretext to curtail contributions to the benefits of both serving and retired staff and for cutting back on funding for the various health insurance plans.

The Working Group observed that there appeared to be a coordinated effort by Member States to look into this matter, despite the fact that the same Member States often took positions that were not consistent according to the organization and context in which they were operating. It was noted that although AFICS New York had offered its *pro bono* services to the Under Secretary General for Management to assist in this matter, there had been no response from the UN. A further letter from the President of FAFICS to the Secretary-General is attached to this report.

With respect to the discussion paper itself the Working Group urged caution with respect to the content of paragraph 13 which it considered should be deleted from the final copy to be circulated to member associations lest it be misinterpreted. While not disputing the content, the Working Group pointed out that in recent years, staff representatives had complained about the cost of retiree health care which had led to talk of cancelling contributions for this purpose. The Working Group recalled that because ASHI schemes were conceived on a pay-as-you-go basis, they did not lend themselves to being transformed into fully funded schemes. Moreover the present economic climate mitigates against attempts to accelerate payments to fund the liability.

With so many different schemes in place the Working Group believed that regular actuarial evaluations of each scheme needed to be undertaken, preferably as often as every three years, so as to set good, credible, actuarially sound, rates of payment.

A draft resolution introduced by AAFI-AFICS was adopted by the Working Group after some fine tuning and is attached to this report for the approval of the Council. The resolution underscores the importance which the Council should attach to

maintaining and defending ASHI schemes against attempts to undermine them and contains a number of specific requests to the FAFICS Bureau for ongoing monitoring and action. The Convenor agreed to redraft the wording of the Working Group's paper (page 7) to conform to the wording of the resolution and re-circulate the paper through FAFICS, following the conclusion of the Council.

Agenda Item 2 – Proposal from AAFIB-Brazil

The Working Group considered a paper from AAFIB covering the possibility of retirees having the ability to purchase, at their own expense, additional full-service contributions in ASHI schemes so that they may qualify for inclusion in ASHI funded schemes. The paper also made proposals concerning certain health insurance benefits.

The Working Group noted that the AAFIB position on funding was identical to that already adopted by the Council and that therefore no further discussion was necessary. It also recognized that disparities exist between the various plans (e.g. coverage for eyeglasses and hearing aids) but considered that it could not enter into this level of detail. It should be up to retirees themselves, through their plan representatives, to approach the individual plans for improvements. At the same time caution was sounded about adding requests that would add to the financial pressures at this particular time.

The Convenor recalled the issue raised by AFICS-Thailand with respect to the need for overhaul and improvement of the health care schemes for local staff. The convenor acknowledged that the principal plan concerned (that run by UN/UNDP) was deficient and proposed that the matter be looked into in more detail by the Working Group in the course of next year.

Agenda Item 3 – Election of a new Convenor

The working group noted that the present Convenor was standing down this year and agreed to discuss the matter of a replacement and bring a proposal to the Council for approval.

Agenda Item 4 – Any Other Business

At the request of AFUNPI-New Delhi the issue of Long-term Care (LTC) was discussed. The Working Group noted that LTC had been omitted from the agenda for considerations of perceptions and cost at a time when ASHI funding was the foremost concern. There was a perception that retirees were the exclusive beneficiaries of this benefit while in fact serving staff and their dependents also took advantage of it. Moreover when LTC was provided, usage was shown to be relatively low. As to cost it was lower than expected, particularly when compared to the cost of medical interventions.

AAFI-AFICS advised the meeting of data that it had collected on various Geneva plans. AAFI-AFICS was asked to compare their data with the FAFICS data base to see if the FAFICS data base could be usefully updated with their data or whether additional elements could be added to the FAFICS data base to bring it up-to-date, and to liaise with the Convenor in this matter.

The Working Group concluded that it should continue to take an interest in LTC but that to counter the issue of perceptions it should begin to refer to LTC as “non-medical components of health care”.

The overall conclusion of the Working Group was that while immediate efforts should be focussed on defending and preserving ASHI as it currently exists, ongoing initiatives could be further explored and supported providing that the member associations were alert to the cost implications of any proposals, given the situation within each plan (which differs).

**Resolution proposed by the Working Group on After Service Health Care and
adopted by the 39th Session of the FAFICS Council**

The Thirty-ninth session of the FAFICS Council:

Taking note of UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/64/241,

Recalling that, in his letter of 28 November 2008 to the United Nations Secretary General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Chief Executives Board, the President of FAFICS had drawn attention *inter alia* to the importance of preserving the Organisations' After Service Health Care provisions,

Concerned that the request to the UN Secretary General contained in operative paragraph 3 of that resolution makes specific reference to "the financial and legal implications of changing, for current retirees and active staff members, (i) the scope and coverage of after-service health insurance plans and (ii) the contribution levels",

Underlining that the provision of After Service Health Insurance is a vital element in the package of benefits designed to attract and retain an effective expatriate workforce and hence to the maintenance of the integrity of the International Civil Service;

1. *Upholds* and is dedicated to ensuring the maintenance of current After Service Health Insurance (ASHI) schemes and the integrity of related benefits for all current and future eligible participants;
2. *Urges* Organisations of the United Nations system to take all necessary steps to ensure the financial viability of ASHI schemes so that they are adequate to meet the entitlements of retirees and their dependents;
3. *Requests* the FAFICS Bureau and its Working Group on After Service Health Care, in close collaboration with Member Associations to:
 - a. follow closely the evolution of this matter in the United Nations General Assembly,
 - b. take all such actions as it deems necessary to inform the United Nations Secretariat and the administrations of other UN System Organisations of its concerns,
 - c. seek legal advice, if necessary, in terms of defending the acquired rights of those in receipt of ASHI coverage,
 - d. provide whatever assistance to the UN Secretariat that may be helpful to it in terms of the inclusion of the views of retirees in the preparation of the comprehensive report requested by the General Assembly for submission in 2012,
 - e. report on progress to the FAFICS Council in 2011.

Copy of the FAFICS President's letter on ASHI to the UN Secretary-General

ACC/lgo

26 November 2008

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

On behalf of the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) and all participants in the United Nations After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI) plans and in the similar ASHI plans of the other organizations of the UN Common System of Salaries and Allowances, I am writing to you, as the Chairman of the Central Executive Board, in order to stress the critical importance of ASHI plans for UN system retirees today and for all UN system staff who in the future will be eligible for, and rely on, ASHI plans.

The provision of ASHI is a key element in the contractual provisions of a workforce which, by the very nature of its service to the world community, is often unable to participate in any national health service arrangements and would otherwise be deprived of social security support on completion of such service. The ASHI plan has never been more vital to their financial and emotional well being.

ASHI was initially established, as an extension of the health benefits enjoyed by active staff, for those retirees who become eligible as a result of their in-service participation. Indeed, the concept of the entitlement to insurance as flowing from one's active service contributory participation in a health plan of the UN system, was formally recognized in a policy which came into effect in 1974. Under that policy, staff in some organizations, in effect, invested in their retirement benefits by paying more than their statutory share of the premium cost of health insurance while in active service, so that they might contribute at a proportionately reduced rate in their retirement years, when their income had decreased. In other organizations retirees have always paid their fair share of all current costs.

In the United Nations in particular, retirees who participate in the ASHI plans not only contribute currently towards the overall costs of the plan but, by virtue of their having paid a higher contribution rate during their active service years they have in fact prepaid a significant portion of their ASHI obligations, thereby clearly establishing an acquired right to join the ASHI plan of their choice, with an apportioned scheme of individual cost, continuing on the basis of the earlier and higher contributions while in UN system service.

As you may be aware, the recent publicity about the unfunded liability for the UN ASHI plans has created anxiety on the part of the UN system retiree community. At the same time you may also be aware that some agencies (such as WHO, FAO, IFAD and WFP) have already taken steps to cover their unfunded liabilities in part or in whole, while others (like UNESCO) have recognized the importance of the problem and are preparing action to be taken. This indicates that if rational and measured decisions are taken to manage the ASHI programme over a long-term

framework, solutions can be found. It is our belief that under the International Public Sector Accounting Standards rules the deficits do not have to be covered in an immediate time frame.

While the retirees may wish to maintain peace of mind regarding the certainty of an acquired right fully exercised by those already participating in an ASHI plan and by those contributing while in service, FAFICS also wishes to express its concern about a reduction or the decimation of an existing health insurance benefit, earned by long and dedicated service to the UN system, because of what it would also represent for the future of the international civil service if UN organizations were not to continue to offer the best conditions of employment required in order to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity called for by Article 101.3 of the United Nations Charter.

FAFICS hopes that its views will be kept fully in mind in any further review of this important issue and it would appreciate being kept informed and consulted on any further developments on ASHI plans.

Respectfully yours,

Andres Castellanos del Corral

President

H.E. Mr. BAN Ki-moon
Secretary-General
United Nations, S-3800

Approved Budget for the Year 2011

All income and expenditure is in US dollars,
unless marked otherwise

INCOME

Members contributions (18,100 x \$1.35 = 24,435, rounded up to 24,500)	24,500
Bank interest	300
Total income	24,800

EXPENDITURES

Travel expenses	20,700
Hospitality	550
Secretarial assistance	2,000
Contributions	600
Details:	
CONGO	US\$ 300
FICSA	CHF 300
Office supplies	650
Bank charges	100
Communications	200
Total expenditures	24,800

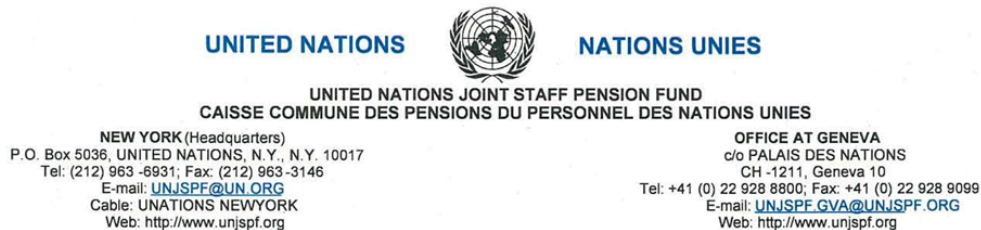
Commemoration of FAFICS' 35th Anniversary

As mentioned in paragraph 59 of the session report, the President had received messages of support and solidarity with FAFICS on the occasion of its 35th anniversary. These messages were received in the course of the 39th session and the texts of the following congratulatory messages are attached:

- Attachment 1: Message from Bernard Cochemé, CEO/Secretary of the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund**
- Attachment 2: Message from Pierre Saylor, President of the UN Joint Staff Pension Board**
- Attachment 3: Message from Michael J. Connery, President and CEO of the UN Federal Credit Union**
- Attachment 4: Message from Margaret K. Bruce, President emeritus of FAFICS**
- Attachment 5: Message from Aamir Ali, President emeritus of FAFICS**
- Attachment 6: Message from George Saddler, President emeritus of FAFICS**
- Attachment 7: Message from Eduardo Alberral, Vice-President emeritus of FAFICS**
- Attachment 8: Message from Angela Butler, Executive Secretary emeritus of FAFICS**

Attachment 1:

Message from Bernard Cochemé, CEO of the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund



July 9, 2010

Message to the Council of the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS)

On the occasion of the annual meeting of the Council of FAFICS that coincides with the 35th anniversary of the Federation, I would like to convey a special note of appreciation for the important role of the organisation, and the work and commitment of its participants.

Established in 1975 by the then existing retiree associations in Geneva, Rome, Paris and New York, the membership of FAFICS currently reaches some 45 retiree associations, with an increasingly important role in the process of effective representation and protection of the interests of its member associations and ultimately retirees and beneficiaries of the overall UN system of organisations.

FAFICS members continue to act as important partners to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund secretariat and to the member organizations, through their support and assistance. FAFICS and its member associations provide invaluable assistance to retirees and beneficiaries in resolving pension related matters, and provide general and individual information and advice to current and future retirees on the practical application of the complex set of Regulations and Rules of the Fund, including its unique Pension Adjustment System. Through the experiences of their respective members, FAFICS member associations serve also as knowledgeable sources of information and advice to individual and/or groups of pensioners and beneficiaries on local laws and other aspects of life in countries around the world.

I am pleased to note that the Pension Fund secretariat and FAFICS enjoy a very strong relationship. Senior staff of the Pension Fund attend annual sessions of FAFICS Council and actively provide advice, respond to questions and garner knowledge on concerns or possible issues that are important to the UN retiree community.

I would also like to mention that our strong relationship has led to important and effective communication efforts impacting on membership of retiree associations and concerning information on FAFICS in the CEO's Annual Letter.

FAFICS currently plays an important role in the overall governance of the Fund. As the official representatives of pensioners and beneficiaries of the Fund, FAFICS delegates continue to participate actively and effectively in the sessions of the Pension Board and its Standing Committee, and in all working groups and committees established by the Board; such as the working groups on budgetary questions and the selection of the Fund's CEO and Deputy-CEO. More recently, FAFICS representatives have been effective contributors to the work of the Fund's Audit Committee which plays an essential role in assisting the Pension

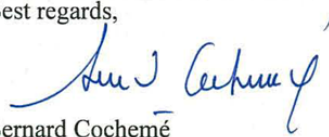
Board to fulfil its oversight responsibilities, and of the Working Group on Plan Design, responsible among other matters to formulate, assess and prioritise proposals to meet the future long-term needs of the Pension Fund.

As manager of the Pension Fund, I fully recognize that the current retirees and beneficiaries have helped built the Fund over the years with their participation and contributions and, in some cases, in actively contributing in the meetings of the Board, its Standing Committee and working groups. Through FAFICS continued support, retirees and beneficiaries can continue to enjoy the benefits stemming from a strong and efficient operation that spans the five continents. The UNJSPF is a successful defined benefit plan, able to absorb longevity and other financial risks to guarantee income for life to retirees and beneficiaries. In these challenging economic times, the importance of preserving and strengthening the Fund so that it continues to be well funded and operate efficiently is becoming more and more evident.

I invite FAFICS and its members to continue to effectively support the Fund's efforts and initiatives to further modernize its operations in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its activities, respond to evolving needs, in order to be adequately positioned to face the internal and external risks to which it is exposed.

I wish the Council and its participants a very successful annual meeting.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bernard Cochemé', written in a cursive style.

Bernard Cochemé

Chief Executive Officer,
United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund

Attachment 2:

Message from Pierre Sayour, President of the UN Joint Staff Pension Board

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF PENSION FUND
CAISSE COMMUNE DES PENSIONS DU PERSONNEL DES NATIONS UNIES

NEW YORK (Headquarters)
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E-mail: UNJSPF@UN.ORG
Cable: UNATIONS NEWYORK
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Web: <http://www.unjspf.org>

A l'attention de M. A. Castellanos
Président
FAFICS

Londres, le 13 juillet 2010.

Monsieur le Président,

En tant que Président et en tant que représentant des Participants, je suis heureux de féliciter FAFICS pour des 35 années d'existence.

Ces dernières années, l'organisation que vous présidez a grandi, non seulement en nombre de membres dans toutes les régions du monde, mais également en importance au sein du Comité Mixte. J'ai pu constater, en de nombreuses occasions, à quel point les interventions des représentants de la FAFICS étaient prises en compte par le Comité Mixte. Votre expérience et votre capacité à négocier ont été un avantage considérable pour le Comité Mixte et au travers de cette instance pour la Caisse et la gestion du Fonds.

Depuis 1995, en tant que représentant des Participants, j'ai été le témoin de l'évolution des relations entre FAFICS et le groupe des Participants. Nous sommes passés d'une relative 'fraîcheur' à une large communion de points de vues et une complémentarité dans nos interventions au sein du Comité Mixte. De plus, j'ai personnellement bénéficié de vos conseils Monsieur le Président, ainsi que de ceux de votre prédécesseur, M. Vitold Zyss. Pour toutes ces raisons, j'ai le plaisir de féliciter la FAFICS pour tout ce qui a été accompli.

En souhaitant à FAFICS un joyeux anniversaire et de nombreuses années de réussite, je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur le Président, mes salutations amicales.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sayour".

Pierre Sayour
Président du Comité Mixte

Attachment 3:

**Message from Michael J. Connery,
President and CEO of the UN Federal Credit Union**

Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants

35th Anniversary Council

July 2010

The United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU) warmly congratulates the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) on its 35th Anniversary. As an institution that has been committed to *Serving the People Who Serve the World*, UNFCU is perhaps an institution in better position than any other to appreciate all that FAFICS has accomplished in the service of its membership.

UNFCU has had the distinct privilege of working closely with FAFICS over many decades and in countries around the world. With great admiration and respect, our Board, management, staff and volunteers globally wish FAFICS continued success and achievement in the advancement of its service mission.

Attachment 4:

Message from Margaret K. Bruce, President emeritus of FAFICS

Dear Andres and Colleagues,

I very much regret that I am not able to accept your kind invitation to attend the FAFICS Council Meeting to be held in London in July 2010. It is an important meeting and I regret that I am unable to participate. As a past President of FAFICS I wish to send you a brief message highlighting my personal interest in the role of FAFICS member associations to support and promote the purposes, principles, programmes and achievements of the United Nations System. An important report before the Council describes advocacy through action, publications, individual initiatives and through celebrations of United Nations Day. I hope that member associations of FAFICS will be inspired to continue supporting the work of the United Nations system in different ways, and also to find and share new ways to show their support and interest.

My best wishes for a successful meeting

Molly Bruce

30 June 2010

Attachment 5:

Message from Aamir Ali, President emeritus of FAFICS

Dear Andres,

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and for your kind invitation to the session of the FAFICS Council next month when you will be celebrating the 35th anniversary of our Federation.

I need hardly say that if it had been at all possible, I would gladly have joined you on this occasion. Alas, I am still a cripple after my accident well over two years ago and any sort of travel is out of the question. I will be with you in spirit but not in the flesh.

Our international civil service is a hierarchical one, as indeed any civil service or institution must be. But one of the joys of being retired is a loosening of any rigid hierarchy: Gs and Ps and Ds and whatever doesn't differentiate us anymore; it doesn't matter what Organization we worked in during our careers. There is no longer the compulsion to climb up the ladder of promotion; if there is any competition, it is in the desire to be of maximum service to our community of former officials.

I hope we members of our AFICS's, united in our Federation, can always set an example of cooperation and solidarity.

With my best wishes for the continuing work of our Federation.

Aamir.

30 June 2010

Attachment 6:

Message from George F. Saddler, President emeritus of FAFICS

Subject: Re: Personal Invitation to attend the FAFICS Council, London, 8-13 July 2010

Dear Andres,

It was very nice of you to think of me with regard to the FAFICS 35th Session being held in London, England in July 2010, a city that I have visited many times and a city that I have enjoyed visiting very much. However, I regret to inform you that I will not be able to attend the FAFICS 35th Session in London, England in July 2010 because for me International travel has become inconvenient, unpleasant, complicated and costly.

Sincere regards,

George F. Saddler

Dear George

I know that it may not be as easy to you to attend the FAFICS session, as easy as for me is to address you this invitation, but it is being sent to you with my utmost respect and recognition to your invaluable contribution to what the Federation has been able to reach since founded. And we would all be honoured with your presence, physically or via a message..

With warm regards,

Andrés Castellanos

Attachment 7:

Message from Eduardo Albertal, Vice-President emeritus of FAFICS

To: Andrés Castellanos <castellanosa@un.org>
From: "Eduardo Albertal" <edalbertal@terra.com.br>
Date: 07/09/2010 04:07PM
Subject: Your invitation

Dear Andrés:

Although I much appreciated your kind and very thoughtful invitation to attend this Council meeting I sincerely regret that a slow recovery from some physical problems have prevented me from travelling at this time.

Please extend my regards and best wishes to all members of the Council and participants for a very successful meeting.

With warm personal regards.

Eduardo

Attachment 8:

Message from Angela Butler, Executive Secretary emeritus of FAFICS

Dear Andres,

I tried to send you a reply to your invitation yesterday. For some reason known only to itself, my computer did not like your address so I'm trying again. You were quite right: much as I should like to be with you all for the Council as from July 9th, I cannot make it. My travelling days are over. I hate to admit it but it's a fact that cannot be ignored. I still do get around, locally, with a copious use of taxis. Like everyone else I complain about the scandalous fees they charge, so I limit my use of them. That's their loss, not mine. Anyway London would be out of the question, though I have fond memories of the last FAFICS council meeting there which was, if I remember rightly in 1990. (Goodness, that doesn't make me any younger!)

I don't know what your agenda is this year but I wish you all fruitful discussions, and may at least some of your expectations and hopes result in positive solutions. And if, as is only too likely, some ideas and hopes have to be held over to "next time", that is just the way of life. In some instances the important thing is to have been able to hold the discussions. This, after all, is one of the purposes of FAFICS and its Council sessions. It is important, too, to confirm and strengthen the feeling that we have worked together -- and still do so-- for worthwhile objectives intended to leave the world in a slightly better state than existed when we started on our respective "missions".

And above all don't forget that the world is always better when work is leavened with a good mix of fun and laughter.

I wish you all the best and look forward to reading about the session in a future AAFI/AFICS Bulletin.

July 2010

ANGELA BUTLER.