

(v.3. DL/JB/DB/DL, 24 September 2025)

FAFICS Bureau Meeting, 18 September 2025

DRAFT Minutes

In attendance: Jerry Barton (President), Clemens Adams, Suzanne Bishopric, Abdou Khadre Diakhate, Adriana Gomez Saguez, Juan Casas Zamora, Nancy Hurtz-Soyka, Jayantilal Karia, Marashetty Seenappa, Delia Barcelona (Secretary), Deborah Landey (Rapporteur), Romesh Muttukumar (Treasurer)

Decisions at the 18 September Meeting

President

- Will provide inputs to the Work Plan
- Will invite Associations to submit 5-10 candidates for the Expertise Pool across the range of expertise needed by the Federation to conduct its work
- Will be approaching the Chair of the HLCM about FAFICS participation in future HLCM meetings
- Will send a letter to the Presidents of Associations expressing appreciation for the work of their members serving on FAFICS Standing Committees/Bureau or Council Working Groups or as FAFICS representatives to the Pension Board and its subsidiary bodies
- Will send a letter to both the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Representative in Morocco regarding the setting up of an Association in Morocco

Secretary

- **Work Plan**-Will integrate all inputs into a draft Bureau Work Plan to be reviewed by the Bureau at its next meeting
- **Bureau Organigram**-Will prepare a couple of new options for the Bureau organigram, including one which is accountability-based without lines and showing all Vice-Presidents equally, for review by the Bureau at its next meeting
- **Onboarding Guide**-Will prepare a revised Onboarding Guide, reflecting suggestions made by the Bureau, for review at the next meeting and prepare a power point presentation
- **Expertise Pool**-Will remove the grade level of individuals, cluster Expertise Pool members by thematic expertise and place those already serving on Standing Committees, Council Working Group(s), the Pension Board and its subsidiary bodies in the Expertise Pool (if not already included) through an expedited process not requiring submission by an Association

- **Letter to Associations:** Will prepare a revised template of a letter inviting retirees in a country to form/revitalize a Member Association for use by the Standing Committee on Membership (to be sent via the Pension Fund)
- For the 100th birthday of George Saddler, prepare a Certificate of Appreciation for his services to FAFICS to be sent to him under cover of a note from the President of FAFICS
- Will correct the Association to which Mr. Srinivasan belongs (AFUNPI) in the Council Report and Bureau minutes regarding his nomination to the ASHIL Standing Committee
- Will follow up with UNOV on the invoice for the use of the conference facilities for the 55th Council

Treasurer

- Will assess the overall financial situation once all invoices from the Council have been received and paid

Standing Committees/Bureau Working Group

- The Standing Committee on Communications will be submitting a revised Work Plan with additional activities. The Standing Committees on ASHIL and Membership and the Working Group on Election Procedures will be submitting their Work Plans. Any work to be done by the Bureau on succession planning will also be submitted
- Standing Committees will update their segments of the website-the template to be used will be shared with them
- The Standing Committee on Communications will place a recording of the ARICSA pre-retirement seminar on the website.
- The Standing Committee on Communications will be issuing a survey on establishing a communications network of focal points and ascertaining the experience of Associations with social media as had been decided by the Council

Council Working Group on Succession Planning

- The Council Working Group on Succession Planning will review the Expertise Pool application form as part of its work

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

1.The President added an item under Any Other Business regarding the proposal for what is now to be called a United Nations Advocacy Community. The amended agenda was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Decisions/Actions from the 21 August meeting

2.The President indicated several actions were completed and others were in progress. Bureau members can review the list attached in Annex A for any further actions needed on their part.

Debbie Landey was commended for very rapidly completing a high-quality Council Report. Great appreciation was also expressed for Pierre Sayour and Tony Casas for their thorough and speedy review of the French and Spanish translations.

Agenda item 3: President's time

(a) Bureau Work Plan

3. The Work Plans of the Standing Committees on Pensions and Communications have been submitted. The Work Plans of the Standing Committees on ASHIL and Membership are being finalized. Inputs on work to be done by the leadership, Working Group on Election Procedures and any work to be done by the Bureau on succession planning need to be provided. These inputs will then be integrated into a draft Bureau Work Plan for review at the next meeting of the Bureau. Briefings on actuarial issues are to be part of the Standing Committee on Pension Issues Work Plan. The President reminded the Chair of the Standing Committee on Pension Issues that FAFICS representatives to the Pension Board and its subsidiary bodies can be included in the work of the Standing Committee on Pension Issues. Regarding the updating of the website by Standing Committees, the template to be used will be shared with the Committees.

(b) Bureau Organigram

4. The latest horizontal version of the Bureau organigram was reviewed. Several suggestions were made, including not to mention specific term limits of incumbents as the organigram is for the period 2025-2026. Another suggestion was made to make it less hierarchical with the President in the center and team members in a circle. An issue was raised as to whether the organigram is for accountability purposes or to simply reflect who is the Bureau. The President said he would like to see an organigram reflecting accountability without the lines and with all Vice-Presidents reflected equally. A couple of new versions will be presented to the Bureau at its next meeting. Regarding whether specific responsibilities should be allocated to each Vice-President, it was said that the work gets done through a team-based approach and it was important not to box people in.

(c) Onboarding Guide for new Bureau Officers

5. A draft Onboarding Guide for new Bureau members was presented, outlining essential documents/reports to be read and suggested activities such as visiting the website, informal chats with Bureau members and outgoing Officers. In the discussion, it was suggested adding information about the FAFICS Council, links to subject matter referenced in the Guide, inclusion of a FAFICS annual calendar to include major events and meetings and that the final product be shared with Associations and placed on the website. An Outlook calendar is currently maintained by the Secretary, and thought will be given as to how to share it with the Bureau reflecting schedule of meetings (including the three Pension Board meetings) throughout the year. It was said the Guide would also be very useful in the context of succession planning. Also, it was said that Bureau members can report on the work of FAFICS to their Associations. The President

briefs ARICSA on the work of FAFICS. The Latin America group of Associations discusses the work of FAFICS at its monthly meetings. AFICS/NY has a standing agenda item on FAFICS matters at its monthly Governing Board meetings. At the most recent meeting, the President's Newsletter was shared with the Governing Board. The Bureau agreed to review a revised version of the Guide at its next meeting. Once finalized the Secretary will then translate the Guide into a power point presentation with links and it will be shared with Associations.

(d) Expertise Pool

6.The Expertise Pool was reviewed. Four additional individuals have been added to the Pool including a person with interpretation skills in French and Spanish. There is now a total of 42 individuals in the Expertise Pool. It was said more people are needed, especially French speakers. After discussion it was decided to: remove the grade level of individuals in the Expertise Pool; cluster Expertise Pool members by thematic expertise; place those serving on Standing Committees, Council Working Group(s), the Pension Board and its subsidiary bodies in the Expertise Pool (if not already included) through an expedited process; have the President invite Associations to submit 5-10 candidates across the full range of expertise needed by the Federation to conduct its work. The Council Working Group on Succession Planning will be requested to review the Expertise Pool application form as part of its work.

(e) FICSA invitation to host a system-wide pre-retirement seminar in October

7.The President announced he has been invited to host a system-wide virtual pre-retirement seminar in October. He is already hosting an ARICSA pre-retirement seminar in Vienna from 2-3 October. He will use the information from the ARICSA seminar for the FICSA seminar, except for information concerning residency. It was suggested a recording of the seminar be put up on the website. Marashetty Seenappa shared that in 2022 a joint FAFICS-AFUNPI seminar was organized. A similar FAFICS-AFUNPI pre-retirement seminar is being organized on October 7, to be held in UNICEF and invitations have gone out to all UN Agency Heads. The President's video about FAFICS will be used to kick off the seminar. Last time a small financial contribution towards airfares for colleagues from Bangalore (to travel to New Delhi) was made and a request will also be made for travel for participation in this seminar. The AFICS/NY leadership has been invited to participate in a UN Staff Union seminar being organized for 4-6 November.

8.The President will be meeting the President of FICSA on 1 October as she will be attending the HLCM meeting. The President will be approaching the Chair of the HLCM about FAFICS participation in future HLCM meetings. It was also suggested the President follow up with Catherine Pollard regarding the status of a response to his letter to the Secretary-General on various health insurance matters. The point was also made that the HLCM is the right forum for the recommendations contained in the JIU Report to be discussed. The Chair of the Standing Committee on ASHIL has written to the President of FICSA to suggest she raise the recommendations of the JIU Report at the HLCM. Continuing to advocate for retiree participation in the health insurance governance mechanisms of organizations is particularly

important as this is a forum where retiree expertise can be useful in determining solutions to health insurance issues including those regarding costs.

(f) Financial Issues

9. Payments that have been made will be entered into the FAFICS system. The Treasurer will assess the overall financial situation once all invoices from the Council have been received and paid. Either the President or the Secretary will also follow up with UNOV on the invoice for the use of the conference facilities for the 55th Council.

Agenda item 4. Updates from Standing Committees

Standing Committee on Pension Issues

10. The President is in the process of looking for a replacement for Gerhard Schramek for the FAFICS delegation to the Pension Board. He would appreciate any suggestions from Bureau members. He advised that the physical Pension Board will take place in Vienna during the last week of July 2026 and the FAFICS Council will take place the week before. The President also advised that two committees on which he serves are scheduling non-routine meetings: the Pension Board Standing Committee will be meeting at the request of the UN Appeals Tribunal in October to re-evaluate a complex case. The Pension Board Succession Planning Committee will be working to advertise a new Ethics Advisor position on a “when actually employed” basis.

11. The Chair of the Standing Committee on Pension Issues, Suzanne Bishopric, provided further updates. She advised that the Pension Fund balance is at \$104.8 billion and markets continue to go up. Only 46.4% of the investments are in equities an unusually low level due to a more conservative investment approach that had been taken as no one could have foreseen the bull market would go on for as long as it has. A meeting of the FSALM Committee will be held. There will be a review to obtain a clearer picture of the impact of the ongoing severances on the Pension Fund. The UN faces a serious financial situation right now with the US, China and Japan not paying their dues. It was said that those being offboarded may face challenges such as not qualifying for after-service health insurance, being able to secure visas to remain in countries where they currently have residence and needing to find employment. We must determine how we may be able to support colleagues in these situations.

Standing Committee on After-Service Health Insurance and Long-Term Care (ASHIL)

12. The Chair of the Standing Committee, Jay Karia, provided the update.

13. The Committee Work Plan is almost complete and will be submitted. The Committee plans to have one or two ASHIL sessions with Association focal points to ensure concerns are dealt with between Council meetings.

14. The Chair has written to the President of FICSA to brief her on the work Committee is doing, including on the follow up to the JIU Report, and how FICSA and FAFICS can coordinate their work. The President of FICSA has nominated a focal point to work on these issues with whom the Standing Committee will meet. The Chair suggested to the President of FICSA that she join this meeting to support her preparation for the HLCM on issues which are particularly relevant for active staff, including the representation issue, as there are organizations who do not include either active staff or retirees in their health insurance governance mechanisms, as well as on ASHIL funding and MIP issues.

15. The Chair advised that Mr. Srinivasan has joined the Standing Committee and is very active.

Standing Committee on Communications

16. The Chair of the Standing Committee, Juan Casas, provided the update.

17. The Committee Work Plan has been submitted. A revised version will be submitted shortly to include additional activities.

18. A draft survey to be sent to Associations has been circulated regarding establishing a network of communications focal points and ascertaining the experience of Associations with social media, as had been decided by the Council.

19. The Chair indicated that Pierre Sayour needs to be replaced on the Communications Committee. He mentioned the prospects of inviting the person nominated from AFICS/Addis Ababa, recently included in the expertise pool, and possibly, Jacques Daoust of CAFICS.

20. The President reported on an issue regarding several emails that had been sent from the Secretary to the President's email address which he had not received. If Bureau members do not receive responses from the President, then they should contact him again or try his personal email. The Secretary has been testing the Bureau Google Group and asked Bureau members to alert her if Google Group messages are not being received.

Standing Committee on Membership

21. The Chair, Marashetty Seenappa and Co-Chair, Abdou Khadre Diakhate, provided the update.

22. The Standing Committee met on 16 September to go through the Terms of Reference of the Committee. It will meet again on 23 September.

23. The Committee is working on several activities. Regarding the organization of pre-retirement seminars, one is to be held in Dar es Salaam and another in Addis Ababa.

24. Regarding revitalization of Associations, a visit to Kenya will be necessary to support the revitalization of the Association. The Co-Chair has been in contact with Mr. Ibrahim Salama in

Egypt, former Director, OHCHR regarding the revitalization of the Association. Subsequently, the Co-Chair obtained the list of those in receipt of a pension in Egypt from the Pension Fund, some 218 individuals, which he shared with Mr. Salama. They are now working together on a flyer to be sent to those retirees suggesting they be in touch with Mr. Salama. Mr. Salama has requested a visit later in the year from the Co-Chair to support the process.

25. In terms of the establishment of new Associations, contacts continue with Mr. Adam Jallow in The Gambia. The Co-Chair may visit the Gambia in October. Communication continues with contacts in Zambia and Zimbabwe. For Morocco, the Co-Chair has spoken with Mr. Mohammed Ayat, former Chief of Staff, UNICTR, with whom he will work to create an Association. It would be helpful for the President to send a letter to both the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Representative in Morocco. The Co-Chair has also started to make contacts with Mr. Frej Fenniche regarding the creation of an Association in Tunisia. The Chair of the Standing Committee is visiting Laos later this year and is trying to arrange to meet our contact there to discuss the formation of an Association in Laos. It was also mentioned that there is a new President of AFICS/Malaysia who is interested in reaching out to Brunei and Singapore, formerly part of AFICS/Malaysia when it was formed as AFICS/ Malaysia/Brunei/Singapore.

26. On the letter that goes out from the Pension Fund, there is a template. It was suggested the Secretary and President prepare a revised template for use by the Standing Committee.

Council Working Group on Succession Planning

27. The Chair, Nancy Hurtz-Soyka, provided the update.

28. The Council Working Group on Succession Planning had held its first meeting. It reviewed the relevant background documents, namely, the Rules of Procedure, the President's Report on Succession Planning to the 55th Council and the summary of the Council session on succession planning in the Council Report. The Working Group then reviewed a draft Terms of Reference for its work. The Working Group will meet again in two weeks to agree on the Terms of Reference and begin its work. The Group will be working simultaneously on elaborating a succession planning strategy as well as ongoing operational issues such as the filling of positions. One member of the Group had requested a letter be sent to the President of her Association regarding her participation in the Group which has been sent. Such a letter could be used for others participating in various Committees.

29. It was decided the President would send a letter to the Presidents of Associations expressing appreciation for the work of their members serving on FAFICS Standing Committees/Bureau or Council Working Groups or as FAFICS representatives to the Pension Board and its subsidiary bodies. There are some 30 Associations currently involved in the work of FAFICS.

Bureau Working Group on Election Voting Procedures

30. The Convenor, Nancy Hurtz-Soyka, provided the update.

31. The Group will meet every two weeks. At its first meeting the Group reviewed a zero draft of new election voting procedures. Abdou Khadre Diakhate had also circulated a paper and a revised draft, incorporating some of the issues in his paper, had been circulated to the Group. The President indicated the Group will need to complete its work in time for a special virtual session of the Council in May or early June to review and approve the new election voting procedures before the call for nominations goes out in mid-June. The Secretary clarified that the call for nominations for elections is sent out 6 weeks before the Council dates. To be able to vote, the President indicated an Association has to have confirmed they will attend the Council virtually or in person and have designated a voter, usually the Head of Delegation. Proxies are also possible if the Secretariat is informed of a proxy situation, in which case the designated voter has two votes. If an Association is behind in its dues for three years they are not entitled to vote.

Agenda item 5: Bureau Meetings for the rest of the Year

32. The dates are as follows:

16 October
20 November
18 December

Agenda item 6: Any Other Business

33. The President provided an update on the United Nations Advocacy Community. A revised proposal had been prepared by the originators based on the discussions with the President and Debbie Landey. The fundamental purpose of the Community will be advocacy for the role and impact of the work of the United Nations. A survey had been conducted by the originators to ascertain the interest of several former international civil servants in participating in such a Community, with largely positive responses from those contacted. There will be an Advisory Group established. The organizers hope to launch the Community on UN Day.

34. On another matter, the Secretary advised she will go back to the Council Report and Bureau minutes to correct the Association to which Mr. Srinivasan belongs. For George Saddler's 100th birthday, a Certificate of Appreciation will be prepared recognizing his services to FAFICS and a note sent to him by the President of FAFICS.

Annex A. Decisions at the 21 August Bureau Meeting

President

- The President and Council Rapporteur will review the suggested edits for the Council Report received from Associations by the deadline of 20 August that the Rapporteur has now integrated into the draft Council Report (DONE)
- The Council Report will be translated and posted on the website the week of 25 August 2025 (DONE)
- The next President's Newsletter will go out once the Council Report is posted and will cover the key outcomes of the Council (DONE)
- The President welcomed Abdou Khadre Diakhate as a full member of the Bureau, under the FAFICS Rules of Procedure, Rule 5.6, which provides the President with the discretionary authority to have a Standing Committee Vice/Co-Chair participate in the Bureau (DONE)

Bureau

- Action points from the 19 June Bureau meeting, attached to the annex, are to be reviewed and followed up by members of the Bureau as may be needed
- Thank you letters to speakers, panelists and special guests who participated in the sessions of the 55th Council meeting and the 18 July FAFICS@50 commemorative event is to be prepared and sent (DONE)
- A short report will be prepared on the 18 July FAFICS@50 commemorative event (DONE)
- An electronic "onboarding" file for new Bureau members will be prepared and reviewed at the Bureau meeting in September (IN PROGRESS)
- A review of the funding of FAFICS, with a view to increasing sustainability, including the travel reimbursement methodology, will be undertaken
- The draft of the next Bureau work plan will be reviewed at the Bureau meeting in September and approved at the Bureau meeting in October (NO PROGRESS)
- A core set of slides will be developed for FAFICS officials attending pre-retirement seminars to be reviewed at the Bureau meeting in September
- A special presentation for staff being downsized with less than five years of contributory service will be prepared for use by Associations/FAFICS
- The Bureau will review the Expertise Pool at its monthly meeting; a brief summary of the 6 nominations received in the last two months was shared by the Secretary, for inclusion in the pool.
- Specific CVs or resumes of individuals in the Expertise Pool may be provided to the Standing Committee Chairs as and when needed; the expertise pool excel file will be shared with the Bureau
- The Council Working Group on Succession Planning will review how to improve the overall management of the Expertise Pool (IN PROGRESS)
- The Bureau confirmed that a Working Group on Election Procedures had been established, to propose more detailed procedures in time for the 2026 elections. (IN PROGRESS)

Standing Committees

- All Standing Committees will provide the Secretary with their work plans using the template circulated (NO PROGRESS)
- The Communications Standing Committee will create a special section on the FAFICS website where all the pre-retirement materials can be placed
- The Communications Standing Committee will work with the ARICSA President to see if the next ARICSA pre-retirement seminar could be recorded
- The Communications Standing Committee will review the form Associations use to update their Directory on the website, to include the focal points for all Standing Committees
- Mr. Srinivasan, AFUNPI-India, will join the Standing Committee on ASHIL; Jay Karia will send him the invitation to participate. (DONE)