

Final Minutes of the meeting of the FAFICS Bureau,

19 November 2025

In attendance: Jerry Barton (President), Clemens Adams, Adriana Gomez Saguez, Nancy Hurtz-Soyka, Jayantilal Karia, Delia Barcelona (Secretary), Deborah Landey (Rapporteur), Romesh Muttukumaru (Treasurer)

Absent: Suzanne Bishopric, Juan Casas Zamora, Marashetty Seenappa, Abdou Khadre Diakhate

Decisions/Actions taken at the 20 November meeting

President

- Will write to Catherine Pollard in January regarding FAFICS participation in future HLCCM meetings and the letter he wrote to the Secretary-General on health insurance issues
- Will attend the BAFUNCS Annual General Meeting in March 2026
- Will send out the position description of Treasurer, with his suggested amendment included, to all Associations asking them to already be sourcing candidates that could be submitted next year for this critical position
- Will include the screening of the video on the history and work of the United Nations, produced by Jay Pozenel, on the first day of the plenary of the 2026 Council meeting
- Plans to go to Geneva in February to check on the status of the FAFICS Office, preferably with Delia

Secretary

- Will forward all the candidates under consideration for the FAFICS representative position on the Pension Board delegation to the Working Group on Succession Planning
- Will draft a congratulatory letter to be sent by the President to Marashetty Seenappa on becoming President Emeritus of AFUNPI and to his successor, the new President
- Will draft a reply from the President regarding the query on membership of consultants and UNVs in Associations received from Peru

- Will include the issue of the use of zoom licensing and AI options, including-AI-generated subtitles in different languages, on the Bureau work plan for further review
- Will draft a letter to all Associations from the President asking for focal points to be identified for the Standing Committees on pension issues, health insurance, communications and membership, as well as for updated information on Governing Body/Executive leadership, to be communicated to the Secretary, so the FAFICS website can be updated
- Will post the FAFICS-FICSA pre-retirement session on the FAFICS website
- Will share the updated Expertise Pool with the Standing Committee on ASHIL which continues its search for new members
- Will draft the job description of Secretary

Standing Committees

- Will draft Chair and Co-Chair job descriptions

Bureau Working Group on Voting Procedures

- Will make the changes suggested in the Bureau meeting to the draft document on Voting Procedures for presentation to the next Bureau meeting

Council Working Group on Succession Planning

- Will circulate the job description template it has developed to the Secretary and Standing Committee Chairs to enable them to produce their position descriptions
- Will share the revised Expertise Pool form with the Bureau

Bureau Members

- Will ask their Associations if they would be willing to fund the travel of their Bureau member to an in-person Bureau meeting in Geneva in February
- It was suggested the issue of tenures for all FAFICS positions be looked at and a note prepared for the next Bureau meeting regarding any proposed changes and justification for any such proposed changes (Adriana)
- Bureau members who have any comments on the social media survey report should provide them to Tony Casas

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

1. The agenda was adopted with an amendment to the order of the agenda with Agenda item 5 regarding the next Bureau meeting being discussed first.
2. The draft Minutes of the Bureau meeting held on 16 October were adopted by email circulated on 22 October.
3. It was decided the next Bureau meeting will be held on January 8 and a decision would be taken at that time regarding whether to continue the practice of meeting on the third Thursday of the month.

Agenda item 2: Decisions/Actions from the 16 October meeting

4. The President indicated he would not go through the decisions/actions adopted at the 16 October Bureau meeting. He did indicate he would write to Catherine Pollard in January regarding FAFICS participation in future HLCM meetings and the letter he had written to the Secretary-General on health insurance issues. Bureau members can review the list attached in Annex A for any further actions needed on their part.
5. The President raised the issue of his travel in 2026 and, in that connection, asked if the Bureau should consider a majority in-person meeting (which would also be hybrid) in Geneva in February 2026, when he and Delia will be there to review files in the FAFICS office. With the exception of the President and Secretary, travel would have to be Association funded or self-funded. It was decided to put the issue on hold with a request that Bureau members ask their Associations if they would be willing to fund participation of Bureau member travel. Nancy advised such funding would not be possible for AFICS/NY given its funding constraints.

Agenda item 3: President's time/Secretariat

(a) Letter regarding FAFICS delegation to the Pension Board

6. A letter has been sent by the President to all Associations requesting candidates for the FAFICS Pension Board delegation position being vacated by Gerhard Schramek. Attached to the letter was a job description for the position, the first of its kind developed for a FAFICS representative position, which had been prepared by the Council Working Group on Succession Planning. A few responses have come back. All those candidates under consideration for the position are to be forwarded to the Chair of the Council Working Group on Succession Planning for the Group to review against a job description template it has developed. Such a review is designed to support the review and decision-making by the President. The President clarified a decision for this position can be taken as late as 15 January. He also clarified that if a candidate is already in the Expertise Pool or on a Committee, the candidate does not have to fill out the new

Expertise Pool form that the Council Working Group has developed. The new Expertise Pool form is more comprehensive, and the idea is eventually to automate it. The new format has people organized by substantive categories. It will be presented to the Bureau at its next meeting. The Chair of the Council Working Group on Succession Planning noted that in the President's letter, the Council Working Group on Succession Planning had been incorrectly referred to as Bureau Working Group. She suggested that perhaps the President could correct this in his next Newsletter and indicate that this is a Council Working Group with broad geographical representation and good gender balance. This would again demonstrate how serious we are about involving talent from across the Federation in the work of the Federation.

(b) French taxation Inquiry (from AAFU/AFUS)

7. A former UNHCR staff member wrote to the President inquiring about taxation rules in France. The President responded indicating he should be taking the matter up with AAFU/AFUS.

(c) AFUNPI 50th anniversary celebration

8. The President advised the celebration had gone very well. He had addressed the gathering via a recorded greeting. A congratulatory letter will be sent to Marashetty Seenappa on becoming President Emeritus of AFUNPI and to the new President. A story on the event is being prepared for the website.

(d) FAFICS-FICSA pre-retirement seminar

9. Some 330 individuals had registered with some 200 in attendance. The President chaired and Marashetty Seenappa and Denise Gustin-Gardella, Head of Client Services, Pension Administration, Geneva, attended. The event had gone well with good questions asked and the feedback on the event was good. The session was posted on the FICSA website and will also be on the FAFICS website. There is now a request for a follow up session in French. It was also reported that the Staff Council in the UN in New York had organized a pre-retirement seminar, with about 100 people in attendance, in which the AFICS/NY leadership had participated, which had also been very well received. AFICS/NY had also hosted an Open House for staff getting ready to leave the UN, which had also been very well received.

(e) UNJSPF Town Hall

10. More questions are being received in Vienna about the two-track option given the lower dollar. The President reminds everyone that local track pension calculations are made at the exchange rate at the time of retirement. He also advised that at the General Meeting of ARICSA, people indicated they were having trouble registering in the Pension Fund Member Self Services portal using the two-factor authentication log in and a special seminar will be set up to support

registration. The letter that the President had sent out on this topic to Associations had been appreciated.

(f)BAFUNCS issues/follow-up

11. There was no change reported on this issue. The issue is value for money. The President will be attending their annual meeting in March 2026.

(g)NGO Committee on Ageing

12. There was a session of the NGO Committee on Ageing in Geneva and New York. Information emanating from the NGO Committee on Ageing regarding ageing issues is useful and could be shared on the FAFICS website.

(h) Peru inquiry on consultants and UNVs as members

13. It was said it is up to local Associations as to whether such individuals can be members of an Association. ARICSA has a few who are “friends”, but they cannot vote. UNVs do not receive a pension or medical coverage so it is up to them if they want to remain connected. A reply conveying this information will be drafted and sent to the President of AEFNUP/Peru.

(i)UNOV Legal Office Note Verbale

14. The President advised the Note Verbale regarding taxation of benefits of surviving spouses had been sent to the Foreign Ministry of Austria that deals with UN organizations based in Vienna. There has been no response yet and a follow-up will be done in December. UNOV attempted to have a VIC wide Note Verbale, but it was only from UNOV and CTBTO. The IAEA and UNIDO did not participate. After the ARICSA General Meeting, a note was sent to the President recommending a group be set up to pursue this matter and asking for all the information available on the issue. The President of ARICSA will be identifying a way that concerned ARICSA members can contribute to ARICSA’s efforts on this issue to ensure only one voice on the matter.

(j)Bureau Work Plan

15. Final inputs are to be provided to the Secretary. A suggestion was made for key deliverables to be identified and included in a high-level Bureau Work Plan. The more detailed work plans of Standing Committees and Working Groups can be maintained separately. A comment was made that all the Committees/Working Groups have been working actively on their respective issues but have not had time to reflect this work in their workplans.

(k)Technology issues

16. Some Associations are requesting more zoom licenses and use of AI-generated sub-titles in different languages, for Council and other meetings. It was indicated that in meetings where English is used this feature would be particularly useful for non-English speakers. The pros and cons of using Microsoft Teams and zoom, including cost, could be looked at. The President will request the Communications Committee to look into this. In UN organizations, the conference services of the organization specify which software is to be used and in Vienna it is Microsoft Teams. The President noted the importance of checking with HQ services regarding these matters. This issue will be placed on the Bureau work plan for further review.

Agenda item 4. Updates from Standing Committees

Standing Committee on Pension Issues

17. The President provided the update.

18. The President reported that the Fund remains in good shape both on the investment side, with investments at \$106 billion and continuing to perform well under the leadership of the Acting RSG, as well as on the operational side. The Standing Committee on Pension Issues plans to meet in January or February.

19. The AFICS/NY Pension Committee is setting up meetings with the RSG and CEPA in January which the FAFICS President will attend.

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

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

21. The Committee Work Plan is almost complete and will be submitted soonest.

22. The draft of the survey Council agreed to conduct is ready. It will be shared with Association health insurance focal points in draft to ensure it reflects all their concerns. The Standing Committee will then meet with Association focal points to review their concerns. The final survey will then go out to Associations to complete. Two templates will be sent, one for Associations to complete and one for them to adapt should they so wish for sending to their members to obtain member views. The understanding will be that Associations will have to

collate and analyze the responses of their members. In terms of what type of software is to be used, options are being reviewed, one of which will likely have modest financial implications.

23. The updated Expertise Pool will be shared with the Standing Committee, which continues its search for new members.

24. It was suggested the list of Association focal points needs be updated. It was decided to send one letter requesting Association focal points for all four Standing Committees.

25. A question was raised regarding the tenure of focal points. It was said Standing Committee Chairs are elected for two years renewable but there is no specified tenure for Standing Committee members. It was suggested the issue of tenures for all FAFICS positions be looked at and a note prepared for the next Bureau meeting regarding any proposed changes and justification for any such proposed changes.

Standing Committee on Communications

26. In the absence of the Chair, Delia Barcelona indicated that if Bureau members have any comments on the social media survey results report, they should be provided to Tony Casas.

27. The report on the survey results will be updated for the next meeting as there were responses that came in after the deadline.

Standing Committee on Membership

28. The Co-Chair of the Standing Committee is currently in Laos and may have a chance to talk to someone in Laos on the establishment of an Association there. Abdou is undergoing various medical tests and so has not been available.

29. The Standing Committee will be meeting on 25 November.

30. The President advised he had spoken with senior UNFCU colleagues, thanked them for their financial support and advised them that UNFCU resources were being utilized for the work of increasing the number of Associations, particularly in Africa. They were very glad to hear that is how the resources are being used.

Council Working Group on Succession Planning

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

32. The Council Working Group is meeting weekly. The team is very dedicated to the task.

33. So far, the Working Group has produced the following:

-Comprehensive position descriptions have been prepared for the positions of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and the upcoming FAFICS Pension Board delegation position being vacated by Gerhard Schramek.

-The FAFICS Pension Board delegation position description was sent by the President to all Associations with a request for nominations of qualified candidates.

-A candidate review template has been developed for the review by the Working Group of candidates for the FAFICS Pension Board delegation position.

-For the position of Treasurer, the Working Group sent a recommendation to the President that this position description should now be distributed to all Associations asking them to begin the process of looking for possible candidates who would then go through the normal election process next year. This would allow time for potential candidates to be in touch with Romesh about the job. The President had one comment on the Treasurer's position, namely that the Treasurer is the carrier of all fiscal responsibility for the Associations which needs to be better specified in the position description. Once this change is made the position description will then be sent to all Associations.

-The Expertise Pool form has been revised to better capture the relevant skills and experience of potential candidates.

-The Working Group will propose that people are in the Expertise Pool for two years after which they would then reapply.

-The Working Group is now exploring options for how the Expertise Pool form can be automated.

-A template for handover notes between outgoing and incoming incumbents has been developed to facilitate knowledge transfer.

-Briefing and shadowing processes to further support new office holders are now being reviewed.

-The Working Group would like to have a complete package of job descriptions for all FAFICS positions. It is therefore asking the Secretary and Standing Committee Chairs to provide their position descriptions. The Working Group will circulate the template it has developed for them to use.

-The Working Group on Succession Planning is endeavoring to implement and test succession planning and talent management approaches as it goes along so that its recommendations to the Council next year are grounded in operational experience.

Bureau Working Group on Voting Procedures

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

35. The Group was set up by the President in response to issues that had arisen regarding voting at the Council meeting in July. The President had made a commitment to the Council that a Bureau Working Group would be set up to come up with improved voting procedures that would be implemented for next year's elections. The Working Group has met several times.

36. A document was submitted to the Bureau for its consideration. The document operationalizes Articles 6 and 8 of the Rules of Procedure.

There are eight parts to the document. Key elements are:

1. An introduction which provides the background and underlying principles.

2. Establishment of an Election Monitoring Committee (EMC) by the President in consultation with the Bureau. It would be an independent body made up of Association members that would oversee the nomination and voting process and report to the Council. It would be made up of four members, with a Chair and Co-Chair elected by the Committee. The EMC will make every effort to ensure a slate of candidates for all open positions reflecting universality-geographic representation and gender balance.

3. Nominating procedures. The Secretary will issue the call for nominations three months, or no later than six weeks, prior to the Council for FAFICS Officer positions whose terms have been completed. Associations and the Bureau can nominate candidates. Candidates are to be submitted at least two months but no later than four weeks prior to the Council. All procedures would be issued in English.

4. Council proceedings. The timing of the elections will be announced at the beginning of the Council and take place on the penultimate day of the Council. Candidates will be required to make a presentation on their motivation, background, experience and competencies.

5. Voter designation. Each Association will designate one official delegate to vote. Proxy voting will be reserved for exceptional situations.

6. Casting of votes. Two options were presented. Associations must use all their votes, or the ballot would be invalidated. Or use none. No late or handwritten notes will be considered valid.

7. Announcement of results. Election results will be announced by the Chair of the EMC.

8. Dispute resolution. Any dispute will be submitted within 24 hours to the EMC. The EMC will investigate and issue a ruling as soon as possible. The Committee's decision is final. Ballots would be stored for audit purposes.

37. In the discussion that followed, the President mentioned the Working Group will need to draft a terms of reference and a proposed tenure for the EMC. Regarding universality, he indicated we would want to have universality as an aspiration. Clearly while every effort needs to be made to

have slates of candidates with broad geographic and gender balance, in the end it will be the decision of Associations as to who is elected. Regarding option one and two on voting, the President would go with the first option indicating that Associations must cast as many votes as there are open positions and use all votes available to them. Adding a box saying “none” would be superfluous. Another Bureau member indicated the new procedures would encourage Associations to take the elections more seriously. It was suggested it would be good to highlight what we are doing, that is working and what is being proposed by way of improvements. The Working Group will take these comments into account and produce a revised draft for the next Bureau meeting.

Agenda item 5: Any Other Business

38. The question as to whether the video on the history and work of the United Nations produced by Jay Pozenel could be shared with FAFICS, perhaps at the next Council session, was raised. The President agreed it could be screened on the first day of the plenary.

39. The President reported that the current Executive team of ARICSA was reelected at its recent General Meeting. The current Executive Secretary, Rosemarie Orkan-lecki, will step back from this function but remain on the Executive team. Anneliese Heber will take on this function.

Annex A: Decisions at the 16 October Bureau Meeting

President

- Will write to Catherine Pollard regarding FAFICS participation in future HLCM meetings and the letter he had written to the Secretary-General on health insurance issues
- Will provide more information on how the work of FAFICS is impacting retirees in future President’s Newsletters
- Will attend the BAFUNCS Annual General Meeting in March 2026
- Will share the relevant Pension Board Annexes regarding Pension Board delegate responsibilities and ethics requirements with the Working Group on Succession Planning

Secretary

- Will integrate all Committee/Working Group inputs into a draft Bureau Work Plan to be reviewed by the Bureau at its next meeting.
- Will upload the final approved version of the Bureau Organigram on the website
- Will upload the final approved version of the Onboarding PowerPoint on the website
- Will prepare a set of talking points that anyone participating in a pre-retirement seminar can use. To this end, the President will share with the Secretary the PowerPoint slides he used for the ARICSA pre-retirement seminar and Marashetty will share the PowerPoint slides he used for the FAFICS/AFUNPI pre-retirement seminar

Treasurer

- Will follow up to obtain any outstanding invoices related to the Council meeting and once these have been paid assess the overall financial situation of FAFICS
- Will identify any outstanding dues owed by Associations and will get this information to the Co-Chairs of the Membership Committee

Standing Committees/Bureau Working Group

- The Standing Committee on Communications will set up a dedicated page on pre-retirement seminars on the website
- The Standing Committee on Communications will look at ascertaining what information Associations want to receive, how to improve the content of communications from the President to Associations, from Associations to the President and among Associations
- The Standing Committee on Communications will look into why some emails to the President were not received by him
- The Committee on Communications will put together a complete proposal by January to include the costs for website investment and maintenance, content management, and brochure updates
- The Bureau Working Group on Election Procedures and the Council Working Group on Succession Planning will provide inputs to the Work Plan on any work that needs to be done by the Bureau in connection with their work

Individual follow up

- Marashetty will send a news story on the FAFICS/AFUNPI pre-retirement seminar to be posted on the website