

FINAL Minutes FAFICS Bureau Meeting 14 May 2026

(Finalized 7 June 2026)

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

Absent: Suzanne Bishopric, Jayantilal Karia

Decisions/Actions taken

The President

- Will set up the Election Support Group
- Will send the budget request form to UNFCU for the reception on the Monday evening of the Council

The Secretary

- May extend the election deadline and send out a further call for nominations after taking stock of those nominations received by the deadline of 1 June
- Will inform Associations of the election procedures ahead of the Council meeting and seek their feedback as to how these procedures have worked after the elections
- Will work with the Treasurer on securing a nominee for the second audit position
- Will work with the Treasurer to reduce Zoom storage
- Will work with the Chair of the Standing Committee on Communications on licensing options for live translation in the Council meeting
- Will continue coordinating logistics arrangements for the Council with UNOV colleagues

Standing Committees

- Standing Committee on Communications to prepare a one-pager on what FAFICS does for the website, dissemination to Associations, various stakeholders including the Pension Fund to use in its communications with retiring staff
- Standing Committees holding informal sessions on the first Monday of the Council to send agendas for their meetings to the Secretary on or before 15 June

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

1. The agenda was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Approval of the Minutes

2.The draft Minutes of the Bureau meeting held on 16 April were sent out to Bureau members with a deadline of 27 April to provide any comments. No comments were received. The minutes have been posted on the website.

Agenda item 3: Decisions of the 16 April meeting

3.The decisions of the meeting of 16 April are attached in the annex. The President indicated he would not go into them in detail. He did indicate that no response had yet been received to his letter to Catherine Pollard, Chair, HLCM.

Agenda item 4: Updates from the President

4.The President confirmed he will be attending the Annual Meetings of FFOA-Rome on 19 May, AAFU-AFUS Paris on 21 May and AFICS-NY on 29 May, as well as the meeting of the AFICS-NY Governing Board. He will meet the Deputy CEPA in Rome, Sarah Mathieson and Aliamane Bacar-Said in New York.

5.The President reported on the April Pension Board meeting. Matters discussed were the Working Group on the pension system which has met and will be meeting very frequently going forward. Its deliberations are confidential. Other matters covered were the preparation of the July meeting of the Pension Board and inputs to the budget. The July meeting of the Pension Board will be held in the last week of July in Vienna, hosted by UNOV. Last year the Pension Board meeting was also held in Vienna, hosted by UNIDO. The practice is normally for a UN agency to host one year followed by the UN the next. There has been no public discussion on the venue for next year's Pension Board meeting.

6.The issue of contacting retirees in countries was raised. It was indicated the Pension Fund can send out letters via email to retirees with information on the local Association, based on drafts prepared by FAFICS or a local Association. This letter can also annex a one-pager on the value of joining FAFICS, The Pension Fund cannot share the names or addresses of those in receipt of a pension.

Agenda item 5: Budget Task Team report

7. The Treasurer reported that the Task Team had met twice and had looked at options for generating income as well as reducing expenditures.

8. On the income generation side, there were three options discussed: increasing the number of Associations, and membership within them; securing more interest on FAFICS deposits; and securing resources from donors. On FAFICS membership, it has been hovering at around 18,000-19,000 for many years and membership numbers are now decreasing. It was felt a much more aggressive membership drive for more Associations and members within them is needed. There are resources in the reserves to support the work of increasing the number of Associations. Communication about FAFICS needs to be leveraged more aggressively. We have not been spending money on communications other than on the website. Could the brochure about

FAFICS be updated, how can we communicate better across Associations, could an information note on what FAFICS does be placed on the website. More pre-retirement seminars can be organized. Regarding interest on FAFICS deposits, we have \$70,000 in our UBS \$ account and only 400 Swiss francs in the Swiss franc account which earns more interest and the value of the Swiss franc is increasing. Should we therefore increase our holdings in the Swiss franc account. Alternatives are being explored. FAFICS also has CDs with the Credit Union and they are doing well. As to donors, there could be further exploration as to how the Pension Fund and UNFCU might be able to provide more support. UNFCU has provided \$10,000 a year since 2017. We are exploring if an increase might be possible. There is the issue of possible bequests, noting that for bequests, FAFICS needs to be established as a legal entity to which a bequest can be made. More work on ensuring FAFICS is an established legal entity needs to be done.

9. On the expenditure side, the team also looked at expenses, in particular travel, which amounts to 70% of the budget; the recurring cost of web maintenance going forward; and support to Standing Committees. One proposal made is to amend the DSA rate from 90-80 %. Another proposal is that we identify retired IT experts who could work on the website on a voluntary basis perhaps receiving a modest stipend. Another proposal was to look at the Bureau structure. Perhaps Vice-Presidents should also chair Standing Committees and have technical experts who work with them.

10. In the discussion that followed, Bureau members agreed on the need to make greater use of technology and virtual interaction to reduce travel costs, to increase communication about the value of FAFICS which the President himself has been doing, including through his presentations to Associations, for there to be more pre-retirement seminars and webinars. Successful pre-retirement seminars had been held in New York and Vienna. It was mentioned that for many years there was an annual letter from the Pension Fund to retirees, to which was appended a list of Associations and the countries in which they were located so retirees knew who to contact. It was suggested that there should be a booklet on FAFICS, what it does and what each Association is doing. Resources might not be available right now to prepare such a booklet, but a one pager on the value of FAFICS could be prepared for the website and for various stakeholders to use and possibly annex to the letter that goes out from the UNJSPF to retirees. It was also suggested that for those leaving the UN before retirement age, retirees could be a resource for these individuals. Perhaps we should not use the term “retiree” in certain contexts but rather the term “former international civil servants”. There is a need to look at what Associations might offer for those leaving the UN who are not at normal retiree age.

11. Regarding the structure of the Bureau, the Standing Committee Chairs are ex-officio members. When they cannot be present the Co-Chairs can be in attendance. It was suggested that instead of having Vice-Presidents become Standing Committee Chairs, Vice-Presidents could instead be members of FAFICS Standing Committees and able to represent the Standing Committee in Council to reduce travel costs. For virtual meetings Standing Committee Chairs could then continue to be present.

Agenda item 6: Bureau Work Plan

12. The latest version of the work plan was circulated. It is close to being complete. The President will report to Council on what has been achieved. It was suggested that the new President will need to have some discretion regarding the work plan from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026. The budget is on a calendar year, and the activities are on a fiscal time frame, so the budget has to be prorated. The President and the Secretary will work together on a version of the workplan for reporting to the Council which highlights accomplishments during this period.

Agenda item 7: Standing Committee Updates

Standing Committee on Pension Issues

13. The President provided the update.

14. The list of those whose pensions are to be suspended because they did not respond to the annual certification request in 2025 is now available. Associations can help the Pension Fund track individuals. There had been an announcement of the suspensions from the two-track system in April to take effect in October. This had resulted in one request for information and one possible complaint from Bolivia. The pension of one person affected in Bolivia will be halved and this person may issue a complaint to the Pension Fund. Meetings have been held with the leadership of the Association in Bolivia and the Pension Fund, which the President attended, to explain the two-track methodology.

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

15. The Chair of the Standing Committee, Jay Karia, who could not be present, sent a written update.

16. The Standing Committee continues to meet on a regular basis. Regarding the survey analysis, arrangements for the consultant to complete the analytical work are continuing. Ann and Jay had a very good meeting with the UNISERV focal point on the Social Security Committee, Ms. Karin Eposito, who works at CTBTO. They reviewed several issues on which we should continue our collaboration. Ms. Eposito was very appreciative of the information shared with her, including the guidance paper on Long-Term Care which she is planning to share with their members. The importance of collaboration on pension issues was emphasized. She will be in touch with the President as she is also based in Vienna. The Standing Committee had shared updated inputs for the ASHIL page on the website. Talking Points had been provided to Jerry for his meeting with Cigna. The Standing Committee is starting to draft the Council report. The Chair had attended a meeting of the Working Group on Succession Planning, which he had found very useful. The Standing Committee looks forward to receiving names of possible new additions to the Standing Committee from the Expertise Pool.

Standing Committee on Communications

17. The Chair of the Standing Committee on Communications, Juan Casas Zamora, provided the update.

18. The Standing Committee will be holding a second meeting of focal points in June. The first one had not been well attended. Efforts are being made to update the list of focal points. Updating the Directory is proving to be a challenge. The Standing Committee will report to Council on next steps regarding the Communications Strategy. The website service provider Quattro Media Digitalis has been paid for the next period. Appreciation was expressed for the Standing Committee on ASHIL which had sent a host of updated health insurance related documents for the website. A similar effort is needed by the Standing Committee on Pension Issues.

Standing Committee on Membership

19. The Chair and Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on Membership, Marashetty Seenaapa and Abdou Khadre Diakhate, provided the update.

20. The Standing Committee will be meeting on 18 May.

21. Efforts continue to establish Associations in Morocco, The Gambia, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Serbia. Retirees in Morocco are concerned about the tax implications that may occur if they organize. The President requested some background on this so he could raise this question with Aliamane when he meets him in New York. Retirees in The Gambia may wish to join the Association in Senegal. The process for the establishment of an Association in Honduras is moving well and will likely be concluded later this year. The Association in Argentina has offered to deploy to Nicaragua to support retiree efforts there to form an Association. This would have financial implications. Marashetty has requested a formal work plan from Argentina for the trip to Nicaragua before funding can be assessed. The Association in Panama could provide support to Nicaragua at no cost. Retirees in Serbia are currently organized as a hospitality group. A poll will now be taken among them to determine the level of support for forming an Association and the implications of that including having to allow members from other countries.

22. Discussions continue with UNFCU about organizing joint pre-retirement seminars in New Delhi, Kathmandu, Colombo, possibly Dhaka, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam to begin in the last quarter of the year.

Council Working Group on Succession Planning

23. The Chair of the Working Group on Succession Planning, Nancy Hertz-Soyka, provided the update.

24. The Working Group is preparing the Council report, including an Executive Summary. The report includes a recommendation that the Working Group become a FAFICS Standing Committee. The Working Group would like to hold an informal consultation on the first day of

the Council. All four key function descriptions for the Standing Committee Chairs have been prepared. The Expertise Pool application form is being automated. The Secretary requested that agendas for informal consultations being held on the first day of the Council be provided to her no later than mid-June.

Agenda item 7: Election Procedures

25. It was recalled the Working Group was asked by the Bureau to come up with voting administrative procedures because of the concerns raised in last year's election. The Working Group had prepared a set of administrative procedures and, in that context, is proposing that a Support Group be established by the President to support the Secretary, whose job it is to oversee the elections.

26. The President supports the idea of the establishment of a Support Group to the Secretary to ensure the rules regarding the voting process are followed. He invited discussion on the practical details.

27. In the discussion that followed, and regarding nominations, it was agreed the Support Group would support the Secretary with any required follow up with Associations regarding candidates for the vacant positions. Once the deadline for nominations has been reached on 1 June, the Secretary and Support Group will take stock of the nominations received and, if necessary, extend the deadline and call for further nominations including from underrepresented regions. As of now, one nomination, a joint nomination from three Associations, for the position of President, had been received. One Association has also submitted a candidate for the position of Treasurer and one of the two auditor positions.

28. With regard to the election process, the Support Group will support the Secretary in ensuring the election process is implemented according to the rules and will produce an audit report certifying that this had been achieved. In particular, it will certify that Associations have utilized all the votes available to them, have voted according to the schedule for voting, confirm no late voting was permitted and that the votes were correctly counted.

29. A dispute resolution mechanism will be put in place.

30. The procedures to be followed for the elections will be communicated to Associations ahead of the Council and their feedback as to how these procedures have worked sought after the elections.

31. Support Group members will not come from Associations proposing candidates and cannot be candidates themselves.

Agenda item 8: 56th Council preparations

32. A second Provisional Agenda had been circulated to the Bureau.

33. Associations have not requested any additional agenda items for the agenda. There have been no requests for any changes to the Rules of Procedure. Five visa support letters have been requested/issued by the Secretary

34. Regarding guest speakers, the President mentioned three ideas: Michelle Rogat, Director, Division of General Services, IAEA; perhaps Francis O'Donnell who is a member of the newly created UN Advocacy Community to speak about advocacy for the UN system; or Monica Juma,

the newly arrived Director-General of UNOV. It was thought we should approach the Director-General of UNOV.

35. On the Presiding Officer, the President will be talking to Jacques Rao from AAFU-AFUS-Paris about taking on this role. He was one of the individuals suggested by the Working Group on Succession Planning.

36. The Secretary is working with UNOV regarding logistics and costs. The Indigo registration system will open on 15 May but needs to be coordinated with UNOV specifically for the FAFICS 56th Council

37. A question was raised about the opening and closing sessions being opened up to a broader audience. It was said they could be opened for people to observe only but not to interact. Options for live translation in the Council meeting are being explored.

38. For hospitality ARICSA will invite Council participants to a Heurige which is easy to reach by public transportation. A request for UNFCU to fund the Monday night reception will be made.

Agenda item 9: Next Bureau meeting

39. The next Bureau meeting will be on 18 June.

Agenda item 10: AOB

40. There was no other business.

Decisions/Actions taken at the Bureau meeting on 16 April

The President

- Will provide the Bureau with his decisions on the representatives and alternates for the Pension Board Plan Design Working Group, which he will be proposing to the April meeting of the Pension Board.
- Will make his decisions on members of the Election Monitoring Group (EMG).
- Will further consider whether to have an introductory speaker by a senior official at the opening of the Council.

The Secretary

- Will draft a work plan for 2026-2027 in coordination with Romesh and the budget task team to present to the next Bureau meeting.
- Will continue to update and maintain the Directory of all Associations' key officers (Pres/Sec/Treas) and focal points for the pillars.
- Will review the email addresses of African Associations and send an updated list to Abdou as soon as possible.

- Will provide Jay and Nancy with the modalities for contracts to enable them to hire the consultants doing the analysis of the health insurance surveys and automation of the Expertise Pool.
- Will send Suzanne the President's video and written message and the one-page visual on how to create Associations.
- Will share the call for nominations letter with the Bureau for any comments.
- Will arrange for a remote part-time virtual assistant to support Council preparation.
- Will organize an upgraded zoom account at least for the opening and closing Council sessions to ensure maximum participation.
- Will provide the annotated agenda for the Council meeting to the 14 May Bureau meeting.

The Rapporteur

- Will integrate any further edits received from Bureau members to the March 26 and 2 April Bureau meetings by COB 19 April.

Budget Task Team

- Will present a revised 2026 budget and preliminary 2027 budget proposal at the next Bureau meeting.
- Will prepare some principles regarding travel for consideration by the Bureau.
- Will examine options for an inflation-based increase to the annual FAFICS dues and present a proposal at the next Bureau meeting.

Standing Committee Chairs

- Will advise the Secretary if they plan sessions on the first day of the Council and, if so, will provide the agenda for those meetings.
- The Chairs for Pension Issues and Communications will provide their key functions descriptions to the Succession Planning Working Group.
- Will attend a meeting of the Succession Planning Working Group to discuss how the Group can support their work.
- The Chair of the Standing Committee on Communications will discuss video uploads via a YouTube link with Quattro Medios Digitales.

Bureau Members

- Will submit any further edits to the Minutes of the Bureau meetings of 26 March and 2 April to the Rapporteur by COB 19 April.

- Clemens will explore opportunities to increase income from the UBS deposit and approach UNFCU regarding a possible increase in their annual contribution to FAFICS.
- Provide any items requiring Council approval by 30 April.