



FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS
FÉDÉRATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DES ANCIENS FONCTIONNAIRES
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FEDERACION DE ASOCIACIONES DE EX-FUNCIONARIOS INTERNACIONALES
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Celebrating 50 Years of Representing Retirees and Families in 2025

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15 April 2026

Ms. Catherine Pollard
Under Secretary-General
Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance
United Nations
UN Secretariat Building, New York
USA 10017

Dear USG Pollard (Catherine),

I do hope this letter finds you well. I know you have a very busy schedule. In your capacity as Chair of the HLCM, I am writing to you as a follow-up to my letter of 22 January 2025 addressed to the UN Secretary-General (copy attached) in which I raised a number of issues related to health insurance of UN system retirees.

These matters had also been highlighted in the JIU Report (JIU/REP/2023/9) on the quality, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of health insurance schemes. The first is the question of participation of retirees in health insurance oversight boards/committees. In this respect, the JIU in its report on health insurance, Recommendation 1, has requested that: “The executive heads of United Nations system organizations administering a health insurance plan should ensure that, by the end of 2026, arrangements are made for the representation of all groups of plan members, including locally recruited staff in the field and retirees, in their health insurance plan management, oversight or advisory committee.” (Para. 43).

As you know, many organizations already allow observer status on such oversight boards/committees for retired staff members. Some organizations allow retiree representatives to have full voting rights on these bodies, following a formal procedure for nominating or electing representatives. It is important that retirees be given the possibility of representation as their health insurance needs may differ from those of younger participants and their requirements may otherwise not receive the attention they deserve.

Suitably qualified retirees have a lot to offer in such health insurance oversight bodies. Experience has shown that they have enormous expertise and knowledge, provide solutions to issues and have the time to devote to the work of these bodies. The result is a win-win situation. We believe it is an opportune time to upgrade the status of retirees’ representatives on health

insurance oversight bodies which could be implemented with little or no financial impact for organizations. FAFICS would therefore like to request that organizations be urged to facilitate the full representation of retirees on internal health insurance oversight boards/committees of their former organizations as soon as possible and at the latest by end of 2026.

Another crucial matter which I addressed in my letter to the Secretary-General was the funding of the Organization's share of after-service health insurance (ASHI). The current financial challenges faced by the UN and specialized agencies emphasize the importance of funding the ASHI liabilities. As you know, since the UN system adopted IPSAS as its accounting standard, the ASHI liability has come to the forefront. The JIU Report indicated that the funded portion of the total liability for the 26 organizations combined in their study was just over 31% as at end of 2021. Bearing in mind the budgetary restrictions since then, that percentage may not have changed significantly. Yet health insurance is vital for retirees.

Ensuring that organizations can meet their commitments in this regard demonstrates duty of care towards those staff members who have diligently served their organization during their career. Even during these times of budgetary constraints, the pay-as-you-accrue approach to funding the liability ensures that the organizations can fulfil their responsibilities in this regard in the future. I would therefore again like to urge the HLCM to endorse JIU's recommendation that all sources of funding (from assessed contributions as well as voluntary contributions) should cover the ASHI liability corresponding to the number of staff working on their programs. The last point raised in my letter to the Secretary General was the situation of the UN Medical Insurance Plan (MIP) which covers retired and active UN field-based locally recruited staff. FAFICS realizes that a review is under way and appreciates the difficulty of financing any expansion of the benefits at the current time. We would nevertheless like to urge the HLCM to do everything it can to pursue improvement of the MIP in the interests of serving active as well as retired staff in the field.

Finally, I would like to put forward a proposal for your consideration. I believe it would be extremely useful for all parties concerned if the FAFICS President could make a statement at HLCM meetings to regularly brief it on ongoing matters affecting retirees. The experience, knowledge and perspective of retirees would be a useful contribution to HLCM deliberations on matters affecting not only retirees but serving staff as well.

I wish you continued success in your important responsibilities and in your efforts to safeguard the well-being of both serving and retired staff. FAFICS remains ready to support and collaborate in advancing these shared objectives. Once again, please accept our sincere thanks for your continuing support to FAFICS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Barton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jerry Barton
FAFICS President