



FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS

FÉDÉRATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DES ANCIENS FONCTIONNAIRES INTERNATIONAUX

FEDERACION DE ASOCIACIONES DE EX-FUNCIONARIOS INTERNACIONALES

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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Dear Member Associations and colleagues,

I would like to thank you all for making the 56th Session of the FAFICS Council such a success.

Once again, the Council demonstrated the strength of our Federation through constructive dialogue, thoughtful decision-making, and our shared commitment to protecting the interests of retired staff, surviving spouses, and other beneficiaries.

It was an excellent meeting in which we addressed the critical issues facing FAFICS, regarding pensions, health insurance, expanding our membership, strengthening our Federation, and ensuring that it remains fit for purpose.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation once again to former President, **Jerry Barton**; the Presiding Officer, **Jacques Rao**, for guiding the Council's work so effectively and ensuring that it met the many demands of its agenda; and Secretary, **Delia Barcelona**, for her outstanding organization, meticulous preparation of documents, and tireless efforts to keep the Council well informed and fully supported throughout the meeting.

The Council elected new officers to serve alongside the continuing members of the Bureau and confirmed appointments to the Standing Committees. These decisions ensure that FAFICS begins this new term with strong, experienced, and diverse leadership. The composition of the Bureau for 2026–2027 is attached to this letter.

The Council also approved the appointment of the new Treasurer, Peter Wichmand and two Auditors for 2026–2027: Jessie Rose Mabutas and Ambi Sundaran.

The confidence placed in the new Bureau is both an honor and a responsibility. We are fully committed to good governance, transparency, accountability, and working collaboratively and effectively with all Member Associations.

The 56th Council also welcomed a new member, AFICS Honduras and efforts are continuing to expand membership and reactivate inactive or dormant member Associations.

The Bureau is now developing its Strategic Priorities, which will be reflected in a comprehensive work plan designed to implement the decisions and recommendations adopted by the Council. We

will share this plan with you as soon as possible. It will establish clear objectives, responsibilities, timelines, and measures of success.

The success of this work will depend on the active participation of our Member Associations. Your experience, expertise, and commitment are among the Federation's greatest strengths.

To further strengthen participation and broaden the pool of expertise available to FAFICS, we encourage all members who are interested in serving as FAFICS representatives or in FAFICS Standing Committee and appointed positions to complete the revised Expertise Pool form, even if they have submitted information previously. This form should be submitted by the respective Member Association.

Expertise Pool: <http://43.204.47.253/fafics>

Let me turn briefly to the recent meeting of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (UNJSPF), which I attended as an observer, following the Council's decision that former President Jerry Barton be delegated to lead the FAFICS delegation. Let me express my sincere appreciation to former President Jerry Barton and the entire FAFICS delegation for their dedicated work before and during the meeting.

As you are aware, the deliberations of the Pension Board are confidential, and the Board's report is currently being finalized. However, it can be said, based on the independent actuarial assessment presented to the Board, that the UNJSPF remains in a sound financial position. This confirms the information senior officials from the UNJSPF shared with the Council during their presentations. The Pension Board has confirmed that its July session next year will be held in Geneva, hosted by ILO.

Thus we can announce this early that the 57th FAFICS Council Session will also be held in Geneva, from 19-23 July 2027. We will send you more details soon. We hope this will allow advance preparation.

In closing, let me recall a quote from President Barack Obama in my acceptance speech. "The road ahead will be long. Our climb will be steep. But I have never been more hopeful than I am tonight."

These words can be complemented by the Kiswahili word, *Harambee*, which means "let us all pull together." Popularized by Kenya's first President, Jomo Kenyatta, after independence, *Harambee* became a powerful call for unity, cooperation, and collective effort in building a stronger nation.

So let us be inspired by the words of these leaders and pull together to do the work of protecting the rights of retirees, surviving spouses and other beneficiaries and ensure that FAFICS remains a respected, effective, innovative, and forward-looking Federation. Thank you once again for your confidence, your partnership, and your continued commitment to FAFICS.

With warm appreciation,

(signed)

Darshak Shah
President, FAFICS