FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS (FAFICS)
FÉDÉRATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DES ANCIENS FONCTIONNAIRES INTERNATIONAUX
FEDERACION DE ASOCIACIONES DE EX-FUNCIONARIOS INTERNACIONALES
"Bringing together Associations of retired International Civil Servants from the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies of the UN"

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Fifty-sixth Session of the FAFICS Council
20 - 24 July 2026
Vienna

FULL REPORT

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REPORT OF THE
FAFICS 56TH COUNCIL SESSION

I. Opening Session

Brief remarks from the FAFICS President

1. The Council opened with brief remarks from FAFICS President Jerry Barton, adding his warm welcome to the delegates to the message delivered the day before by ARICSA's Vice President, Werner Blenk. He then called on the representative of the Director-General of the UN Office in Vienna (UNOV) to give some remarks.

Welcome Remarks from UNOV

2. Ms. Chhaya Kapilashrami, Deputy Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Director of the Division for Management of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, welcomed everyone to Vienna and to the VIC. She recognized that FAFICS has established a strong network of retirees. At UNOV and UNODC, she said they support some 12,000 retirees and surviving spouses with pensions, ASHI, and pre-retirement seminars for active staff of agencies such as IAEA, UNIDO, and CTBTO. She was pleased to hear that her colleague's presentation the day before on their global initiative to prevent digital fraud was well received by the delegates. She offered similar presentations in the future if FAFICS is interested. She once again thanked President Jerry Barton and said she looks forward to continuing meaningful partnership with FAFICS.

Nomination of Presiding Officer, Rapporteur and Polling Officer

3. Jacques Rao (AFUS France) and Michael Atchia (AFICS Mauritius) were proposed by President Jerry Barton, in consultation with the Bureau, to serve as Presiding Officer and Rapporteur, respectively. Both were unanimously accepted by the Council, by acclamation. Veronique Whalen was introduced by Jerry Barton and approved by acclamation as the Polling Officer for the 2026 elections.

Quorum

4. Confirmation that a quorum had been fully reached was given by FAFICS Secretary Delia Barcelona, with 44 Associations represented – in person and virtually, out of 65 Member Associations of FAFICS. Of the 44 Member Associations, 25 had both in-person and remote participants, while 19 had only virtual delegates. A total of 156 delegates registered through VIC's Indico system: 61 in-person and 95 virtual participants.

5. Before starting the formal agenda, and as is now a tradition at successive FAFICS Councils, a minute of silence was observed, with all members standing in memory of all those who, since July 2025, have passed away. Special mention was made of FAFICS' first President, George Saddler, and FAFICS longtime Council Rapporteur, Peter Lilly. It was also mentioned that FAFICS is in solidarity with those who are suffering from wars, conflicts and violence, and from environmental and human devastation caused by natural disasters happening in many parts of the world that have adversely impacted older people and UN retirees.

6. The FAFICS President also mentioned that since last year, the Council had reintroduced the idea of pre-Council open and ad hoc meetings to allow Standing Committees more time to exchange ideas informally, especially on pension and health insurance matters. This year, in addition to these two main pillars, there were also informal sessions on communications, membership and succession planning. All these major topics will be presented and discussed in the upcoming plenary sessions. He stated that, given the limited time during the Council Session- only three and a half days of plenary sessions- some agenda items would be for information only, while for others there will be time for discussion, especially about items that require Council approval.

7. Before concluding this part of the opening agenda, he also recognized from the many Council documents that there have been many follow-up actions from last year's 55th Council Session that the FAFICS Bureau has undertaken. He reminded delegates that all minutes of the Bureau's monthly meetings are posted regularly on the FAFICS website.

Plenary Sessions

8. The Provisional Agenda for the meeting (Council 56/2026/D.1 v.6) and the proposed Work Programme (Council 56/2026/D.1a v.6) were both adopted,

taking into consideration the suggestion to conclude the Council meetings earlier, if possible.

9. Upon assumption of his role as Presiding Officer, Jacques Rao had these words to say:

- Thanked the President, the Bureau and the Council for the nomination and acknowledged the welcome remarks from Jerry both as FAFICS President and as President of the host Association, ARICSA – for the 11th time.
- Welcomed Michael and thanked him for accepting the challenging role of rapporteur, and thanked Debbie Landey for doing this valuable task for the last two Council sessions, as well as being rapporteur for the FAFICS Bureau.
- Mentioned that the work programme is quite comprehensive, with lots of documents for discussion and approval, so this early, he called for active participation but also for efficiency, in terms of time management for discussions and interventions.
- He also recognized the large number of virtual participants and reminded everyone to be mindful when they want to make interventions.
- He reminded participants that all available Council documents have been sent by the Secretary to all delegates through electronic links and will be updated as the Council progresses. He reiterated that FAFICS, as in previous years, has observed the UN's paperless guidelines, so all Council documents will only be provided electronically. He added that while the working language of FAFICS remains English, most documents are now available in French and Spanish thanks to Jerry and his team who have promoted during his mandate the necessary plurilingualism requested by many FAFICS members.
- He mentioned some of the developments characterising the special context of this 2026 session: UN80 reform process; US pull-out from, or freeze of contributions in, many UN specialised agencies and programmes; UNGA resolution A/Res/80/243 (Dec. 2025) calling for an overhaul review by the PB of the pension scheme and report by 2028; election of a new UNSG; open and competitive elections for FAFICS positions (usually done by acclamation in the past).

- He indicated that he would perform the PO duties in compliance with FAFICS rules, aiming always for consensus and in a spirit of collegiality.

II. Status of Membership and Admission of New Member

10. FAFICS Secretary Delia Barcelona reported first on the statistics of attendance in this 56th Council Session. There are 44 Member Associations represented, of which 25 have both in-person and virtual delegates, while 19 have only remote participants. A total of 156 individual delegates registered via VIC's Indico system: 61 in person and therefore issued security badges for the Centre, while 95 are virtual delegates, connecting via Zoom.

11. The Secretary also reported that while there have been potential new members being actively followed up by the FAFICS Standing Committee on Membership, only 1 new member completed the requirements for admission - AFPNU Honduras, represented by its newly elected President, Rafael Cuestas, who joined the Council virtually from Tegucigalpa. Based on the review of its Statutes and their alignment with the FAFICS statutes and principles, the Association's admission to the Federation was recommended by the FAFICS Secretariat. Thus, AFPNU Honduras was admitted during this FAFICS 56th Council Session as the 66th Member Association of the Federation. As the Council delegates asked no questions or comments, AFPNU Honduras was congratulated and warmly welcomed to the FAFICS family.

12. AFPNU Honduras President Rafael Cuestas (via Zoom) was invited to say some words. He appreciated the decision, extended greetings to all delegates and other FAFICS Members on behalf of their Association's officers and members and expressed eagerness to begin participating in FAFICS activities.

III. Report of the President

13. President Jerry Barton delivered his very comprehensive report, which in many ways summarized and reflected on the last 4 years of his presidency. He highlighted what he thinks FAFICS has achieved during his time, how this was done and gave ideas of how he sees the future of FAFICS. Some highlights from his 14-page full report (included in the list of Council documents) are the following:

- Thanked the dedication of many people, both elected and appointed officers and representatives, and the Member Associations, volunteers, and the Presidents and teams who came before, for their commitment that has carried FAFICS forward
- He said he organized his reflections around three simple questions: First, what have we achieved together in our public advocacy? Second, how have we strengthened FAFICS itself? And third, what challenges must the next President, and all of us, prepare to meet?
- On the first question, he stressed that FAFICS has worked closely with the Pension Board, with the Fund's management, and with Member States to ensure that the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund remains financially sound, professionally managed, and responsive to the needs of its beneficiaries. We now also have an official seat at the table on the Pension Board.
- He also mentioned that in terms of small pensions, FAFICS raised the long-overdue adjustment, and in collaboration with the Pension Administration, the adjustments were increased.
- He emphasized that our communications have grown significantly, having sent approximately 25 letters to all Member Associations during his tenure to keep them informed and ask for their feedback. He has also written to the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General, and the Assistant Secretaries-General, because of which FAFICS is better known today. FAFICS has also restored its relationship with FICSA.
- On the second question, he said that FAFICS has sought to improve governance by clarifying procedures, strengthening coordination between meetings, and encouraging a culture of openness and collaboration.
- To correct an election-related mistake last year, he established a working group on voting procedures to ensure a clearer, more coherent set of election procedures.
- Emphasis was made on the importance of succession planning and of harnessing the spirit of volunteerism and using the expertise pool to identify and bring in new talents to the work of the Federation.
- Finally, he said, the biggest challenge for the future, given the more complex environment of the UN, and the increasing number of retirees, is to preserve solidarity, keeping in mind that our Member Associations vary greatly in size, geography, language, and mandate, while sharing common interests and common values. He concluded his report by saying that the strength of FAFICS lies precisely in bringing those diverse voices together.

14. The Presiding Officer thanked President Jerry for his very comprehensive report, thanking him and the Bureau members for what have been a remarkably busy 4 years under his excellent and transparent leadership.

IV. Elections

New Voting Procedures

15. The FAFICS Secretary introduced the new voting procedures for this year's elections. These new election administrative procedures were developed (after a thorough review) by a small 4-member Working Group established by the President and endorsed by the FAFICS Bureau in May 2026. The working group was composed of Nancy Hurtz-Soyka, Romesh Muttukumaru, Adriana Gomez, and Abdou Khader Diakhate. The document shared with all Member Associations as part of the President's letter on 7 June aimed to ensure a clear, more coherent set of voting procedures and to address election issues that arose during the 55th Council in 2025. Based on this years' experience with the elections, any feedback from Member Associations will be reviewed and addressed by the incoming FAFICS Bureau for the next Council.

16. A key feature of the new voting procedures is the setting up of an Election Support group. As communicated on 3 June 2026 to Member Associations, the Secretary's responsibilities under Rule 6.11(f) for conducting the elections of FAFICS officers at this Council will be augmented by an ad hoc Election Support Group (ESG). The ESG will consist of three people physically present in Vienna who are not running for office and are not from an association that has nominated a candidate for office. In consultation with the Bureau, the following were nominated and subsequently accepted to be this year's ESG: Souleymane Diabate (AIAFI-SNU Abidjan), Tim Nurunnabi Khan (AFUNSOB Bangladesh), and Maria Celina Berardinelli Arraes (AAFIB Brazil). The role of the ESG, as stated in the voting procedures, was to certify that:

    - Only those Associations entitled to vote are authorized to vote (e.g., having paid their FAFICS dues)
    - Associations have utilized all the votes available to them. [A new requirement that Associations must cast as many votes as there are open positions.]

- Associations have voted according to the schedule for voting
- Associations voted only via the electronic software
- No late voting was permitted
- The votes were correctly counted

17. Based on the new procedures, each eligible Member Association designated one official delegate to vote on its behalf (usually the Head of the Delegation). The FAFICS Secretary confirmed the names of the 44 eligible voters (heads of delegations) and submitted them to the Polling Officer. As proxy voting is permitted under the FAFICS Rules of Procedure, one Association requested it. Using the software, eBallot, all votes were cast electronically.

18. Further elements covering the voting procedures included the following:

- No late or handwritten ballots will be accepted.
- If the number of candidates is equal to the number of posts to be filled, the Council may decide to elect them by acclamation.
- Those elected shall be the candidates who receive the most votes.
- The Polling Officer shall report the election results to the Secretary, who will inform the Council immediately thereafter.
- When two or more candidates have the same number of votes, they will proceed to a run-off election immediately following the first round. In that case, a second-round vote would be carried out in the same manner as the first round, electronically, within the time allotted for voting.
- Election results are announced by the Secretary as soon as possible after the vote tally.
- Results are documented and made available to all Associations and included in the Council's report of that session.
- Any dispute or challenge related to the electoral process must be submitted in writing to the Secretary within 24 hours of the announcement of results. In such a case, the Secretary, with the support of the Election Support Group, will undertake a review as soon as possible.
- The recommendation of the review is final and binding.
- The Secretary will ensure that all electronic ballots are securely stored for audit purposes for a minimum of one year following the election.

19. After the new voting procedures were explained by the FAFICS Secretary, the electronic voting period officially began (from 17:30 on 21 July 2026 to 17:30 on 22 July 2026) for the following open positions in the FAFICS Bureau:

- President (2 nominees)
- 3 Vice-Presidents (8 nominees)
- Treasurer (2 nominees)

20. Each nominee was given a few minutes to introduce themselves, i.e. the nominees for the post of President 5 minutes each and the candidates for the posts of Vice-President and Treasurer 3 minutes each.

21. The Secretary also mentioned that the other appointments to Standing Committee Chairs/Working Groups of the Pension Board will be presented by the President later in the agenda as part of succession planning.

22. There were several important interventions regarding elections, mainly challenging the procedure that voters must use all votes; in other words, no abstentions, and that if any voter does not complete votes for all open positions, their ballot will be invalidated. The President assured delegates that the new voting procedures will be evaluated as input to next year's Council.

23. The FAFICS Secretary reiterated the President's message that the new voting procedures will be evaluated in due course.

Election Results

24. Following the observance and implementation of the new voting procedures, the elections went on smoothly. The results were proclaimed by the FAFICS Secretary, Delia Barcelona, in accordance with the FAFICS Rules of Procedure. Before announcing the results, she also thanked the Election Support Group set up for this purpose, consisting of Souleymane Diabate, Maria Celina Arraes and Tim Khan, with special acknowledgement of the important role played by Veronique Whalen as polling officer.

25. The results of the 2026 elections for the two-year term (2026-27) were as follows:

Post of FAFICS President: Darshak Shah

Posts of FAFICS Vice-President:

Nancy Hurtz-Soyka

Maria Machicado

Aye Win

Post of FAFICS Treasurer: Peter Erik Wichmand

Posts of two FAFICS auditors: Ambi Sundaran and Jessie Rose Mabutas

V. Administrative and Financial Matters

26. The Presiding Officer introduced the agenda item, noting the four documents to be presented – with the first three for information and the fourth document on the Proposed Interim Budget for 2027 for approval, as well as the oral presentation on the Appointment of the new Auditors for approval.

27. FAFICS President Jerry Barton presented the 2025 Accounts and Report of the Auditors for the year ended 31 December 2025 (Document - Council 56/2026/D.9/1), and noted the following:

- The Auditors expressed their satisfaction that the 2025 Accounts were correctly maintained.
- That the 2025 financial situation and the results of the year as contained in the Balance Sheet and the Income and Expenditure Statement for 2025 do provide a true and fair view of FAFICS.
- At the same time, the Auditors made these observations:
  -Their concern is the declining membership income, while expenditure has been increasing – especially in travel. They recommended that FAFICS needs to explore options/approaches to increase membership income and contain expenditures. -Recommended that FAFICS coordinate more outreach and membership promotion at the UN agency level
  -They also remained concerned about the long-standing unpaid dues from several Member Associations and recommended that FAFICS conduct a review of what further actions could be taken in this regard, recognizing the FAFICS Rules of Procedure.
  -They also expressed concern on the retroactive authorization and some related transactions related to the 50th Commemoration activities and recommended that such post-facto approval by the Council be avoided.

28. The FAFICS President, in conclusion, noted that the FAFICS Bureau appreciated the observations and the related recommendations by the Auditors and will explore the best ways forward.

29. The Treasurer of FAFICS, Romesh Muttukumaru then presented the following three documents, highlighting certain points on each of the documents as follows:

    - On the Interim report on the Management of the Budget (Council 56/2026/D.9/2), he noted that, based on current income and expenditure projections that FAFICS would remain within the Council approved total 2026 budgeted expenditures; that expected membership income since the report was prepared at end May, now stood at approximately US $38,000, that FAFICS did receive UNFCU's contribution of US $10,000 in June 2026, and that most expenditures against the budget were related to the Council.
    - On the Utilization of assigned reserves (Council 56/202/D.9/3) he noted that the utilization of the Assigned Reserves in 2025 related to the initial maintenance costs during the development phase of the new FAFICS website - amounting to US$ 4,950 charged to the Capital Reserve; in addition, the cost associated with the mission of the co-chair of the Membership Standing Committee to Mauritania to assist in the reactivation of the Mauritania AFICS Association, amounting to US$1,366.35 charged to the Solidarity Reserve.
    - On the Proposed Interim budget for 2027 (Council 56/2026/D.9/4), he noted that the proposed preliminary budget is based on the lines of the projected 2026 budgeted expenditures, with a projected marginal increase in income.

30. In this connection, the Treasurer noted that the Bureau will continue to consult with Member Associations on approaches to increasing income and containing expenditures and will revert with an updated 2027 budget as needed. In this connection, an ad hoc Bureau committee explored budget-related options that will be discussed in the new Bureau and subsequently shared with Member Associations for their comments and views.

Auditors

31. Finally, FAFICS President Jerry Barton made an oral presentation on the appointment of the Auditors for the 2026 Accounts. He noted that as only two candidates have now applied for the two Auditor positions, namely Ambi Sundaram (AAFI-AFICS Geneva) and Jessie Rose Mabutas (AFICS Philippines), they be unanimously elected. The Council decided by acclamation.

Discussion Highlights

32. Following the presentations by the FAFICS President and the Treasurer, Member Association delegates thanked them for the clean Report of the Auditors on the 2025 Accounts, and for the clear and comprehensive documents presented. They then brought up issues for further discussion. The main area raised related to exploring options for increasing the income of FAFICS going forward and what that would entail - including in making the case as to the value of FAFICS. Delegates proposed that FAFICS explore increasing its current membership dues rates per number of members in each FAFICS Member Association, as well as non-traditional sources. At the same time, they reiterated the importance of employing a strategic approach of how FAFICS utilizes its budget resources. It was also noted that UNFCU had officially informed FAFICS that it intends to increase its contribution to FAFICS from 2027 – no specific amount was provided.

33. Delegates also highlighted the need to further strengthen the role of FAFICS, calling for increasing the number of retirees it covers through its Member Associations, which in turn would require increasing member numbers in individual Member Associations, reactivating dormant Associations, and in establishing new Associations. The value proposition of FAFICS would need to be clearly articulated they noted. The established legal status of FAFICS would need to be further researched and explored, and if needed be revisited.

34. Comments were also made on the follow up of outstanding dues from some Member Associations – including in those cases where they have been affected by civil unrest, wars and environmental disasters. Going forward, it would need be determined what further steps could be employed as to those Member Associations with dues – some of which go back to 2022.

35. An editorial error was noted in Annex 2 of Document - Council 56/2026/D.9/4, as to Total expenditures for 2026 projected, which should have been US$ 48,820 and not US$ 46,820 – which subsequently was corrected in the latest uploaded documents by the FAFICS Secretary.

36. The FAFICS President and the Treasurer thanked delegates for their comments and the ensuing discussion. They noted that increasing FAFICS income and in the strategic utilization of the budget resources of FAFICS was critical. While progress has been made in these areas over the last couple of years – including reactivating some dormant Associations and welcoming a couple of new Associations, including collaboration with UNJSPF to reach out

to former UN system staff- it is clear that a stepped-up approach, as noted by delegates, going forward was imperative. On the strategic utilization of FAFICS budget resources, the Bureau workplans over the last couple of years have helped target such resources where needed – while no doubt more can be done in this regard.

37. Regarding Member Associations with outstanding dues, Annex 1 of Document - Council 56/2026/D.9/4 was prepared based on payments received as at end of May 2026, and as mentioned by the Treasurer, the following Associations did make their 2026 dues payments during June 2026 and in July 2026 prior to the Council: Burkina Faso, Canada, Costa Rica, Cyprus, New Delhi-India, Kenya, New Zealand, and Senegal. Sixteen Member Associations remained with outstanding dues. While FAFICS has been following up with these Associations, a couple of steps were taken to reactivate them (such as Nicaragua in July 2026), resulting in their outstanding dues being paid later in 2026, but in some cases, there was no response. Going forward, FAFICS would need to determine what further follow-up actions could be taken, also recognizing the stipulations contained in the FAFICS Rules of Procedure. The write-off of such outstanding dues would also need to be considered, recognizing that if such action is to be implemented, the current balance in the Reserve for Bad Debts would need to be revisited.

38. The Presiding Officer then called for the decision of the Council on the Proposed Interim budget for 2027 (Council 56/2026/D.9/4). The Council approved the proposal.

VI. Pension Issues

39. Several papers were prepared by the Standing Committee on Pension Issues chaired by Suzanne Bishopric, which covered pension benefits administration, investments and assets and liabilities monitoring.

Pension Benefits Administration

40. Suzanne Bishopric started the presentation by presenting the Bifurcated (two-part) Structure of the UNJSPF, as follows:

-The Pension Fund Secretariat reports to the Pension Board

-The Pension Fund Secretariat handles operational functions, including processing benefit claims and managing administrative costs
-The Chief Executive of Pension Administration, or CEPA, leads the Pension Fund Secretariat. The CEPA is currently Rosemarie McClean.
-The fiduciary responsibility for investments is assigned to the Secretary-General, who delegates it to the Representative of the Secretary-General for Investments;

41. The note also reflects information contained in reports by the Chief Executive of Pension Administration. She stressed that the CEPA delivered strong results throughout the calendar year 2025. The total number of benefits processed in 2025 was over 33% higher than the previous year and the surge in downsizing has continued into 2026. Retirement processing volumes have exceeded 2,000 benefits per month since July 2025. An all-time monthly record of 3,151 benefits was processed in March 2026. As of June 2026, the pace of separations was expected to abate in a few months.

42. As of year-end 2025, there were 94,031 Benefits in Payment and 138,510 participants contributing to the Fund. The Pension Administration successfully completed this increased workload without additional staff. Among the reasons that this volume of processing was absorbed so effectively, the CEPA and her team had carefully invested and implemented computer automation over the past five years and had established a Unit to liaise with Member Organizations to keep them up to date with pension documentation requirements. This improved client outreach and technical support, in combination with town halls, helped to ensure that necessary documentation was available before the staff had to leave their employment.

43. Although many of those who left employment had not anticipated leaving the UN system so early in their careers, there were at least few delays in the receipt of benefits. Despite the enormous surge in the volume of separations 98.3% of benefits were processed within 15 business days of receipt of necessary documents. FAFICS appreciates the steadfast leadership and teamwork of the Pension Administration.

44. The modernization of Pension Administration continues, and the CEPA has started to implement digital separations forms, replacing the paper documents. Separations forms are already being received digitally from the UN, UNICEF and IMO, reducing manual mailing costs and handling. The next agencies to have digital separations processing will be WFP, UNIDO, and UNESCO. The data quality and security have improved, both because of better

communications with the participating organizations, and because some routine data checks have been automated. This has freed staff to focus on more complex cases.

45. Beneficiaries now constitute about 40% of the combined retirees and participants, whereas ten years ago, retirees were only 36% of the combined group. The proportion of people receiving benefits will continue to grow steadily, so long as the separations continue to exceed new participants. The efforts of FAFICS will grow in importance, as the Fund continues to mature.

46. It should also be noted that a majority of those retiring in 2025 elected to take a full withdrawal settlement and for many, this was a necessity. FAFICS should bear in mind that many staff retired at unexpected times in their careers and might benefit from suggestions about adjusting to life in retirement.

47. The Standing Committee Chair presented several recommendations for consideration by the FAFICS Council and Pension Administration which are:

- That the FAFICS Council note with great appreciation the effective system improvements implemented by the CEPA, enabling her team to process the ongoing surge in separations.
- FAFICS notes the improved format and content of the Member Self Service and reminds the PA of the significant number of beneficiaries without computers or reliable internet access.
- FAFICS remains interested in future developments, in collaboration with FAFICS and the HR divisions, to improve further the handling of surviving spouse benefit requests.
- That the FAFICS Council encourages the Pension Administration to consider continuing the increased frequency of Townhalls, including information about FAFICS membership for the recently retired.
- That FAFICS/AFICS's continue the outreach to retirees on pre-suspension lists due to apparent non-submissions of Certificates of Entitlement.
- That FAFICS/AFICS's remind our members to be sure that the Pension Administration has current documents needed to prove spouse or dependent benefits.
- That FAFICS/AFICS's extend a hand to UN System staff affected by the downsizing, especially by helping them with potential job opportunities or other practical advice, including pre-retirement seminars.

Note on Management of Investments

48. Suzanne Bishopric welcomed Robert van der Zee to the FAFICS Council for the first time and wished him success in navigating the financial markets during these especially challenging times. She noted that FAFICS appreciated the hard work and efforts of the entire OIM team to help grow our assets safely.

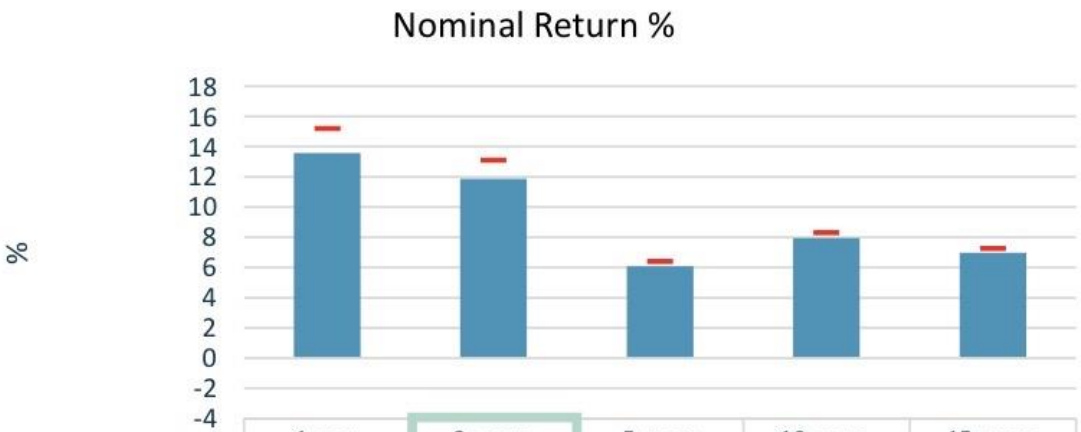
49. She reminded the FAFICS Council that the Management of the investments of the assets of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund is the fiduciary duty of the Secretary–General of the United Nations, in consultation with an investments committee, and in light of the observations and suggestions, made from time to time, by the Pension Board on the investments policy. The Representative of the Secretary-General (RSG) has been delegated the responsibility and authority to act on behalf of the Secretary-General in all matters involving the fiduciary duties of the Secretary-General relating to the investment of the assets of the Fund. The RSG is assisted by the Office Investment Management (OIM). Investments must, at the time of initial review, meet the criteria of **safety**, **profitability**, **liquidity**, and **convertibility**

50. Bishopric's note reflected information contained in the Report by the Representative of the Secretary-General on the Management of Investments of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. As of 31 December 2025, the Fund was valued at USD 107.65 Billion, an increase of USD 12.22 Billion from USD 95.43 Billion as of 31 December 2024. Although the market was volatile, a strong year in public equities worldwide and improved performance in the fixed income portfolio of the UNJSPF combined to achieve a positive real return of 10.62 per cent.

51. Over the past three years, the Fund has returned an annualized nominal rate of return of 11.88%. While this is a healthy state for our investments, it was observed that there has been underperformance when compared with the Fund's customized benchmarks. For the calendar year 2025, the Policy Benchmark return was 15.2 per cent, yet the Fund returned only 13.06 per cent, leaving a shortfall of -1.6 per cent or as is said in the financial services industry, a negative 160 basis points.

52. When looking at the longer term, the Fund's return over the 15-year period was 7.00 per cent, below the Policy Benchmark of 7.25 per cent. The recent performance shortfalls have been wider than in the past. This was surprising because the benchmarks were customized and updated with unusual frequency in recent years, to match more consistently the investment choices available to OIM fund managers. The chart below, extracted from the website of the UNJSPF, illustrates the gaps

between the Portfolio Benchmarks, shown in red, and the actual Total Fund performance, shown as blue columns.



	1 year	3 years	5 years	10 years	15 years
Total Fund Return	13.6	11.9	6.1	7.9	7.0
Benchmark Return	15.2	13.1	6.4	8.3	7.2
Excess return	-1.6	-1.2	-0.3	-0.4	-0.3

53. Bishopric remarked that the Public Fixed Income Portfolio outperformed its customized benchmark by 40 basis points (or .40 per cent). In 2025, the RSG initiated a small private debt component that invests in high-yield bonds in the US that has, so far, generated competitive returns. The Fund's initial foray into asset class has been externally managed, although the RSG has noted that the experience and staffing levels of the fixed income team may allow for a gradual shift to internal management. This continues the performance improvements which have been observed since 2022 and is a welcome change for the Fixed Income portfolio. For many years, the portfolio had underperformed.

54. In 2025, Public Equities underperformed their customized benchmarks by 8 basis, not a significant figure when taken in isolation. Bear in mind that the Fund allocates more to Public Equity than to any other asset class. As of 31 December 2025, the allocation to public equity was 43.9 per cent as compared to the allocation to fixed income which was 38.4 per cent. Because of the magnitude of the public equities held by the Fund, every basis point of performance matters.

55. Notable among the smaller asset class holdings, the Private Equity portfolio (8.1 per cent of the Fund) underperformed its benchmark to the extent that it impacted the overall performance of the Fund, despite a positive contribution to net income. While the Private Equity benchmark used by the UNJSPF and many industry participants lagged public markets significantly, the results of the UNJSPF appear to

have been attenuated by a scant allocation to surging technology sectors, such as artificial intelligence and Defense.The benchmark for private equity assumes that the private equity market should earn a hefty 200 basis points more than public equity. This benchmark is widely used by the investment industry, which is now asking questions given the obvious challenges of comparing outcomes in illiquid markets. In this regard, it should be noted that the upcoming ALM study will include an analysis of all the benchmarks.

56. The Fund has continued to identify opportunities to diversify its investments by asset class and geographical regions. As of 31 December 2025, the Fund held investments in 72 countries/regions, including both developed and developing markets. As of 31 December 2,025, the Fund's exposure to developing markets represented 13.27% of the portfolio.

57. The FAFICS Council considered the following observations and suggestions for the Pension Board:

(1) FAFICS notes the impact of inflation and higher borrowing costs on investments in many asset classes, and would appreciate the RSG's efforts to mitigate these factors.

(2) FAFICS observes that when investing for the long-term, seemingly minor underperformance can compound into a substantial shortfall over time.

(3) The restoration of the first 0.5 per cent inflation adjustment after retirement is "on hold." the fact that it remains on hold despite a rsurplus of over 1 per cent of Pensionable Remuneration above the required contribution rate demonstrates that the Pension Board is mindful of the current fiscal and political climate.

58. The preponderance of Lump Sum commutations was a notable change from previous valuations. Separations had an impact because many of the new retirees were younger than the normal retirement age or had been employed less than five years, therefore they had no choice but to take lump sum payouts. Those with more than five years, but not ready for retirement, may still be considering what to do. The rules allow them to take 36 months to decide. This means there is considerable uncertainty about how many payouts will be requested or whether these former employees might find other jobs at other Member Organizations of the UNJSPF. There is also uncertainty about the nature and duration of further staff reductions. Strong Financial Markets helped investment returns.

59. Higher than expected inflation rates and remuneration rates. The higher rates of inflation experienced in the last two years increased Cost-of-Living Adjustments

(COLAs) for retirement benefits. In addition to the inflationary pressures, remuneration assumptions in the projections were higher than originally expected. This was because the downsizing included a higher proportion of staff who had been earning lower salaries or were newer staff at lower steps of the salary scale. When so many lower paid staff were deducted from the assumptions, the remuneration assumptions for the remaining staff needed to be increased.

60. In short, the Fund remains well within a sound funding range, when analyzed on an open group basis. The results for an analysis on a closed group basis were slightly different because the key reasons for the improvement in funding level had to do with the assumption that new staff would join the Fund. If the Fund were to close at current levels, the result shown as of 31 December 2025 would still indicate full funding.

61. Whether the Fund is analyzed on an open group basis or on a closed group basis, there will be an increasing dependence on investment returns. This is especially important to consider at a time when the Fund is maturing and the difference between total income from investments plus total contributions and the amount needed to pay benefits has turned negative. This is normal for Defined Benefit pension funds, because in the early years of any plan, no beneficiaries have been vested yet, so contributions and investment income have time to build up. Once enough retirees have been added to the Fund's payroll, the outflows grow to the point where they may exceed inflows. That is a mature fund, and the Fund that supports our benefits has reached that stage.

62. The impact of downsizing is important to understand as shown by the 2025 data and uncertainty about projections. The balance between Participants and Retirees is changing, so the active population covered by this actual evaluation decreased to 124,577 (2025 data) from 138,102 as of the prior evaluation in 2023. The inactive population, including retirees, beneficiaries, children, and participants entitled to benefits in the future, increased. For the 2023 valuation, the total number of inactive members was 97,759. For the 2025 valuation the total of inactive members increased to 107,964. The membership of FAFICS should increase accordingly.

63. FAFICS should also consider the impact of downsizing, not only because of the positive reduction in the Required Contribution Rate, but also because of the impact on the workload of the Pension Administration and OIM. The next ALM Study is about to begin, adding another item to the agendas of both sides of the Fund. In this regard, FAFICS would like to take the opportunity to thank both the CEPA and the RSG for their steadfast work.

64. An important input to the discussion of pension issues is the statement from AAFI-AFICS Geneva about the GA Resolution on the Pension Fund System, which was submitted to the Standing Committee on Pension Issues Chair for consideration of the Council. (Refer to the annex as well as the list of documents, under Pension Issues)

65. Suzanne Bishopric then shared the following observations and suggestions for the consideration of the FAFICS Council:

- Express our appreciation to the CEPA and the OIM for their cooperation in producing the recent Actuarial Valuation Report, indicating a fully funded status as of 31 December 2025.
- Take note of the many uncertainties which may make the next Asset and Liability Monitoring (ALM) Study a more challenging exercise than ever.
- Note the increasing dependence of the Fund on investment returns

66. Following a very rich discussion, the Council took note of the three reports as presented and endorsed the following actions and recommendations listed therein (Refer to Council 56/D.10.a2A; Council 56/D.10.a2B; Council 56/D.10.a2C).

Presentation by Rosemarie McClean, CEPA

67. Rosemary McClean, the Chief Executive of Pension Administration, gave a detailed ppresentation covering the UNJSPF's operational achievements, including increased benefit processing efficiency and expanded digital services. Participants raised questions and concerns about low pensions, language accessibility, the two-track system, and support for retirees in accessing services. The meeting also included discussions on ethical investments, the role of local pension committees, and the importance of outreach to new retirees.

68. She also spoke about improvements in pension benefits processing and improved client outreach – both to participants and to Member Organizations. She outlined many of the initiatives of the Fund such as:

- Townhalls in English and French
- Automation of many routine procedures and documents
- Increased usage of the Digital Certificate of Entitlement.

69. The CEPA talked about the Two-Track System as part of the Pension Adjustment System which protects the income replacement value of pension benefits. The Two-Track System is a benefit for those living outside of the U.S.A., who may be subject to exchange rate volatility and different inflation rates. In response to questions raised by FAFICS, the Pension Administration regularly monitors exchange rates and inflation data to ensure that retirees who reside outside of the U.S.A. may be eligible for the Two-Track system. Effective 1 April 2026, Djibouti and Saint Kitts and Nevis were reinstated into the Two-Track pension system.

70. The CEPA also highlighted the growing importance of retirees and of FAFICS in the PF. Retirees now make up for about 40% of the combined retirees and active participants. Ten years ago, retirees were about 36% only. Separations are expected to continue to exceed new active participants. A majority of those retiring in 2025 elected to take a full withdrawal settlement – many had no other option.

71. The Pension Fund handles investments and processes benefits with safety and profitability in mind, as well as keeping liquidity needed to cover current money needs. Pension Fund assets increased from 87 billion US$ a few years ago to 107.65 billion US$ in 2025. with a nominal performance of 13.06%. (The set policy benchmark of 15.2 had never been reached). The PF had made considerable advances in diversification of assets now invested in 72 countries, from a situation some years back when most of the PF was invested in the USA. To a question from a member as to which countries and what % of the money in each country, the CEO promised to give FAFICS the figure.

72. The CEPA also stated that:
    - The Fund is in Strong financial position and performance
    - Our clients can be assured that their benefits are secure
    - The Fund continues to perform and modernize to deliver excellent service.
    - 2025: performing across service delivery
    - Over 23k benefits processed (+33% vs 2024, record volume)
    - 95.5% processed within 15 days (initial separations 98.1%)
    - 114,188 client queries handled; average response time: 2.5 business days.
    - Contact Center calls wait time: 15 seconds

73. On the necessity for beneficiaries to provide CE's she stated that progress is being made toward DCE: Over 47,000 Digital Certificates of Entitlement (DCE) as of July 2026 (of the entire beneficiary population) 61.93%.

74. Regarding outreach and communications, the PF has organized, 33 global sessions of Town Halls in 2025 with 42k viewers. Efforts are also being made to have continued communication on social media and encouraging participants to regularly visit the PF Website.

75. The Chief Executive **s**ummarised her reactions at the end and made the following proposals:

- Consider the suggestion to use AI technology for translation into local languages for pension administration communications.
- Explore the possibility of providing a list of beneficiaries by country to FAFICS associations.
- Investigate the potential of creating a pensioner certificate as proposed by AEFNUP Peru in future system enhancements.
- Look into the possibility of extending the digital ID project to retirees.
- Consider the suggestion to proactively inform retirees about the need to appoint a contact person for their pension administration.

76. Sarah Gail Mathieson, Chief of Operations, UNJSPF made additional remarks about the positive and fruitful use of Townhall events that allow members to participate, express views and make proposals. She also spoke about the use of AI to extend the number of languages pension documents can be accessed by members. She acknowledged the requests from many FAFICS Member Associations to reach out to retirees who may be interested to join a local AFICS through the letters that the UNJSPF sends to retirees with addresses in those countries. Such membership campaigns in the past did yield good results. She also noted the benefits of being a member of FAFICS Associations in terms of solidarity, obtaining assistance when required, socialization, and representation.

Presentation by the RSG on Investments

77. The Council welcomed the new Representative of the Secretary-General on Investments (RSG) Robert van der Zee. He reiterated that the management of the investment of the assets of the UNJSPF is the fiduciary duty of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in consultation with an investment

committee, and in light of the observations and suggestions made from time to time by the Pension Board on the investment policy. As such the RSG is delegated the responsibility and authority for investments.

78. The RSG talked about the 4 main Criteria used by the PF for Investments: Safety, Profitability, Liquidity and Convertibility and cited investment results for the last 2 years: Assets increased from USD 95.43 Billion in 2024 to USD 107.65 Billion at year-end 2025. Gain of USD 12.22 Billion, hence positive, with 13.06% nominal, or a 10.62% real return after deducting the impact of inflation. Considering the last 15 years of investment: data shows that the Fund returned 7.00%; the Benchmark was 7.25%; the shortfall, 0.25%. Despite customized benchmarks, which now exclude prohibited sectors, in recent years the Office of Investments have seen wider shortfalls than historically.

79. He stated that the portfolio has been gradually diversified, both geographically and in terms of markets. Geographic Scope: 72 countries and regions; Emerging Markets: 13.27% of the portfolio.

80. The RSG also explained the OIM developments since mid-2025 and highlights of the Strategic Plan for 2025-2030. He then talked about the Total Portfolio Approach (TPA) Roadmap called Project Blue Print 2030 which cites the following strategic points:

- Structured, multi-year programme to implement TPA best practices
- A gradual adoption of TPA capabilities reaching mid-level TPA maturity by 2030 building on existing strength and skills
- An integrated approach to decision-making across investments, risk, and data
- Learning from peers that are already implemented TPA (pension funds from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and USA
- Strategic initiative included in 2027 budget proposal for US$ 2.3 million

81. Both the CEPA and the RSG were applauded by the Council for their very informative presentations and responses to the delegates' interventions.

VII. ASHIL matters

82. The Chair of the ASHIL Standing Committee Jay KARIA, presented the highlights of the report of the Committee which has been shared in three languages, noting the various annexes as well to the report. A major annex is the Survey Insights Report that shows the data collected from Member Associations, globally as well as by Association. A drop-down menu in the spreadsheet allows Member Associations to see actual summary results of the survey in their country.

83. The Chair thanked all the members of the Committee who actively participated in both the preparation of the report as well as in the work of the Committee throughout the year: Giovanni Quaglia, Vice-Chair and the following members in alphabetical order: Hamidou Bague (AFICS, Burkina Faso), Carol Chatterton (AFICS, Chile), Nanjundappa Srinivasan (AFUNPI, Bangalore, India), Kadri Tankari (AFICS, Niger) and Ann Van Hulle (AAFI-AFICS, Geneva).

84. The report reviewed the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the 55th Council and proposed priorities for 2026-2027. During the reporting period, the Committee focused on:

- Implementing last year's recommendations;
- Strengthening advocacy with the UN system and staff federations;
- Conducting a survey of retiree awareness and satisfaction with health insurance services (with particular focus on the Third-Party Administrators (TPAs) and awareness of appeal processes in case of rejection of a claim)
- Identifying practical priorities for the coming year.

85. Overall, the Chair said that the Committee made good progress despite limited resources. Some recommendations have been substantially implemented, while others – particularly those requiring extensive technical work or financial commitments – remain work in progress for future action.

ASHIL Survey results

86. One of the most significant achievements this year was the global survey. Details can be found in the survey insights report (Annex 1 to document 56/2026/D.10.b/1). The Chair expressed his appreciation of the efforts of the ASHIL Focal Points in obtaining the maximum number of responses. He also expressed a special word of thanks to others assisting the Committee members in making the survey possible. Mr. Paulo Lyra, AAFIB Brazil and Mr. Velimir

Kovacevic, AFICS New York, for their advice and role in developing the online version of the questionnaire. The initial draft report on the survey results was prepared by a consultant, Mr. Michael Notarte (Philippines) under the guidance of the Chair and coordination of Mr. Nanjundappa Srinivasan, AFUNPI Bangalore member of the Committee.

87. The key survey facts include:

- 2,420 respondents
- 48 Member Associations
- Approximately 75% of all associations participated.

88. The major findings were:

- Satisfaction with claim turnaround was generally good;
- Awareness of insurance rules is high;
- More than half were asked for additional documentation;
- Out of 32% whose claims were rejected, only 19% appealed.
- Four out of five rejections go unchallenged because the reasons for rejection are difficult to understand (44%) or they don't know how to appeal (32%)
- Latin America has the highest propensity to appeal
- Africa has 29% rejection rate and 22% appeal awareness, yet 39% appeal rate among its rejections.
- 42% found TPA communications confusing;
- 39% of global respondents are enrolled in supplementary insurance
- Enrolment is high in the US 61% but is only 8% in Africa
- Telehealth and other value-added services are greatly underused;
- Appeal mechanisms are poorly understood;
- LTC awareness remains low worldwide.

89. The Chair also referred to the excellent discussions which took place at the informal session on the first day of the Council when the following issues were raised:

- A significant amount of time had been devoted to presenting the participants with the outcome of the survey.
- Several comments had been made on the recent changes introduced to the MIP by the UN Secretariat with a formal letter from AAFIB Brazil

to the President of FAFICS dated 14 July with a technical evaluation. They expressed concern about the impact of the changes (increased contributions and certain changes in benefits) would have on locally recruited staff. Proposals (which included a request that implementation of the measures be suspended pending a broader consultative process) were put forward.

- The Chair indicated that as the measures had already been implemented under the responsibility of the UN Secretariat, FAFICS could not interfere in this matter. He also pointed out that the changes made by UN were for the purpose of aligning the Medical Insurance Plan (MIP) to the World-Wide Plan for international staff to an extent feasible as well as addressing financial imbalances within the MIP. As a result, some provisions decreased whilst others remained unchanged or improved. It was also explained that contributions remained unchanged for many years while the annual loss ratio was above 112% since 2012 and had risen to 124% last year so adjustments were required to meet the current level of expenditures.
- Some of the issues raised by AAFIB Brazil on this matter were already addressed in the ASHIL Standing Committee's report to the Council.
- A comment was also made on the limited focus on preventive measures within MIP. The Chair indicated that this matter could be looked into further by the Committee as part of its workplan for the coming year.
- Other issues raised included the inadequacy of certain benefits affecting retirees including dental care; inequalities in benefits for local versus international staff including reduction of physiotherapy sessions from 60 to 30.
- The challenge of rising healthcare costs was recognized. New medicines, innovative surgery etc. inevitably mean an increase in cost. While the majority of the health insurance plans, including ASHI, of the UN system organizations are self-insured, all health insurance plans, whether self-insured or commercially insured, are funded by the organizations and participants based on cost sharing arrangements approved by organizations legislative bodies. Consequently, rising costs and increased benefits must be offset by higher contributions and benefit adjustments. Use of out-of-network providers for services such as physiotherapy resulted in higher costs, which in turn led to curtailing the number of sessions allowed. The Chair pointed out that these measures were taken for all self-insured plans and not just for MIP.

- More than one association addressed the challenge they faced in trying to provide answers to all the issues retirees faced. Sometimes it was impossible to find solutions for all cases because many different health insurance plans were involved.
- The problem of having to pay upfront substantial amounts for hospitalization and other treatments was raised particularly in relation to African countries. Some retirees postponed or even avoided seeking treatment because they could not cope with the upfront payments. The Chair confirmed that this matter would be addressed in the context of Recommendation 4.
- Another problem facing some retirees was the fact that reimbursement for services received outside of their country of residence was based on the usual and customary fee in their country of residence. The Chair pointed out that this was a complex issue which was linked to the rules of individual health insurance plans and prevailing local health care practices.
- The frequency of meetings with ASHIL focal points was also raised. The Chair confirmed that consideration was being given to having two meetings per year to provide information and an opportunity for exchange of views between the Committee and the associations, and to receive valuable feedback.
- Some associations expressed the desire for more uniformity between the various health insurance plans. The Chair pointed out that attempts to align the rules of the various plans had failed in the past. The organizations are different in structure, with different healthcare settings, thus making alignment difficult, if not impossible.
- In response to a question raised, the Chair clarified that FAFICS provides guidance of a general nature whereas more specific interaction takes place at the local AFICS level.
- Regarding Long-term Care (LTC), the Committee had recognized that providing special insurance was not feasible. For this reason, the Committee issued guidelines highlighting the various aspects of the problem and the importance of advance planning. These guidelines were also shared with FICSA and UNISERV as planning for LTC had to commence before retirement.

ASHIL Recommendations for 2026-27

90. The following recommendations were put forward for this Council's consideration:

Recommendation 1: FAFICS Standing Committee on ASHIL should continue monitoring meetings on ASHI and LTC in the UN General Assembly and in other legislative bodies of UN system organizations. FAFICS should maintain lobbying for ASHI with Executive Heads of UN organizations through the Chief Executive Board (CEB) and the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) and HR network.

Recommendation 2: FAFICS (including the Standing Committee on ASHIL) and member associations should continue to sustain and deepen its engagement with staff unions—particularly CCISCUA, FICSA, UNISERV and local Staff Unions —to identify shared priorities and develop joint initiatives on health-insurance issues. Regular dialogue, data-sharing and collaborative advocacy will help align approaches and strengthen collective influence across the UN system.

Recommendation 3: FAFICS should continue to pursue improvements in the Medical Insurance Plan (MIP) provisions and its administration by TPAs. Adequate Coverage Limits: Advocate for adequate benefit ceilings and coverage thresholds. Locally recruited personnel serving in high-risk, resource-constrained field locations in some of the most challenging UN duty stations around the world have often experienced disproportionate hardship, and both active staff and retired staff deserve commensurate support. Request the UNHLIS assistance to contact certain TPAs to request quotations or feasibility studies for group plans to supplement the current MIP coverage, especially for hospitalization. This supplementary insurance would be fully paid for by the interested participants only, both active staff and retirees. (Also, covered in Recommendation 4 below)

Recommendation 4: ASHI schemes must more effectively address the unique challenges faced by retired staff in African countries—and in any region with comparable constraints. To ensure equity of services and benefits, the Standing Committee on ASHIL should:

In the short term:

- Develop a guide on medical evacuations, modelled on the guide prepared for LTCs, for retirees.
- Request the UNHLIS to contact TPAs to obtain quotations or feasibility studies for group plans to supplement existing health insurance

arrangements by a special insurance for hospitalization and for transportation during medical evacuations, applicable to current and future retirees. This request is like the type of supplementary insurance required for MIP as outlined in B.16 and Recommendation C. 3 above.

In the medium term:

- Engage Insurance Providers
- Based on results of quotations or feasibility studies for group plans for special insurance for hospitalization and transportation during medical evacuation, initiate discussions with organizations to explore the inclusion of medical evacuation support and/or coverage for retired staff facing life-threatening emergencies, particularly in regions with limited healthcare infrastructure such as Africa. If this is deemed to be a viable option, it is important to note that a separate insurance scheme from the current ASHI schemes would have to be established. The issue of financing will form part of further study of this option.
- Explore Solidarity-Based Support Models
- Assess the feasibility of voluntary solidarity funds through which retired staff may collectively support peers during medical emergencies. Although such mechanisms do not currently exist, they may offer a practical interim solution.
- Review Existing Hardship Mechanisms: Consider whether existing mechanisms, such as the UNJSPF emergency fund, could be expanded to include hardship assistance for medical evacuation cases, based on strict criteria, excluding any part of the cost of medical treatment which is covered by ASHI schemes.

Recommendation 5: Retiree representatives on various organizations' health insurance committees should advocate for continuing improvements in processes such as prior-approval processes, direct-payment arrangements and availability of health facilities which are in the network of health plans etc. Continue to advocate for improvements in various processes which benefit retirees at meetings of the UN system health insurance committees where retirees are represented.

Recommendation 6. Promote awareness of participants to claims submission procedures and time-sensitive multi-level appeal processes of TPAs with involvement of health insurance services of the relevant UN system organization. In particular, TPAs and health insurance units should:

- develop guide/handbooks on grievance and appeal processes, which outline the procedures to be followed in order to question and appeal a denied claim;
- claims submission and processing procedures;

- prepare a pre-submission checklist by claim type in the TPA web portal
- Provide briefing on these matters to current active staff and retirees as well as at pre-retirement seminars.
- Encourage retirees to familiarize themselves with their health insurance rules and procedures to reduce the risk of their claims being denied.
- Report on various KPIs such as on first-pass settlement rates; use of value- added services provided by TPAs, settlement of appeals, email transaction duration from the time of claim submission until its final settlement (including appeal processes), etc., which should be posted on Organization websites and periodically shared with FAFICS.

Recommendation 7: Long-term Care (LTC) should continue to be a focus area for FAFICS. Considering the results of the survey carried out in 2026, the following actions are necessary:

- LTC guidelines should again be sent to member associations urging them to distribute the guidelines to their members. The guidelines should be adapted to the national environment by associations to make them more meaningful and informative.
- The Committee should explore the possibility of identifying suitably qualified persons within FAFICS who could assist in briefing retirees on this topic at seminars to be organized by FAFICS and advocate for including this topic in pre-retirement seminars. As LTC requires advance planning over many years, such seminars should also be organized for active staff in collaboration with the Staff Associations.

91. Following a rich discussion on this important pillar, both during the informal open sessions on day 1, and the plenary session on ASHIL, the recommendations under Council 56/D.10. b.1, were fully adopted by the Council.

VIII. Communications

92. The Chair of the Standing Committee on Communications (SCC), Juan Antonio Casas Zamora, presented the Committee report, basically highlighting elements which make up its Communication Strategy for 2026–2027 (Council document 56/2026/D.10.c/1).

93. The proposed strategy is a successor to the 2023 framework, built on two years of Committee experience, the results of the November 2025 Social Media and Communications Survey, and the outcomes of the two Communications Focal Points Network meetings held on 25 March and 12 June 2026. The strategy frames 2026 as a year of consolidation and 2027 as a year of scale-up, with emphasis on deeper engagement, capacity building and digital visibility.

94. He stressed that the communication strategy is anchored on a solid evidence base. The 2025 survey (25 associations across four regions, representing roughly 60% of FAFICS membership and over 5,000 members) confirmed email as the universal channel, established WhatsApp/instant messaging as essential for daily coordination (18 of 25 associations) and virtual meetings as now standard (12 of 25), found social media use still modest (only 8 of 25 associations active on Facebook, about half with no regular presence), and identified strong demand for French- and Spanish-language content. Seventy-two percent of respondents supported creation of the Focal Points Network.

95. The website analytics for fafics.org (via the QMD provider) showed growing traffic but softening engagement: 8,074 sessions in the first half of 2026 alone (63% of all 2025 sessions), even as the engagement rate fell from 48.7% to 32.2% and the bounce rate rose from 51.3% to 67.8% — attributed in part to AI assistants answering user queries directly rather than driving click-throughs to the site. Desktop access dominates (about 80% of sessions), English accounts for roughly 80% of traffic, and visit patterns from Singapore and China suggest a degree of automated (non-human) traffic warranting monitoring.

96. A user satisfaction survey found high approval (96% found the site easy to navigate, 82% would recommend it) but flagged content freshness, mobile responsiveness and multilingual access as priorities, with focal points stressing that timely and accurate pension and ASHI (After Service Health Insurance) content matters most to users.

Communication Strategic Framework

97. The strategy sets out five priorities**:** consolidating the Communications Focal Points Network; strengthening fafics.org as the central information hub; deepening multilingual communication in English, French and Spanish; building member associations' communication capacity; and expanding digital visibility through measured use of social media and video. Its objectives centre on ensuring reliable information flow to associations, turning associations into

active content contributors, building capacity, reinforcing governance transparency, and increasing FAFICS' visibility with UN system stakeholders and unaffiliated retirees.

98. Some of the key initiatives outlined in the framework are the following:

- Focal Points Network: 41 designated focal points, with an operational WhatsApp group and email listserv; roughly two global meetings a year plus regional virtual meetings. Attendance grew from 12 of 41 at the first meeting to 20 at the second. Guidelines and an expectations document are due in the third quarter of 2026, with a target of 30 or more verified active focal points and 60% attendance at global meetings.
- Website: an editorial calendar with monthly contribution deadlines for Standing Committees; a requirement that pension and ASHI content be cleared by the respective committee chairs; an automated content-alert system (e.g., Brevo) targeted for the third quarter of 2026 or first quarter of 2027; mobile optimization; and streamlined cross-posting arrangements for member associations.
- Multilingual communication: trilingual templates by the third quarter of 2026; translated executive summaries of SCC reports; and a pilot of AI-assisted or volunteer simultaneous interpretation for global meetings targeted for the fourth quarter of 2026 or first quarter of 2027.
- Capacity building: at least two webinars per year, prioritized according to focal-point polling (newsletter production ranked highest, followed by social media management, website submission and WhatsApp administration); a Communication Toolkit by the fourth quarter of 2026; peer mentoring; and encouraged, human-supervised use of AI tools.
- Social media: a baseline guidance note; an institutional pilot on Facebook and LinkedIn with at least six Bureau-cleared posts per year from the third quarter of 2026; and a YouTube channel pilot targeted for the fourth quarter of 2026 or first quarter of 2027, beginning with quarterly institutional updates.

99. Regarding governance, monitoring and budget issues, the Pension and ASHIL content requires clearance by the respective Committee chairs, and the Bureau retains final authority over sensitive topics such as pension taxation, UN advocacy positions and external communications. Regional leads are to be designated for four geographic zones, including exploration of language-based

sub-groups building on the existing, active Latin American network; the SCC is seeking additional European and African members for regional balance. Key performance indicators are to be finalized by the third quarter of 2026 and tracked semi-annually — for example, raising monthly unique website users from a baseline of roughly 1,500 to a target of 3,000 or more, and increasing content available in three languages from about 40% to over 70%. Budget implications are described as modest and largely absorbed within existing resources, with targeted additional needs for website enhancement (the QMD contract), translation services and interpretation-platform costs; the SCC reiterated its call for a permanent, dedicated communications budget line.

100. Council members welcomed the strategy and offered a substantial number of observations and recommendations, which are grouped thematically below:

Membership, Impact and Reach

- Members called for increased information sharing and communication with associates and stakeholders such as FICSA.
- It was suggested that, alongside performance indicators, the strategy include impact indicators tied to goals such as growing new membership and retaining existing members.
- In response, it was noted that such impact indicators would need to be set at the level of the organization-wide strategic plan, since impact depends on the combined work of all FAFICS Standing Committees, the Bureau and member associations.
- It was recommended that the Communications and Membership Standing Committees work together to achieve synergy in growing new membership, reactivating dormant associations and raising awareness across the global UN retiree community.
- The target audience should extend to family members, not only UN retirees themselves.
- It was observed that younger retirees are likely to be more comfortable and proficient with social media.
- A short, simple document highlighting the work of FAFICS and the benefits of membership for UN retirees should be prepared for wide distribution and promotion.

Website, Content and Channels

- The SCC should explore with the QMD internet provider whether major social media platforms' algorithms could be oriented to direct users toward fafics.org.

- Priority should be given to using the most appropriate channels to achieve the strategy's impact goals.
- Websites and platforms commonly used by UN retirees, such as UNJSPF and UNFCU, could host pop-ups linking to fafics.org.
- Information should be presented in a more succinct, easily digestible format for the retiree community.
- There is a need to improve the availability of relevant, up-to-date website information on key topics such as pensions and ASHI.
- The uploading and management of member-association contributions and information on the site must be greatly expedited, through more decentralized authorization to do so.
- Member associations could share documents, newsletters and interviews among themselves to enhance horizontal information sharing; one step could be to establish a directory of member-association publications and documents.
- The site could provide a dedicated space for personal testimonials from retirees worldwide, sharing experiences of the transition from employment to retirement and related topics of interest.
- *fafics.org* must improve the management of corporate mail accounts for FAFICS officers to facilitate archiving and transition processes
- Multilingualism and Accessibility: The strategy's provision for trilingual summaries of all documents, reports and news uploaded to the site was noted and endorsed.

Regional Networks and Capacity

- Latin America already has an established, functional regional network that meets regularly; Africa is in the process of establishing a similar initiative this year.
- The ambitious set of goals in the strategy requires a timeline of at least two years.
- It was understood that regional and global focal-point network meetings will be held only on virtual platforms, at no additional cost to the budget.
- Implementing the strategy will require increased specialized human resources for content management, information channelling, training and capacity building — entailing either additional financial resources for communications operations or more effective mobilization of technical expertise from within the global FAFICS community to perform these functions on a regular basis.

Governance and Data Protection

- Security and confidentiality of personal information must be ensured.
- Several Council members congratulated the Chair and members of the Standing Committee on Communications for their presentation and for the proposed strategy.

Committee Recommendations to the Council

101. In summary, the SCC put forward six draft decisions for adoption: to adopt the strategy; to endorse the Focal Points Network as a permanent structure; to request a dedicated communications budget line; to require each Standing Committee to designate a content liaison; to encourage associations to confirm their focal points and allocate resources; and to endorse the YouTube channel and social media pilot. Following the very engaged discussion, the proposed communication strategic framework and its six accompanying recommendations as described in Council 56/D.10. c.1 was unanimously approved by the Council.

IX. Membership Matters

102. The Standing Committee Chair and Vice-Chair Marashetty Seenappa and Abdou Khader Diakhate reported on current and planned efforts to reach out to inactive members and attract prospective new members. The presentation focused on the Membership Standing Committee's report and recommendations for expanding FAFICS membership. The committee reported significant progress, including the addition of new members and the revival of dormant associations in Tanzania, Ivory Coast, and Nicaragua.

103. Key recommendations included establishing impact indicators across the organization, strengthening cross-committee communication, creating a directory of publications, and implementing a travel budget for committee members.

104. The Standing Committee elaborated on its successful efforts to revive or establish new Associations in Tanzania, Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Mauritania, Bolivia, Liberia, Laos, and Ivory Coast, as well as in Honduras and Serbia. The committee has also identified priority countries for new associations including Serbia, El Salvador, Morocco, Liberia, Zambia, and

Zimbabwe, while also proposing strategies for reaching out to pre-retirees and dormant members.

105. Some of the specific membership issues identified and observed by the Committee and the Bureau:

- Decreasing total members of member associations
- The ageing and disability of senior members
- Weak leadership in some Associations
- Financial Constraints
- Poor attendance in FAFICS Council meetings in person or virtual.
- Failing to pay annual dues to FAFICS
- Associations prone to becoming dormant
- Associations with lesser membership are more prone to challenges.

106. For its priority work in 2026-27, the following key actions/support and follow-ups were identified:

- UN retirees in Zimbabwe are interested in starting an AFICS association.
- UN retirees in South Africa also interested to start an AFICS association
- UN retirees in Morocco expressed similar interest and Mr Abdou Diakhate has established contact and is providing the required support.
- The associations that need revival include Madagascar, Cameroon, Somalia, Egypt, and Sri Lanka.

107. The Standing Committee Chair and Vice-Chair concluded their presentation by acknowledging the composition and everyone's support on the work of the SC on Membership. The Committee hopes to further strengthen its team by increasing its committee membership and mobilizing focal points in Member Associations. The current team is composed of:

- Marashetty Seenappa Chair
- Abdou Khader Diakhate Vice Chair
- Maria Machicado Member
- Manijeh Torabi Member
- Eva Ruhago Member

- Delia Barcelona Member
- Romesh Muttukumaru Member

X. Succession Planning and Talent Management and Appointments to Standing Committees and Working Groups of the Pension Board

Succession Planning Framework

108. The Council considered the report of the Working Group on Succession Planning, presented by its Chair, Nancy Hurtz-Soyka. The report emphasized that succession planning is essential to ensure that FAFICS remains strong, effective and well prepared for the future. As a volunteer-based Federation, FAFICS depends heavily on the experience, commitment and institutional knowledge of individuals serving in its elected, appointed, representative and committee positions. Succession planning should therefore not be viewed solely as an activity undertaken when elections approach or when vacancies arise, but as an ongoing governance responsibility of the Federation.

109. The Council recalled that, through decisions 55/4 and 55/5 adopted at its 55th session, it established the Working Group and mandated it to develop a succession planning strategy and an operational plan for FAFICS. In carrying out this mandate, the Working Group sought to develop a practical and sustainable framework that would promote both continuity and renewal: continuity to preserve institutional knowledge and experience, and renewal to enable new people, perspectives and skills to contribute to the work of the Federation.

110. The Working Group was broadly representative of the Federation, comprising members from seven Member Associations. The members of the Working Group were:

- Nancy Hurtz-Soyka (AFICS/NY), Chair
- Clemens Adams (AAFI-AFICS Geneva)
- Promita Chadha (UNPAI-India)
- Abdou Khadre Diakhate (ASAFI-Senegal)
- T. I. M. Nurunnabi Khan (AFUNSOB-Bangladesh)
- Deborah Landey (AFICS/NY)
- Alcestis Mangahas (AFICS-Philippines)

- F. Claudio Sampaio de Menezes (AAFIB-Brazil)

111. The Working Group met regularly from September 2025 and initially prepared an Interim Report, which was circulated to all Member Associations in February 2026 for comments and feedback. The Working Group reported that the responses received from Member Associations were generally supportive of the proposed succession planning framework and of establishing a continuing mechanism to carry the work forward. As part of its consultations, the Working Group also met with the Chairs of the four existing Standing Committees—Pension Issues, ASHIL, Membership and Communications—to obtain their views and draw upon their practical experience. The final framework therefore reflected both the views of Member Associations and the operational experience of those already carrying significant responsibilities within FAFICS.

112. The Chair presented a succession planning framework developed by the working group comprising five interconnected core elements: Key Functions Descriptions; the Expertise Pool; Comparative Candidate Review; Learning, Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing; and Effective Handover Arrangements. The Council was informed that these elements should not be regarded as separate initiatives, but as mutually reinforcing components of a continuous succession planning process designed to identify, develop and mobilize talent and ensure continuity in key FAFICS functions.



113. The strategic framework was further elaborated as follows:

- The first element, Key Functions Descriptions, provides clear descriptions of the responsibilities, qualifications, competencies, experience and personal qualities required for critical FAFICS positions. The Working Group noted that, for the first time, key functions descriptions had been developed for an initial group of important positions within the Federation. These descriptions would enable Member Associations and prospective candidates to better understand the requirements of positions before vacancies arise and

would be particularly valuable for functions requiring specialized knowledge and experience, including pension governance and representation.

- The second element, the Expertise Pool, is intended to serve as the Federation's repository of available talent. FAFICS Member Associations collectively possess extensive professional knowledge and experience, but this expertise has not always been sufficiently visible or readily accessible when positions need to be filled. The Working Group therefore revised the existing Expertise Pool form and initiated its automation. The revised system captures more focused information on experience and expertise, including up to three self-assessed areas of expertise, with entries having a three-year validity. Automation would facilitate updating, searching and matching individuals according to relevant skills and potential roles while incorporating appropriate data privacy and security safeguards. The Expertise Pool would not replace elections or established appointment procedures; rather, it would broaden the range of qualified individuals who might be identified and encouraged to participate in FAFICS activities.
- The third element, Comparative Candidate Review, provides for a structured assessment of candidates for non-elected positions against the requirements set out in the relevant Key Functions Descriptions. The objective is to provide the President and other appropriate decision makers with a more consistent and objective basis for considering candidates' qualifications, experience, readiness and suitability for particular roles. The Council noted that this approach had already proved useful during the year in assisting the President and Bureau in considering candidates for positions that required appointments or nominations. It was emphasized that the process would support, rather than replace or diminish, the authority of those responsible for making appointments.
- The fourth element, Learning, Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing, recognizes that effective succession planning requires the development of people before vacancies occur. FAFICS should therefore create opportunities for members to become more familiar with the Federation's work, structures and responsibilities, including the work of the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund and the responsibilities of FAFICS representatives. Measures could include orientation and role-specific training, knowledge-sharing activities, participation in Standing Committees and projects, mentoring and other opportunities through which members could gain relevant experience. Such an approach would enable institutional knowledge to be transferred systematically and would help develop a broader and better-prepared pool of individuals able to assume future responsibilities.
- The fifth element, Effective Handover Arrangements, addresses the importance of ensuring that institutional knowledge is not lost when

individuals leave positions. The Working Group emphasized the need for a simple and consistent handover process through which key tasks, files, contacts, ongoing issues, deadlines and practical knowledge are transferred to incoming position holders. Early planning for transition, appropriate documentation and direct support during the handover period would reduce disruption and enable incoming colleagues to become effective more quickly.

114. Taken together, the five core elements are intended to support a stronger and more sustainable Federation—one capable of retaining institutional memory, broadening participation, preparing future leaders and ensuring continuity in its work.

115. The Council was informed that succession planning should become a permanent and continuing practice throughout FAFICS rather than a one-time initiative or a process activated only when vacancies occur. Member Associations have a particularly important role because they are best placed to identify members with relevant expertise, encourage participation and bring forward individuals who may be willing and able to serve the Federation.

Establishment of a Standing Committee on Succession Planning

116. The Working Group further proposed the establishment of a Standing Committee on Succession Planning to provide the institutional focus, coordination and follow-up necessary to sustain the framework. The proposed Standing Committee would work across the Federation and support the four existing Standing Committees—Pension Issues, ASHIL, Membership and Communications—in identifying talent, developing capacity, transferring knowledge and planning for continuity.

117. Particular attention was drawn to the specialized requirements associated with FAFICS representation on the Pension Board and its subsidiary bodies. These functions require appropriate expertise, experience and institutional knowledge and therefore benefit from the advance identification and preparation of potential candidates. A continuing succession planning mechanism would help ensure that qualified individuals are available when such opportunities or vacancies arise.

118. The Working Group stressed that implementation of the framework would require participation at all levels of the Federation. Member Associations would contribute through identifying and encouraging talent; the Standing Committees would provide opportunities for learning, participation and capacity development within their respective areas; and the Council would continue to provide strategic direction and oversight. In this way, succession planning would become embedded in the normal functioning of FAFICS.

Discussion and Decisions for the Council

119. Following the presentation, the Council discussed the proposed Succession Planning Framework and the arrangements necessary to ensure its continued implementation. There was broad recognition of the importance of ensuring continuity in FAFICS leadership and representation, preserving institutional knowledge and identifying qualified individuals who could assume responsibilities in the future.

120. During the discussion, several Member Associations expressed reservations about the proposed approach. They considered that the succession planning process risked becoming overly bureaucratic and questioned whether succession planning needed to be institutionalized as a major pillar of the Federation's work. Some also questioned whether the establishment of an additional Standing Committee was necessary and suggested that succession planning responsibilities could be addressed within FAFICS's existing structures and processes.

121. Other Member Associations supported the proposed framework and emphasized that succession planning should be regarded as an ongoing governance responsibility rather than an activity undertaken only when a vacancy arises. They stressed that a more structured approach would help FAFICS identify and develop talent across the Federation, broaden participation, preserve institutional memory, strengthen knowledge transfer and ensure that qualified candidates are available when positions become vacant.

122. In responding to the concerns raised, it was emphasized that the proposed framework was intended to be practical rather than bureaucratic. Its purpose was not to create additional layers of administration or to interfere with existing election and appointment authorities, but to introduce greater structure, transparency and predictability into the way FAFICS identifies talent, develops future candidates and prepares for leadership and representational transitions.

123. The discussion also addressed the proposed establishment of a Standing Committee on Succession Planning. While some Associations questioned the need for an additional Standing Committee, supporters considered that without a continuing institutional mechanism there was a risk that the work undertaken by the Working Group would lose momentum and that succession planning would again become primarily a response to individual vacancies. A Standing Committee would provide continuity, coordination and accountability for implementation of the framework and would work in support of, rather than duplicate, the responsibilities of the existing Standing Committees and other FAFICS bodies.

124. Several Member Associations expressed reservations, including the cost of establishing a new Standing Committee, the difficulty in finding a broad number of Standing Committee volunteers, and the potential decrease in emphasis by the Bureau on the major priorities of pensions and health insurance by the creation of yet another body that focuses on the internal functioning of FAFICS.

Notwithstanding the reservations expressed , at the conclusion of the discussion the Council adopted the Succession Planning Framework and approved the creation of a new Standing Committee on Succession Planning. Specifically, the Council approved the following recommendations :

i. The five core elements of the FAFICS Succession Planning Framework were approved—Key Functions Descriptions; the Expertise Pool; Comparative Candidate Review; Learning, Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing; and Effective Handover Arrangements—together with their ongoing implementation.
ii. The creation of a Standing Committee on Succession Planning was approved to provide the continuing institutional focus, coordination and follow-up necessary to implement and further develop the Succession Planning Framework.
iii. That, in the meantime, as no permanent Chair has been appointed, Nancy Hurtz-Soyka will continue to serve as Interim Chair of this new Standing Committee.

125. Through these decisions, the Council established succession planning as a continuing element of FAFICS's work and provided an institutional mechanism for carrying the framework forward. The decisions reflected the Council's determination that, while the framework should remain practical and proportionate and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy, a structured approach to succession planning was important to the Federation's long-term continuity, institutional knowledge and capacity to identify and prepare future leadership and representatives.

Appointments to Standing Committees and Working Groups of the Pension Board

126. On appointments to standing committees and working groups of the Pension Board, the President presented his proposals as outlined in document Council 56/2026/D.13. The proposals contained in this report are intended to provide Member Associations with a clear and transparent overview of those serving as Chairs/Vice Chairs of FAFICS Standing Committees and as FAFICS representatives on the Pension Board, its Committees and Working Groups. It also provides the timing of future vacancies. Maintaining this information on a regular basis ensures transparency, accountability and forward planning, while enabling Member Associations to identify opportunities for future participation and leadership. It also provides information on appointments made this past year and my nominations for reappointments.

127. President Jerry Barton stressed that with the completion of his tenure and the results of the FAFICS election for President, certain reappointments must be made, and others will await decisions by the incoming President. His proposals were discussed with the incoming President. He also referred to Rule 6.5 which states that "The officers normally shall take office immediately following the Council session during which they are elected." This rule has been applied to all the positions presented in the document.

128. With regard to the handover of the Presidency to the newly elected President, the Bureau discussed the practical implications of the delayed handover for approval of the Council, considering that (a) the Pension Board now operates on a three meetings per year schedule, ending in July with the in-person meeting; (b) there are a number of pre-meetings before the July Pension Board that the outgoing President has attended, including the various committees on which he sits and that report to the July Pension Board. The numerous tasks and technical arrangements would need some time. Therefore, the Bureau proposed completing the handover by September.

129. As clarified by the incoming President, through an intervention by AFICS NY, the Council approved the technical aspects of the handover of the Presidency to the incoming new President take place as soon as possible, to be completed at the latest by 1 September 2026, it being understood that, upon conclusion of the 56th Council, the newly elected President is fully assuming the functions of the presidency of FAFICS in accordance with Rule 6.5 of the FAFICS Rules of Procedure. These modalities are contained in the revised document 56/2026/D.13 (Refer to Annex: List of Council documents) which was prepared following the debate on this item, with the agreement of all parties concerned, and subsequently approved by the Council.

130. With regard to the handover of the Treasurer's functions, the handover always follows the banking and technical requirements, which are determined by the outgoing and incoming Treasurer, but will be accomplished as soon as practical keeping in mind Rule 6.5 which also applies here. The outgoing Treasurer will still need to advise on the Financial Report for 2026.

FAFICS Standing Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs

131. Each of the four FAFICS Standing Committees, Pension Issues, ASHIL, Membership and Communications, includes both a Chair and a ~~Co-~~Vice-Chair.

According to Rule 5.5 of the FAFICS Rules of Procedure, the Chairs and ~~Co-~~Vice-Chairs of the Standing Committees shall be nominated by the President, after consultation with the Bureau, and appointed by the Council for two-year renewable terms. There are no term limits. The Chairs shall be ex officio members of the Bureau. According to Rule 5.5, Chairs and Vice Chairs can be appointed for two-year renewable terms.

132. The four Standing Committees and their Chairs and Vice Chairs are as follows:

a. Standing Committee on Pension Issues – Chair Suzanne Bishopric (AFICS-NY) and Vice-Chair Jay Pozenel (AFICS-NY). Ms. Bishopric was reappointed last year for another two years through July 2027. Mr. Pozenel was appointed in 2024 and will continue through July 2026. He was proposed to be reappointed for another two years through July 2028.

b. Standing Committee on Health Insurance and Long-Term Care – Chair Jayantilal Karia (AFICS-NY) and Vice-Chair Giovanni Quaglia (AAFIB-Brazil). Mr. Karia was appointed in July 2023. Mr. Quaglia was appointed in October 2022 Their first two-year terms are completed. They were proposed and approved for reappointment last year for another two years through July 2027.

c. Standing Committee on Membership – Chair Marashetty Seenappa (AFUNPI-India) and Vice Chair Abdou Khadre Diakhate (ASAFI-Senegal) were both appointed after the approval by the Council of the establishment of a Standing Committee on Membership at the Council session in 2024. Thus, their terms expire in July 2026. Marashetty is stepping down. Mr. Abdou Khadre Diakhate was proposed as the Chair of the Standing Committee for a two-year period and left the ~~Co-~~Vice Chair position vacant at this time.

d. Standing Committee on Communications – Chair Juan Casas (AFICS-Panama) and Vice-Chair Aye Win (AFICS-Myanmar) were appointed after approval by the Council of the establishment of a Standing Committee on Communications at the Council's session 2024. Their terms will expire in July 2026.

133. On current and proposed FAFICS representatives to the Pension Board and its subsidiary Committees and Working groups**,** Article 13 of the FAFICS Rules of Procedure specifies that the FAFICS President is an ex-officio member of the Pension Board delegation and Head of Delegation. The Chair of the FAFICS Standing Committee on Pension Issues is also an ex-officio member, and the

term is unlimited as the terms of Chairs of FAFICS Standing Committees are unlimited. The other two members and two alternates on the delegation are to be chosen from the Expertise Pool. Their terms are two years, renewable twice for a maximum term limit of six years. Only Mr. Yossipov's term expires this year and was proposed to be extended for another two years.

Name	Organ.	Initial Appt.	Beginning of Current Term	Expiration of current Term	Years Served	Additional Years until Max. term
President	FAFICS	July 2022	July 2022	July 2026	4	Term limited
S. Bishopric	FAFICS	July 2022	July 2025	July 2027	4	No term limit
T. Panuccio	FFOA-Rome	July 2023	July 2025	July 2027	3	3
J.Pozenel	AFICS-NY	July 2025	July 2025	July 2027	1	5
V. Yossipov (alt.)	AAFI-AFICS-Geneva	July 2024	July 2024	July 2026	2	4
A.Van Houtte (alt.)	FFOA-Rome	July 2025	July 2025	July 2027	1	Has resigned
D. Shah	AFICS-NY	July 2026	July 2026	July 2028	0	As alternate until September 2026

134. Regarding Pension Board Subsidiary Committees and Working Groups, the FAFICS Rules state that the tenures of our representatives on Pension Board Committees align with the mandates specified in the Pension Board rules.
    a. On the Standing Committee: The Pension Board's Standing Committee meets as needed in lieu of the Board, especially handling appeals. As such, the members are chosen from the Board delegation. The practice has been for the FAFICS President to be one of the two FAFICS representatives. The Pension Board does not specify term limits for this Committee. It was proposed that the other Committee members remain the same, according to the FAFICS Rule that aligns tenures of our representatives with the Pension Board tenures.

Name	Organization	Initial appointment	Beginning of current term	Expiration of current term	Years served	Additional Years Until Max.Term
President	FAFICS	July 2023	July 2025	July 2026	3	-

Theresa Panuccio	FFOA- Rome	July 2023	July 2023	July 2027	3	n.a.
Suzanne Bishopric (alternate)	FAFICS	July 2023	July 2025	July 2027	3	n.a.
Annick Vanhoutte (alternate)	FFOA -Rome	1 August 2025	January 2026	January 2028	.5	n.a.

b. The Audit Committee has a four-year term, which is non-renewable, with one FAFICS representative**.**

Name	Organization	Initial appointment	Beginning of current term	Expiration of current term	Years served	Additional Years Until Max.Term
Darshak Shah	AFICS-NY	July 2024	July 2024	July 2028	2	2

c. The Budget Committee has a term of three years, with a maximum of two terms, and two FAFICS representatives. They are Clemens Adams (AAFI-AFICS-Geneva) and Mr. Dennis Thatchaichawalit (AFICS-Thailand). Their terms expire in December of 2027.
d. The Fund Solvency and Assets and Liabilities Monitoring (FSALM) Committee has a term limit of eight years and two FAFICS representatives. Currently Suzanne Bishopric (AFICS-NY) and Ms. Kathrin Bruchmann (AAFI-AFICS-Geneva). Their terms expire in July of 2029.
e. The Succession Planning and Evaluation Committee includes two FAFICS representatives, the current President and Ms. Theresa Panuccio. The new President will automatically replace the current President.
f. The Governance Review Working Group's report requested the Pension Board to maintain its mandate for two items: (i) further work on proposals regarding the composition of the Board (i.e., how to allocate the 21 non-UN Board seats among the non-UN member organizations), with a view to making a final proposal at the July 2028 session; and (ii) further work on the procedures to be used by the Standing Committee when conducting reviews and appeals under Section K of the Fund's Administrative Rules. There are two FAFICS representatives, Gerhard Schramek and Jay Pozenel. Their terms will expire in December 2028. The Pension Board has continued the work of the Governance Review Working Group in support of this mandate, although no General

Assembly resolution or Pension Board decision has been identified that formally extends the Working Group until 2028

g. This is a new Group "**OP 14" Group** created by General Assembly resolution 80/243that was requested by the General Assembly, in its resolution 80/243*, to undertake a holistic review of the UNJSPF pension scheme and its governance. These appointments were made earlier this year and reported by the President to Member Associations in his letter of 24 April 2026.

Name	Organization	Initial appointment	Beginning of current term	Expiration of current term	Years served	Additional years to max. term
Gerhard Schramek	ARICSA-Vienna	April 2026	April 2026	July 2028	-	n.a.
Kathrin Bruchmann	AAFI-AFICS-Geneva	April 2026	April 2026	July 2028	-	n.a.
Richard Dictus(alt.)	AFICS-Netherlands	April 2026	April 2026	July 2028	-	n.a.
Darshak Shah (alt.)	AFICS-NY	April 2026	April 2026	July 2028	-	n.a.

*Report to be issued to the 82nd General Assembly in 2028.

135. In summary, at this session, the Council approved the continuation of the following appointments:

- Jay Pozenel as Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Pension Issues for a further two-year term;
- Abdou Diakhate as Chair of the Standing Committee on Membership for a two-year term;
- Juan Casas as Chair, and Aye Win as vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Communications for a further two-year term;
- V. Yossipov as an alternate member of the FAFICS delegation to the Pension Board for a further two-year term;

136. An important intervention and clarification from AFICS New York stressed that even as some members of Pension Board Standing Committee are stepping down, they can still be mobilized to support Committee work even if they are not officially a part of the FAFICs delegation to the Pension Board. This matter went through a hard negotiation process between FAFICS and the Pension

Board and is now successfully practiced. This is now the case with several FAFICS experts (e.g. Richard Dictus who is in the OP14 working group, Gerhardt Schramek in the Governance working group) are actively engaged in Pension Board matters through their respective working groups and not as part of the official FAFICS delegation to the Board.

137. The incoming President proposed that the delegation of the responsibility of the role of the FAFICS spokesperson for the 84th session of the Pension Board still be given to the outgoing President and that the new President would attend as an Alternate Member of this Pension Board Session. This was adopted by the Council. Other appointments referred to in the report await decisions by the newly elected President following the conclusion of the Council session.

138. In concluding this agenda item, President Jerry Barton expressed these words: "*As I conclude my term as President, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all those who have represented FAFICS over the past years. Their expertise, commitment and willingness to serve have strengthened the Federation's ability to work on behalf of retirees and beneficiaries around the world and in particular to contribute to the work on pension and health insurance issues. I am confident that the incoming President and Bureau will continue to build on this foundation, ensuring that appointments are made through transparent, merit-based processes that promote both continuity and renewal, diversity of experience and the continued effective representation of the interests of all UN retirees and beneficiaries*."

139. The newly elected President, Dar**s**hak Shah, expressed his own appreciation for the spirit of collegiality that he and President Jerry Barton have demonstrated in handling the transition process. The two of them have had several discussions and have agreed on most of the proposals presented regarding appointments to Standing Committees and Working Groups. He added that some of these decisions may have to wait for the new Bureau or go through the succession planning process, which the Council just approved.

XI. WORDS OF APPRECIATION

140. The Presiding Officer introduced this agenda item as a moment of tribute for the outgoing FAFICS President Jerry Barton.

141. The FAFICS Secretary, Delia Barcelona, started this session by saying that she has gone the unconventional way for this agenda item; instead of delegates taking turns asking for the floor, she had consolidated messages from Member Associations and colleagues on a PowerPoint presentation, and thanked those

Associations and colleagues for sending them in advance. Details of these and other comments expressed from the floor during the closing sessions are in Annex B.

142. Incoming President Darshak Shah said: "*Jerry, everything has been said. You have been brave; you have been bold. You have started a movement I must continue. As far as the Presiding Officer is concerned, you have set a new standard. Thank you for the skillful way you have managed this difficult and complex meeting. Big thank you to Jerry, Delia, the outgoing Bureau and the entire Council".*

143. Following multiple proposals from Member Associations to appoint Jerry Barton in an Honorary capacity, the Council unanimously acclaimed him as President Emeritus. Thus, Jerry Barton now joins the list of other Presidents Emeriti of FAFICS. The Council also took note of a proposal to appoint Marashetty Seenappa as a VP emeritus and decided to first refer the matter to the Bureau in accordance with Rule 14.1.

XII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Date and Place of the next FAFICS Council

144. Molla Sharew, President of AFICS Ethiopia made an intervention about the prospects (and invitation) of the next FAFICS Council to be hosted in Addis Ababa. He highlighted positive factors including UNECA's excellent facilities and as hub for international diplomacy in the region, having at least 15 UN specialized agencies and 5 UN Funds and Programmes being hosted there, the fact that Addis Ababa was the first AFICS to be established in Africa, the rich culture of Eastern Africa.

145. President Jerry Barton said that the venue for FAFICS Councils has traditionally been linked to the location of the Pension Board meetings. There have only been two occasions when this did not happen: one time in Nairobi, Kenya but a quorum was not possible, so it was shifted to Vienna; and another time in London, when facilities were assured for the dates when the Pension Board was meeting but not for the FAFICS Council, so again, the proposed venue was relocated to Vienna. FFOA Rome also said that it is the turn of specialized agencies to host the Pension Board meeting, so there is prospect of hosting it in Rome through WFP or the possibility of ILO hosting it in Geneva. In any case, the President said there may be news about the venue from the upcoming Pension Board meeting the week following the FAFICS Council. In

the case of hybrid meetings though, it may be easier to establish the required quorum for meetings.

146. AFICS New York, through Jay Pozenel provided some updates relating to payment of income tax on UN Pensions and the successful argument in court about pension being non-taxable since these arise from contributions from non-taxable UN salaries. Examples of such successful cases, or efforts to address this issue, from Austria, Spain, India, Mauritius. His presentation generated significant interest so there was a proposal to consider making the subject of taxation of pensions an agenda item in FAFICS Council agenda. He clarified that just because pension is paid out of the US does not make it a US taxable fund. He mentioned that there are several resources available on UN taxation and that if there are more specific questions that people can reach out to him. The Chair of the SC on Communications suggested to put up some relevant information regarding UN taxation on the FAFICS website.

147. AFICS-Mauritius, Michael Atchia, spoke on 2 matters relating to publications, following a recommendation made earlier in the Council that we all AFICSs should publish more. He offered to build and edit a FAFICS Directory of all present publications from member associations. This directory would not only make these publications known but could encourage others to publish similar ones. He again displayed a printed copy of the book GLIMPSES (of Life in the service of the United Nations), The first edition was published online by AFICS-Mauritius in December 2025 and circulated electronically to all Member Organizations. He also announced the Second edition for December 2026. Retirees were invited to contribute a personal experience which should be about 1,000 to 1,500 words in English; send to the Editor mklatchia@intnet.mu by end November 2026. He also briefly referred to the upcoming elections of the new SG of UN and referred to the ongoing Town Hall in NY in the General Assembly Hall between the 6 candidates, 4 women and 2 men.

XIII. CLOSING SESSION

148. Before closing the session, the Presiding Officer gave the floor to the FAFICS Secretary for some logistical announcements. She explained how the Council report will be finalized, citing FAFICS Rule of Procedures 3.14 stating that the President, Presiding Officer and Secretary must clear the report before sending it out to delegates, and before sharing it with all Member Associations. This process can take about 6 weeks. She also assured participants that all documents, PowerPoint presentations and photos will be shared. Finally, she made announcements about the informal handover between the outgoing and incoming President, and the informal Bureau meeting that will take place after

the Council concludes. The group then was organized for a momentous group photo.

149. The Presiding Officer than asked outgoing President Jerry Barton for any last words. He sincerely thanked everyone for their appreciation and support.

150. In his concluding remarks, the Presiding Officer expressed the following messages: ***Voila, c'est fini***!; that the Council has been a very productive session; and exciting now that the Council has a new President, 3 new Vice Presidents, a new Treasurer, a new Standing Committee, and a new member Association; he congratulated Darshak again and the new team, including the new auditors. He added that he has learned a lot from Jerry and wished him all the best as he continues his presidency of ARICSA and as President Emeritus. He thanked all the Standing Committees and Chairs for the quality of documents prepared. He thanked the rapporteur for duly noting the deliberations. He thanked Delia very warmly for her efficiency, professionalism, dedication, resilience (working even when she was feeling sick) and for a wonderful partnership. He thanked Lili and Ann, Maxine of Conference Services, and Thomas from the Technical booth for their discreet but essential support. He thanked all the delegates for their remarkable attention, patience, adaptation, especially those online far and away despite time differences, and disciplined participation. He thanked them for their indulgence and understanding of the methods used for optimal time management given that he committed himself to follow the rules, try to reach consensus, and to be "*in time*" and "*on time*". He concluded by saying it has been a wonderful experience, having done the Council in a spirit of consensus and unity – which shows FAFICS coming together. ***Bon Voyage, Bon retour, Vive la FAFICS*** !

151. On that note, the Presiding Officer Jacques Rao banged the gavel to close the 56th Council Session of FAFICS.

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End of Report

Annex A: Highlights of the Pre-Council Open and ad hoc Sessions

Welcome remarks from ARICSA

1. ARICSA Vice-President Werner Blenk welcomed the FAFICS delegates to Vienna and said it was their pleasure to host them again for the 11th time. He acknowledged the challenges of hybrid meetings and made special mention of the virtual participants who are much more than the in-person delegates and that they should be given appropriate times to make interventions. He spoke briefly about the rich history and culture of Vienna. He also acknowledged the very active support of the ARICSA team in making this Council a reality, namely Rosemarie, Anneliese, Monireh, Lily and Mary, under the leadership and guidance of President Jerry. He said such Council meetings are a great opportunity to reconnect with old friends and make new ones. He said ARICSA looks forward to hosting the dinner on the third day of the Council in a very typical *Heuriger* (traditional wine tavern) that serves homemade food. As host, he concluded by wishing the Council productive results.

Informal discussions on FAFICS pillars (reported here for information only)

2. The chairs of the different Standing Committees held informal sessions with the delegates: Suzanne Bishopric on Pension issues; Jay Karia on ASHIL; Juan Antonio Casas Zamora on Communications; Marashetty Seenappa and Abdou Khader Diakhate on Membership matters. Detailed official deliberations on these issues which were tabled for the Council plenaries may be found in the Council report proper.

3. On Pension issues, Suzanne briefly introduced the papers that have been prepared for the Council on pension benefits processing, investments and FSALM. Some associations shared their feedback on pension-related matters like the efforts of ARICSA to support surviving spouses; the need to keep retiree/beneficiary details up to date in the system; the challenges of older retirees who are not confident with digital technology, and so on. Associations also shared their successful (and sometimes challenging experiences) supporting the UNJSPF annual pre-suspension outreach exercise. AFICS Philippines also shared its successful efforts reaching out to 100% of those in

the pre-suspension list – some were successfully supported to shift to DCE; also noting that unfortunately some have passed away, some were not members of AFIC; AFICS Netherlands and AAFIB Brazil expressed similar views and feedback, including the fact that the core problem seems to be that the contact details provided by the Pension Fund were not correct or up-to-date. This puts pressure on retirees to ensure that themselves and their beneficiaries' information/basic documents are current in the MSS portal.

4. On ASHIL, Jay Karia focused on follow-ups to the recommendations from the previous Council and current efforts to continue addressing them and presented the results of the ASHIL global survey. Some of the issues raised during this informal session related to the recent changes introduced to the MIP by the UN Secretariat. A formal letter from AAFIB Brazil was sent to the FAFICS President dated 14 July expressing concern about the impact of the changes (increased contributions and certain changes in benefits) would have for locally recruited staff; and further requesting that the implementation of the measures be suspended pending a broader consultative process. On this point, however, the SC Chair indicated that as the measures had already been implemented under the responsibility of the UN Secretariat, FAFICS could not interfere on this matter; and that the changes made by UN were for the purpose of aligning the MIP to the World-Wide Plan for international staff to the extent feasible as well as addressing financial imbalances within the MIP.

5. Other issues raised included the inadequacy of certain benefits affecting retirees including dental care; inequalities in benefits for local versus international staff including reduction of physiotherapy sessions from 60 to 30. The challenge of rising healthcare costs was recognized, especially with new medicines, innovative surgery etc that means an increase in costs. The ASHIL plans are self-insured. Consequently, the rise in costs and increased benefits must be offset by increased contributions and adjustments to benefits. Use of out-of-network providers for services such as physiotherapy resulted in higher costs which in turn led to curtailing the number of sessions allowed. The Chair pointed out that these measures were taken for all plans administered by the UN Secretariat and not just for MIP. The problem of having to pay upfront substantial amounts for hospitalization and other treatments was raised particularly in relation to African countries. Some retirees postponed or even avoided seeking treatment because they could not cope with the upfront payments. Another problem facing some retirees was the fact that reimbursement for services received outside of their country of residence was based on the usual and customary fee in their country of residence. The Chair pointed out that this was a complex issue which was

linked to the rules of individual health insurance plans and prevailing local health care practices. The Chair also confirmed that this matter as well as other issues raised are/will be looked into by the Standing Committee in its workplan, including the interactions with the ASHIL focal points. The issue of uniformity in health insurance plans had failed in the past as organizations are different in structure with different healthcare settings thus making alignment difficult if not impossible. Regarding Long-term Care (LTC), the Committee had recognized that providing special insurance was not feasible; and reminded delegates of the LTC guidelines that have been issued to emphasize the importance of advance planning.

6. On Communications, Juan Antonio Casas Zamora introduced the updated communication strategy and the priority actions within this broad framework, including the activation of the communication focal points network and data on the FAFICS website traffic.

7. On Membership matters, Marashetty Seenappa and Abdou Khader Diakhate described outreach efforts the Committee has undertaken facilitate the setting up of new associations as well as the revival of inactive ones. They announced several prospects for new FAFICS members in the coming year, and the good news on the proposed admission of AFICS Honduras during this 56th Council Session.

8. On Succession planning and Talent Management, Nancy Hurtz-Soyka, as Chair of the Working Group set up by the FAFICS Council last year, highlighted the tedious work of the Committee, which has produced a comprehensive succession planning framework. Its proposals included the creation of a Standing Committee on Succession Planning.

Intervention from UNODC

9. A brief presentation and video were shown by Bill Batware, Programme Officer of UNODC on their global initiative to help older populations, including retirees, avoid being victims of sophisticated digital fraud schemes and scams. The delegates said they can support the promotion of such a campaign at the local AFICS level. He appreciated the interest expressed by the delegates on such initiatives that are useful to all UN retirees.

Remarks from UNFCU

10. UNFCU's FVP of Global Service Delivery, Ms. Lindy Ramsdale, accompanied by Nisreen Mirza, Manager of UNFCU at the VIC, made a brief presentation about UNFCU. She started by thanking FAFICS President Jerry for the ongoing steadfast collaboration, and all FAFICS members who continue to remain loyal members of the UNFCU family. She stressed their strong commitment to serve, especially UN retirees, who have spent years of their lives to serve the world. She stressed that through effective governance and effective risk management, UNFCU has remained strong, with over 265, 000 members worldwide of which about 22,600 are retirees globally. She reminded the group that once a member of UNFCU, one remains always a member. She encouraged members to read their annual reports, newsletters (UNFCU connect), and continue to avail themselves of seminars and resources they continue to offer to AFICSs, such as those on fraud prevention. They are committed to ensuring members' financial well-being as they continue to improve services through contact centers. In addition to the contact center in Nairobi, Kenya, there are plans to soon open centers in Senegal and Thailand. She concluded by thanking FAFICS for the enduring partnership and that they would remain committed to serving retirees who have been referred to demographically as the "super age".

UN80 Film

11. UN80 Film was introduced by Jay Pozenel. It is an inspiring documentary production by the UN Department of Global Communication about the story of the UN, its people, milestones and its global impact over eight decades of collective progress. It features reflections on global challenges and honors the UN's enduring legacy captured in its vibrancy, diversity and shared aspirations of the international community. The film runs for 1:20:40 and is available on the UN web TV.

Cocktail reception

12. The first (informal) day of the Council ended with a cocktail reception hosted by UNFCU, held at the 3rd floor café of the VIC.

Annex B: Words of Appreciation for the outgoing FAFICS President Jerry Barton

1. The following messages were received prior to the Council and consolidated by the FAFICS Secretary through a PowerPoint presentation shared during the closing session of the Council:

- I best knew Jerry during a challenging time for FAFICS, the drafting of a new Rules of Procedure (Jennifer Ashton, AFICS Australia)
- His dedication to strengthening country-level associations, safeguarding members' interests, has been truly outstanding. (Joyanta Adhikari, AFUNSOB Bangladesh)
- Jerry showed great responsibility and true leadership qualities as the President. (A.K. Masood Ahmed, Pres Emeritus, AFUNSOB)
- Your clever, friendly and democratic approach has been an asset to reinforce FAFICS four pillars: Pension, Communication, Health and Membership (Claudio Menezes, AAFIB, Brazil)
- The Federation has experienced renewed momentum under your leadership, and this has been achieved with great transparency (Jacques Daoust, CAFICS Montreal)
- Throughout his presidency, Jerry has transformed the way we communicate. He has worked tirelessly to keep everyone informed, answered questions promptly and openly, and always made time to listen and connect with colleagues personally. (Adriana Gomez, AFICS Chile)
- Your effort to advocate for small pensioners, providing clear guidance to Associations and stakeholders' participation has been inspiring (Molla Sharew, AFICS Ethiopia)
- Appreciate Jerry's excellent leadership as President of FAFICS (Amb. John Kakonge, AFICS Kenya)
- Jerry was always there, even when not intervening or even present in the room. That presence was much appreciated, from you as leader. (Michael Atchia, AFICS Mauritius)
- He gave attention to issues of equality and equity in medical benefits for retirees residing in countries with limited healthcare infrastructure, particularly in Africa (Kadri Tankari, AAFNU Niger)
- You have been a pillar of support to AFICS-PHL, we are truly grateful. Our best wishes for your new chapter. May you have many more adventures in leadership (Alcestis Mangahas, AFICS Phils)

- Some of his important initiatives include decision to communicate its messages to the Associations in English, French, and Spanish, the establishment of a Standing Committee on Website and Communications, and the creation of the FAFICS Pool of Experts, etc. (Angel Escudero de Paz, Pres.Emeritus, AFIJUB Spain)
- Your hard work, perseverance, and passion have been a true inspiration to all the members (AFICS Tanzania)
- Under your leadership, the Federation and its Council have embraced a more modern approach, while you always made communication with all our members a priority (Odette Foudral, AAFI-AFICS Geneva)
- He organized and structured every aspect of FAFICS' work within a clear institutional framework (Mohamed Sebti, AAFI-AFICS Geneva)
- Greatly appreciated Jerry's clear-sighted and consensual leadership of our Group on the Rules of Procedure (Robert England, BAFUNCS)
- Under your leadership and after fifty years, FAFICS became aware that "The South also exists," and began using Spanish and French as the federation's primary working languages (Jan Steverlynck, AFICS Uruguay)
- Your quiet demeanor paired with strategic purpose decisively empowered our Bureau (Juan Antonio Casas Zamora, AFICS Panama)
- You carried out your responsibilities with tact, grace and good judgment, even when the circumstances were far from easy (Pierre Sayour, AFICS Geneva, Former FAFICS Secretary)
- Jerry has always been supportive of the Federation's activities and especially the Secretariat's work in the preparatory work for the Councils and the dissemination of Council reports. His constructive remarks and criticisms were greatly appreciated (Jay Sundaresan, AFICS Geneva, Former FAFICS Secretary)
- For ARICSA to host these many events is a testament to your strong leadership, especially in the 4 years of your tenure as FAFICS President, where I've seen a growing enthusiasm from many FAFICS Member Associations around the world (Lydia Ontal, FAFICS Honorary Asst. Secretary, also AFICS Phils Adviser)
- During my time as President of FAFICS, Jerry took on key responsibilities leading the work of the working group on revising our Council procedures. If we now have modern principles and processes much of it, we owe to Jerry (Marco Breschi, FAFICS President Emeritus)
- I have been impressed by Jerry Barton's intense consultative work to improve the Federation's rules and procedures. Jerry succeeded in bringing together a wide range of viewpoints and interests, significantly contributing to a more structured and professional decision-making process in the Federation. This served him well during his two terms as President. I hope we can benefit from his wisdom also in the future (Lucien Back, AFICS – Netherlands)

- "*You have left a mark and now leaving the FAFICS presidency with the cordiality and comradeship you practiced, open to discuss every matter, with those agreeing or disagreeing with you, so essential to the Federation to fulfil its mission, on the duties of the President to look after the benefits, welfare and rights of all international civil servants and beneficiaries, be they affiliated members of Federation*." (Andrés Castellanos del Corral, FAFICS President Emeritus)

2. Additionally, the following words of congratulations were expressed from the floor during the closing session:

- ARICSA said, "*now you are only our President*", but truly thanked him for not leaving ARICSA even with all his commitments to FAFICS; and expressed appreciation for his dedicated and committed leadership.
- AFUS Paris said, "*You have many friends in Paris, you have moved a lot of things, and we are confident your great work will be continued by the new President and team, so again, congratulations*"
- AFICS-India New Delhi/AFUNPI: *Jerry Barton has started a new set of reforms of FAFICS which have to continue; including more effective communication channels between FAFICS and member associations and an improved concept of succession planning*.
- AFICS Japan congratulated all new Officers and expressed good wishes for the outgoing President and Bureau members and briefly talked about their Association activities.
- AAFI-AFICS Geneva: Thanked the Treasurer Romesh for his excellent Report on FAFICS Finances and spoke of several ways to augment income. AAFI-AFICS Geneva also applauded the Presiding Officer for the manner he has run the Council, like a great "master of ceremonies" or conductor of an orchestra, recalling his promise at the beginning of the Council that he would be guided by the rules, and would ensure consensus and dialogue – *and you have succeeded in doing all that*!
- AFICS Panama proposed earlier an increase of 30% each year on membership payments (from $2 to 2.10, then 2.20, then 2.30 per person per year); however, no decision has been taken yet on this matter.
- AFUNSOB Bangladesh: It would be a disaster to further increase dues, as some members already cannot pay present dues.
- AFICS Netherlands appreciated the very well-organized Council, observing that unlike typical UN meetings when delegates go in and out of the meeting, Council delegates were extremely disciplined and actively

engaged. He added that this was truly a model of collegiality, which is what FAFICS is all about. He particularly thanked the Secretary for excellent preparations (ensuring that documents were available on time, online and accessible); congratulated the Presiding Officer for an excellent job keeping the Council running smoothly. He made an additional comment about perhaps tightening the agenda in the future (referring to overlaps between the open sessions and plenaries on the FAFICS key issues) and suggested that the Council Session could be reduced to 3-4 days.

- AFUNPI India described the Council as a great learning experience and appreciated the wonderful collegial spirit and warmth from everyone, adding that not only the Vienna hills are alive and singing, but that this echoes among FAFICS Associations as well.
- AFICS Ethiopia extended again their warmest congratulations and good wishes for the new Bureau and continued spirit of collaboration and commitment to FAFICS; and wished Jerry good health.
- AFICS Tanzania reflected on "*why it was worth paying their way to come to Vienna*"; they have lots to take away for their Associations, congratulated the Presiding Officer for maintaining composure, and said everyone in the Council should congratulate ourselves for this wonderful Council.

Annex C: Elections

a) Detailed election results

1. The voting was conducted following the new procedures and using the 'eBallot' software as in previous years.

2. The Election Support Group verified that the 44 designated voters represented 44 Member Associations in good standing, and that the ballots for the three elections had been configured properly. [n.b. the election of the auditors was removed from the ballot, since there were only two candidates for the two positions.]

3. All 44 voters received their individual ballot passwords during the day on Tuesday 21 July 2026. Polling opened on Tuesday 21 July 2026 at 17:30 and closed after exactly 24 hours on Wednesday 22 July at 17:30.

4. All 44 voters submitted valid ballots (as confirmed by the Election Support Group). No paper ballots or other votes outside the 44 valid votes were recorded via the eBallot software.

5. Results by Question, as recorded in the eBallot software (since the voting was anonymous, there is no record of which Association voted for which candidates):

Results by Question:
FAFICS President

Choice	Percentage	# of Votes
Darshak SHAH	77%	**34** votes
Marashetty Seenappa	23%	**10** votes

Results by Question:
FAFICS Vice-President

Choice	Percentage	# of Votes
Maria Machicado Teran	14%	**19** votes
John Martin Levins	14%	**18** votes
Nancy Hurtz-Soyka	23%	**30** votes
Lucien Back	11%	**15** votes
Balasubramaniam Murali	5%	**6** votes
Tawiye Molla Sharew	6%	**8** votes
Kadri Tankari	13%	**17** votes
Aye Win	14%	**19** votes

Results by Question:
FAFICS Treasurer

Choice	Percentage	# of Votes
Wilson Jandrajupalli	14%	**6** votes
Peter Erik Wichmand	86%	**38** votes

b) Acceptance speeches

The elected officers were given the floor to express their acceptance messages. Below are some excerpts:

- From the incoming President of FAFICS Darshak Shah "*Working for a united FAFICS*" and cites US President Obama "*The road will*

be long". It is an enormous honour to be elected to the position of President. At the outset, I want to acknowledge the great achievements of President Jerry Barton and his team. I commit to build on these achievements. I want to congratulate all members that applied for the vacant positions - evidence of success of Succession Planning. I also want to congratulate all newly elected members and look forward to working with you. You can be sure: I will give this VITAL task for retirees & their families & other beneficiaries my full attention. The task ahead is best described in an excerpt from President Obama's acceptance speech: "The road will be long, our climb STEEP, BUT I have never been more HOPEFUL than I am tonight' This is exactly how I feel! Thank you!

- From Nancy Hurtz-Soyka, elected VP…. "*very grateful, accepts with deep sense of commitment the new responsibility". A privilege to serve FAFICS*.
- From Maria Machicado, elected VP….*Thanks for the confidence in me, accepting gratefully and humbly the post*".
- From Aye Win: "Thanks for the *confidence in me". Accept gratefully".*
- From Peter Erik Wichmand: Spoke of a final handover from Romesh Muttukumaru on 1st October; have not stopped speaking to each other ever since the election results.
- One of the elected auditors by acclamation, Jessie Rose Mabutas also said some words, virtually. She thanked FAFICS President and members of the Council for the opportunity, highlighting her extensive experience with the UN system having worked mostly in the areas of governance, oversight, financial and administrative in several UN and other international organizations which she believes are very relevant to the auditor position. She believes that her confirmation for the auditor position provides an opportunity to continue serving those who have devoted their lives to serving the world.

c) Comments on voting procedures

Two important position papers about the elections were submitted for consideration by the Council and its incoming Bureau.

AAFI-AFICS Geneva also submitted this statement, for consideration by the Council for next time, that stated:

- This year, a change has been introduced to the election procedure, in particular the requirement for voters to cast votes for as many candidates as there are vacant positions. Failure to do so will render the ballot invalid.
- This raises a question regarding the freedom of choice of voters, which should normally be exercised independently and without constraint. In a standard electoral process, voters should have the option to abstain or, if they choose to vote, to select one or several candidates, according solely to their own judgment.
- Under the new procedure, however, voters are effectively required to vote for as many candidates as there are vacant positions. That said, only as a matter of principle, the Bureau has adopted this new voting method for specific and exceptional reasons applicable to this year's elections.
- AAFI-AFICS Geneva accepts these new arrangements for the present vote but expresses the hope that they will remain strictly temporary. It further wishes that the possibility of reverting to the standard election procedure next year be considered, as that procedure has proven its effectiveness over time.

AFICS New York's position paper on the elections stated the following:

- The rules and procedures for the election of officers of FAFICS (*i.e.*, the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Secretary, and the Treasurer) are governed by (i) the FAFICS Rules of Procedure, approved at the 51st Council, 4 February 2022; and (ii) the Voting Procedures for 2026, adopted by the FAFICS Bureau in January 2026 and provided to the membership of the Council for its 56th Session (Doc. 56/2026/D.7/1. a).
- Article 6, para. 6.4 of the Federation's Rules of Procedure provides that the officers of the Federation "shall be elected in accordance with the procedures laid down in these Rules" of Procedure. Article 8 of the Federation's Rules of Procedure sets forth the procedures for the election of officers of the Federation. Article 8, para. 8.8 specifically provides that, for voting on nominated candidates for such officers, "those elected shall be the candidates who receive the most votes *from among those present or represented in the Council*" (emphasis added). This strongly implies that delegates are expected to cast one vote on any decision to be taken, including the election of officers of the Federation.

- Since delegates to the Council "represent" their member organizations, they have a *fiduciary duty* to ensure the proper governance of the Council for their member associations, including by choosing the Federation's leadership. Insofar as the officers of the Federation are chosen by a majority of the votes of such delegates present or represented in the Council, delegates to the Council have a duty to exercise their votes so that each delegation's vote can be registered in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. Abstentions by delegations on any vote would undermine this duty and skew the election results.
- This is not the same case as citizens voting in a representative democracy, whether a direct democracy (in which the voter contributes to decision-making through voting) or a republic (in which the voter elects a representative in government who makes decisions in a governing body). In those cases, individual voters would have a right to register votes by abstention as a matter of fundamental rights to freedom of expression and a right to vote for governmental leadership or policies (*cf.,* Articles 19 and 25 of the Universal Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, GA res. 2200A (XXI), entered in force on 23 March 1979).
- The principle that delegates to the FAFICS Council are expected to cast all their allotted votes and not to abstain from voting for any candidate for election as officers of the Federation is reflected in the FAFICS Voting Procedures for 2026. Part IV of those Voting Procedures concerns Election Procedures. Thus, paragraph 25 makes clear that "the designated voting delegate must utilize the total number of all available votes for the positions that are up for election" and paragraph 26 provides that "ballots received with only partial voting will be invalidated."
- AFICS-NY recognizes that the 2026 FAFICS election process will be evaluated after the election. But AFICS-NY notes that the 2026 Voting Procedures were adopted and approved by the President and the Bureau after careful consideration to avoid issues that had arisen in the 2025 election process that had led many delegations to raise concerns of fairness and transparency in that election process. AFICS-NY is fully confident that the 2026 Voting Procedures, including the support provided to the Secretary of FAFICS by the Election Support Group and the independent monitoring of the election process, are key to and will lead to a fair and just election.

Annex D
Link to Work Programme, including all Council documents, presentations, list of participants and photos

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RNcmI64Uvdk9QZoPEcNIopyO8ngNQPbGkPwMvQjAovM/edit?usp=sharing

Annex E. List of acronyms in the document

AAFI-AFICS	Association of Former International Civil Servants, Geneva
AAFIB	Association of Former International Civil Servants, Brazil
AEFNUP	Association of Former International Civil Servants, Peru
AFICS	Association of Former International Civil Servants
AFPNU	Association of Former International Civil Servants, Honduras
AFUNPI	Association of Former United Nations Personnel in India
AFUNSOB	Association of Former United Nations Staff, Bangladesh
AFUS	Association of Former UNESCO Staff, France
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIAFI-SNU	Association of Former International Civil Servants, Abidjan
ALM	Asset and Liability Management
ARICSA	Association of Retired International Civil Servants in Austria
ASHI	After-Service Health Insurance
ASHIL	After-Service Health Insurance and Long-Term Care
CE	Certificate of Entitlement
CEB	Chief Executives Board
CEPA	Chief Executive of Pension Administration
COLA	Cost-of-Living Adjustment
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DCE	Digital Certificate of Entitlement
ESG	Election Support Group; Environmental, Social and Governance
FAFICS	Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants
FICSA	Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations
FFOA	Former FAO and Other UN Staff Association, Rome
FSALM	Fund Solvency and Asset and Liabilities Monitoring
GA	General Assembly
HLCM	High-Level Committee on Management
HR	Human Resources
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ISDA	International Swaps and Derivatives Association
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LTC	Long-Term Care
MBS	Mortgage-Backed Securities
MIP	Medical Insurance Plan
OIM	Office of Investment Management
PA	Pension Administration
PB	Pension Board
PF	Pension Fund
PO	Presiding Officer

QMD	Website/internet provider Quattro Medios Digitales
RSG	Representative of the Secretary-General
SCC	Standing Committee on Communications
SC	Standing Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TPA	Third-Party Administrator; Total Portfolio Approach
UN	United Nations
UNFCU	United Nations Federal Credit Union
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHLIS	United Nations Health and Life Insurance Section
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNISERV	Federation of United Nations International Civil Servants
UNJSPF	United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOV	United Nations Office at Vienna
UNPAI	United Nations Pensioners' Association of India
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
USA / U.S.A.	United States of America
VIC	Vienna International Centre
WFP	World Food Programme