



FÉDÉRATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DES ANCIENS FONCTIONNAIRES INTERNATIONAUX

FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS

**Fortieth session of the Council  
Geneva, 4-7 July 2011**

**Report of the session**

1. The fortieth session of the Council of the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants was held from 4 to 7 July 2011 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva under the presidency of Andres Castellanos. The formal opening of the session on 4 July was preceded by a meeting of the Working Group on Pension Issues chaired by Oscar Larghi. The FAFICS Bureau met on the eve of the Council session and an informal group on taxation issues met on the third day of the session.
2. Council observed one minute's silence in honour of those colleagues who had passed away and those international civil servants who had lost their lives in the service of the United Nations over the past year. The President paid particular tribute to the late Hermann K.M. Augsburg, one of the founders and first President of AFICS-Uruguay, who over a period of several years had participated most effectively in Council sessions

**Opening session**

3. The FAFICS President declared the meeting open on 4 July at 2.30 p.m. Clemens Adams, Chief of Administration of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), bade the participants welcome on behalf of Kassym-Jomart Tokaiev, Director-General of UNOG, and hoped that they would enjoy their stay in Geneva. His addressing the session of the FAFICS Council attested to the importance that UNOG attached to the work of the Federation
4. The Director-General of UNOG had every respect for the Federation and applauded the palpable increase in its membership. UNOG recognised the significance of the Federation's pre-retirement activities and pledged its active support and assistance in any way it could. Mr. Adams wished Council every success in its deliberations despite its voluminous agenda.
5. Jayaraman Sundaresan, FAFICS Secretary, presented a list of the 32 member associations that were represented at the session, directly (25) or by proxy (7). The list of participants is contained in Appendix 1.

**Agenda item 1: Adoption of the agenda**

6. Council adopted the provisional agenda (document Council 40/2011/D.1) as submitted together with the tentative schedule of work. The agenda as adopted is contained in Appendix 2. The list of documents submitted to Council is reproduced as Appendix 3.

**Agenda item 2: Election of a Presiding Officer**

7. Council elected Helene Hasselbalch (ASOPENUC-Colombia) to the office of Presiding Officer and Peter Lillie (ARICSA-Austria) to that of Rapporteur

### **Agenda item 3: Report of the President**

8. In presenting his report, the President first thanked the host organisation, AAFI-AFICS, for the extraordinary facilities they had provided. He noted with a sense of pride that following the acceptance of AFICS-Nigeria as a new member, he had met one of his personal targets: the Federation would comprise 50 member associations. Efforts to secure more members, both in terms of associations and total numbers of retirees represented (currently just short of 20,000), would continue unabated. That could only strengthen the Federation's claim to being 'the only and unquestionable voice of the retirees and beneficiaries of the UN pension system'.
9. The President paid tribute to the Secretary/CEO of the Pension Fund and the chiefs of service at the Pension Fund secretariats in New York and Geneva staff for their on-going support and advice on pension issues, Similarly, the Federation had benefited from the support that such key figures as the Secretary-General's representative for Investments, the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the Director of Investment Management and the Chief of the UN Disbursement and Insurance Service had lent throughout the year.
10. In the deliberations in the Pension Board, FAFICS had unflinchingly reaffirmed the Federation's trust and conviction in the merits of a defined benefit pension plan. The Federation upheld the two-track system and would continue to press for the right of the retirees' representatives to vote on matters under discussion in the Pension Board. The Federation's representatives would continue to insist on the restoration of the remaining 0.5 per cent in the first CPI adjustment after retirement. He also looked forward to the Federation's endeavours related to the improvement of small pensions meeting with success in 2012.
11. The President pointed to developments associated with unfunded liabilities related to ASHI that the Secretary-General would address in a report to the General Assembly at its 67<sup>th</sup> session in 2012. That report, inter alia, would provide information on the legal and financial implications of discontinuing ASHI, should that be found necessary. He remarked that some organisations had already started to set up funds to meet their liabilities, whereas the UN seemed to have done little in preparation for the report. The Federation was very aware of the implications of the matter and would watch developments closely. It had written to the Chair of the High-Level Committee on Management enquiring about action taken by the UN organisations thitherto and repeated the Federation's offer to assist in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report.
12. The President paid especial tribute to the contribution to the report on heightening the efficiency of the Council sessions of Enid Steward-Goffman and the other members of the working group, as well as Katia Chestopalov who had ensured effective liaison between the working group and the FAFICS Bureau; he also appreciated the complementary inputs from AFICS-Uruguay, AEFNUC-Cuba and ASOPENUC-Colombia. He commended Mary Johnson on having spearheaded the survey on strengthening gender balance in FAFICS. He also thanked Linda Saputelli for the lengths to which she had gone in preparing reports on membership practices in FAFICS, conducting an assessment of the Federation's advocacy activities, the

quadrennial report to ECOSOC and the activities of the various NGO Committees at major duty stations. He suggested that the broad field of topics to be addressed by FAFICS might be reduced somewhat from the original nine issues identified at the FAFICS Council in 2002: human rights, ageing, gender balance, economic and social development, education, human settlements, health and HIV/AIDS, peace (including disarmament). He also proposed that responsibility for the preparation of certain reports, which thitherto had been the responsibility of AFICS-New York, be rotated among member associations.

13. While thanking them for their commitment throughout the year, the President urged member associations to respond to questionnaires in greater numbers. He cited the exercise related to gender balance as a case in point. He also noted with appreciation the offer of AFICS-Mexico to host the forty-first session of the Council in Mexico City: a first such offer. He closed his statement with an expression of thanks to AAFI-AFICS Geneva and AFICS- New York for the support they had lent him throughout the year. His thanks also went to the FAFICS Secretariat and the Bureau, as well as to Anders Tholle, the Honorary Secretary, for 'his steadfast disposition, dedication and support'. Those commendable qualities had not only ensured support for the current session, but had also helped beyond measure to facilitate the transfer of responsibilities to his successor, Jay Sundaresan.
14. In concluding the agenda item, Council took note of the President's report with appreciation. The President's report is attached as Appendix 4.

#### **Agenda item 4: Admission of new members**

15. Council considered the report on the admission of new members (document Council 40/2011/D.4). An application had been received from AFUNCS-Nigeria; it had been found to meet the conditions for membership of FAFICS. The application that had been submitted by ASAFI-Senegal the previous year was still wanting and formal acceptance could not be considered at the current juncture.
16. In the ensuing discussion, it was first asked whether the increasing number of small associations posed any financial problems given the need to cover travel costs. The assurance was given that member associations bore their own travel costs. Furthermore, regardless whether an association was large or small, attendance at sessions of the Council was not the sole form of contribution to the Federation's aims and objectives. Furthermore, judicious use of new communications technologies could increase cohesion among member associations and help to reduce costs associated with physical attendance at meetings.
17. Several associations pointed out that the term 'small associations' was misleading. All associations were equal; there were simply associations with fewer members. Following on that remark, discussion turned to ways and means of increasing the positive benefits of membership by grouping or clustering countries (possibly at the subregional level) so as to reach a critical mass. In that way, one association could represent a group of countries. AFNU-Burkina Faso, for example, had been actively helping UN retirees in Benin, Chad and Togo to pave the way to setting up their own organisations, just AAFICS-Australia had been helping Fiji and the Pacific Islands in a similar manner. In his report, the President had extended a warm welcome to C.P.Ramachandran, President of AFICS-MSB, who was attending Council for the first time. That association bore testimony to the effectiveness of a subregional

approach and the potential for cohesion among its three constituent members: Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Singapore.

18. The Federation was urged to continue its commendable efforts to seek and maintain contact with other associations. In that context, it could, where appropriate, draw on the good offices of member associations to establish links in neighbouring countries.
19. Council welcomed AFUNCS-Nigeria as a new member association with a round of applause. It further agreed to pursue the admission of ASAFI-Senegal and thus reiterated its position of the previous year. Upon receipt of a notification from the President of ASAFI-Senegal that the association had amended its statutes to comply with those of FAFICS, the President could formally admit the association to FAFICS (rather than wait yet another year) and inform the membership accordingly.

#### **Agenda item 5: Pension issues**

##### *(a) General*

20. Gerhard Schramek gave a brief introduction of the report of the representatives of FAFICS to the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Pension Board 2010 and its outcome (document Council 40/2011/D.5). The items identified in that report as being of particular interest and concern to FAFICS membership associations would serve as a reference point in the subsequent discussion of the sub-items on the report of the Working Group on Pension Issues and the pension adjustment system that would be taken together.
21. At a later stage in the discussion, it was suggested that the representatives' report might touch on the ambience in which discussions took place and hint at the views that had been expressed on the volatility of exchange rates and their impact on pensions.

##### *(b) Report of the Working Group on Pension Issues*

##### *(c) Pension adjustment system*

22. Oscar Larghi introduced the report of the Working Group on Pension Issues, which is contained in Appendix 5.
23. In the subsequent discussion, attention was drawn to items that it was felt the Working Group could have taken up. For example, the report could have made reference to the need to defend the two-track system that had proven its worth over the past thirty years. Equally important was the continued need to defend the defined benefits system, even though one association questioned whether in fact that system was under threat.
24. The report had made no mention of the Committee of Actuaries' recommendation to extend the age of retirement. In the words of one association, increasing the age of retirement was a win-win opportunity that would ensure the continuance of the system's actuarial health.
25. Similarly, eliminating the 0.5 per cent reduction in the first adjustment due after retirement and securing voting rights for FAFICS in the Pension Board, as well as

eliminating negative CPI adjustment and improving the working of the UNJSPF Emergency Fund were issues of crucial importance to the Federation.

26. In its discussion of bank charges, the report had made no reference to using the UNDP offices as an alternative conduit for transfers: something that certain UNDP offices did and others did not. The report had also made no reference to the information provided by the President on the possible use of automated teller machines (ATMs) in most of the countries where member associations were located. Retirees could use the ATMs to withdraw cash withdrawals from the accounts they held with the United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU), into which UN pensions could be deposited. The President had further reported that the UNFCU was ready to authorise withdrawals of up to \$1,000 a day at no charge to the account. He further offered to launch a pilot test with a number of member associations in different locations in order to explore the workability of the scheme. He also reported that the European co-operative association of international civil servants (AMFIE) was willing to provide cost-free banking services. AFUS pointed to the positive experience its members had had with the UNESCO credit union and echoed the assessment of the banking services provided by AMFIE.
27. Council took note of the two-stage approach to the small pensions issue described in the report of the FAFICS representatives to the ICSC session in March 2011 (document Council 40/2011/D.5(c)/Add.1). It also noted the President's statement to the ICSC in which he pointed out that small pension recipients, most of whom lived in Africa and Asia, accounted for some 3 per cent of all UN pension beneficiaries. The Federation had stressed the urgency of the issue that had been pending unresolved for many years. Council noted that the two-stage approach had since been amended and a complete review was to be presented to the Pension Board at its 59th session in 2012. Furthermore, the Pension Fund Secretariat, with the support of the ICSC, had already begun preparing that review.
28. In the light of the findings of the Working Group and the need to provide the FAFICS representatives at the Pension Board with a measure of guidance, it was decided to draw up a list of priorities that they could refer to as discussions evolved. Gerhard Schramek was entrusted with the task of drawing up such a list that was then presented at a later stage in the discussion.
29. In the course of Council continuing the discussion, associations also referred to the lack of follow-through on the part of the Pension Fund secretariat. It also touched on the delaying tactics that had been applied in the discussion in an effort to stop any further discussion of the mandatory age of retirement. On the other hand, the participants' representatives in the Pension Board, FAFICS and most member states were fully convinced of the benefits of extending the age of retirement. The use of such tactics made it all the more important that FAFICS do everything in its power to keep open until the next valuation such issues as the elimination of negative CPI adjustments. A similar tactic should be used in respect of the Federation's endeavour to secure an amendment to Article 35 *bis*.
30. At the conclusion of the discussion, one association stressed the need to spend more time on issues related to pensions and health since they were the key concerns of the members of that association. He was also convinced that pensions and health were also the overriding concerns of the membership in other associations.

31. The listing of priorities prepared by Gerhard Schramek was discussed and agreement was reached on ten priorities. Council approved the list, which is contained in Appendix 6.

**Agenda item 6: After-Service Health Insurance and Long-term Care (ASHIL)**

32. Roger Eggleston introduced the report of the Working Group on ASHIL (document Council 40/2011/D.6). He pointed out that in addition to the proposals surrounding the establishment of a Standing Committee, issues of importance were the risks associated with unfunded ASHI liabilities, the failure of the CEB to respond to the President's letter on ASHI-related matters, the need for help with understanding how the medical insurance plan (MIP) works and the expansion of ASHI to include long-term care (LTC).
33. He reported that, confronted with the magnitude of the unfunded liabilities, organisations were taking various steps. A number of them had begun show the liabilities in their balance sheets and some were taking measures to provide for some sort of funding. The United Nations, however, would not seem to have undertaken any action to date despite the need to prepare the report in good time for consideration in autumn 2012. FAFICS had offered its assistance in preparing that report, but had received no reply. The Federation would follow up on the lack of response.
34. Roger Eggleston felt that it was not opportune to make any great ASHI-related policy pronouncements in the current environment. The Federation would be better advised to continue its practice of applying 'stealth' to achieve progress on LTC matters.
35. In the ensuing discussion, concern was expressed over what was seen as a threat to ASHI. Some organisations were passing the burden of maintaining social security schemes on to the staff, thus making it increasingly difficult to maintain an affordable health insurance scheme. Other organisations were reported to be annulling the payment of costs associated with 'medicalised' care in a quest to save costs. Making national health schemes the providers of first resort and the organisations' health plans the providers of second resort could prove untenable in some countries: a case in point being France and Netherlands where mandatory contributions associated with participation in national schemes would entail major cuts in pensions. Other associations spoke of the prohibitive expense of long-term care, although others pointed to ways in which care for the aged was provided for in certain schemes, as well as to the number of agencies that had LTC coverage in place and the low financial burden it actually incurred. Over the past ten years, costs had averaged some 2 per cent of all claims and a number of claims in all schemes had related to active staff.
36. On the positive side, in the United States, mandatory participation in Medicare Part B for UN retirees between the age of 65 and 74 resident in that category was being helped by the organisation absorbing the cost of the penalties imposed for late registration and retirees would be reimbursed 100% of the premium effective 1 July 2011. Since Medicare would pick up the primary costs of treatment with the secondary costs being reimbursed by other insurers, it would have an impact on the liabilities accruing to the organisations. In Austria an appreciable proportion of the

Austrian retirees had the national health scheme as their primary provider and took out supplementary coverage with Vanbreda, while the Vienna-based agencies and organisations subsidised at least 50% of the premium costs.

37. It was reported that in Australia, AAFICS-Australia had managed to secure an arrangement whereby claims made in AUS\$ would be reimbursed in AUS\$. It was felt that a similar arrangement might help others who did not live in an area where the US dollar or euro was the lead currency.
38. In summing up the discussion, Roger Eggleston spoke of a number of 'threads' that the Standing Committee would take up in the course of its deliberations. He agreed that pressure to have staff and retirees attach themselves to national schemes would increase. At the same time, the issue of premia under different health insurance schemes would have to be addressed, as organisations would doubtless seek ways and means of reducing their liabilities on that score.

#### **Agenda item 7: Improving the functioning of the FAFICS Council**

##### *(a) Report of the Working Group*

39. Enid Steward-Goffman, the Convenor of the Working Group, introduced the report. The undertaking had been very much a team effort and she paid tribute to the members of her team, Edward Omotoso and Pierre Traoré. The team had been greatly assisted by Katia Chestopalov.
40. The density and length of the report was the outcome of the need to reach out to new member associations that were not familiar with past events. Background documents had been posted on the Federation's website. In fact, the website had experienced a complete makeover in the course of the exercise, thereby expanding its use and increasing its importance as an effective medium in the preparation of reports and Council sessions alike.
41. Every attempt had been made to remain faithful to the mandate: analysing the various issues that had been raised around the functioning of the Council and the options for their solution, together with their pros and cons, and reporting thereon to the Council. However, it had not been possible to complete the guidelines on the preparation of documents in time for the current session; they would be issued by October so as to allow their use in the preparations for the Council session in 2012.
42. *Ab initio*, it was quite apparent that the Secretariat needed greater support in the weeks leading up to the Council sessions. As for all other issues ranging from meetings management through the pattern of Council sessions and inter-sessional activities, to participation of member associations in the work of the Federation and enhanced use of technology, the report had attempted to identify the major concerns of the Federation's membership and propose changes. Those proposals included the recommendation that meetings should be agenda-driven, while the advantages of meeting back-to-back with the Pension Board were felt to outweigh the disadvantages, but the Working Group remained flexible on that and other issues.
43. At the outset of the discussion, Council also took note of the comments made by AFICS-Uruguay, AEFNUC-Cuba and ASOPENUC-Colombia (see sub-item 7 (b) (ii) below). Appreciation was expressed for the manner in which the report had been

structured, in particular the inclusion of an abstract that, it was suggested, should be mandatory for all documents over a certain length. As for the length of documents, it was proposed that limits be introduced in the interest of conciseness and precision.

44. It was decided to take the report section by section and focus on the various options proposed by the Working Group.

#### *Meetings management*

45. Council accepted the integrated package of meetings planning and management tools described in paragraph 20 of the Working Group's report, with the one modification pertaining to post-session period. It amended the text to read:

- **Circulation as soon as possible, but no later than three months after the conclusion of the Pension Board**, of a checklist of the action required to follow up the Council's decisions, conclusions and recommendations, taking into account the Board's deliberations on matters relevant to the Council's agenda.

#### *Agenda management*

46. Council recognised that contrary to the aims of good agenda management, items were being included in agendas without people's knowledge, thus making them unwieldy and full of surprises. It was thus agreed to combine options 2 and 3 to read:

- **Requests for inclusion of an additional agenda item from any source should be submitted with an accompanying explanation of the issue and a clear commitment from the author to prepare a document containing a proposed course of action to be made available at least three weeks before the session.**

#### *Action by member associations*

47. Council agreed to adopt option 4 with a slight amendment.

- Increase the deadline for distribution of documentation, **excluding comments on Pension Board issues**, to a minimum of three weeks

It agreed with the contents of paragraph 44 of the Working Group's report pointing to the infeasibility of preparing a report during the session, although it did not set a specific deadline for the completion of the sessional report other than it should be issued as swiftly as possible. Council subscribed fully to the suggestion in Option 5 that in-session documentation should be limited in terms of type, volume and length.

#### *Frequency of Council sessions*

48. An intense discussion ensued on the issue of the frequency of Council sessions which a number of associations claimed was closely linked to the issues of their duration and location. It was argued that a switch to a two-year cycle would entail major changes in the way the Bureau worked. Given the implications of such a change and the need to consider them carefully, it was suggested it would be best to



await the outcome of the review of the role and function of the Bureau that had been proposed in the report.

49. For many delegations adherence to the current annual cycle was the most rational course to take. Furthermore, given the need for intensive communication throughout the two-year gap between Council sessions, one should be mindful of differences in terms of access to adequate technology and the complications created by the differences between time zones. It was also pointed out that even in 'budget years', the Pension Board agendas were voluminous.
50. A note of caution was raised with respect to piloting the biennial cycle by not meeting in a Pension Board 'budget year' since testing the new mode of operation on a trial basis incurred the risk of violating the Federation's statutes. It was recalled that the Federation was not accepting a prospective member association on grounds that its statutes did not comply with those of FAFICS, yet the Federation seemed to have no compunction about violating its own statutory commitments. Whereas suspension of the rules of procedure was possible, statutes could not be simply held in abeyance. At the same time, switching to a two-year cycle would also call for changes to procedures governing the election and terms of office of Vice-Presidents. In the ultimate analysis, the five-year moratorium on changes to both the statutes and the rules of procedure was recalled that effectively dashed any hopes of suspending certain provisions.
51. Under the circumstances and given the need to introduce a number of statutory and other changes, Council decided to adopt option 6, maintaining the current annual cycle, while not ruling out the possibility of switching to a biennial cycle on a trial basis at a later date.

#### *Duration of Council sessions*

52. Council decided to adopt option 9, maintaining the five-day session, the first day being devoted to pre-session meetings of the Standing Committees. If experience showed that the Standing Committees yielded the efficiencies expected of them, Council could consider reducing the overall duration to four days.

#### *Timing of Council sessions*

#### *Location of Council sessions*

53. In the view of many member associations, the two factors had to be considered together. Costs were not the sole factor, although savings on airfares in the off-season would presumably be appreciable. It should not be overlooked that a far larger number of member associations were not based in Europe or North America. Consideration had to be given to such factors as the issues to be taken up by the Pension Board and the relay of common agreed instructions to the FAFICS representatives. The matter was further complicated by the late issuance of the Pension Board documents, which militated against a constructive in-depth discussion of the pertinent issues.
54. Under the circumstances, Council agreed that the Bureau should present to Council at its 2012 session a paper on the timing and location of its session, outlining the pros and cons of the various alternatives, including a cost analysis.

*Inter-sessional activities, especially communications*

55. It was recognised that communication was a two-way process that extended far beyond the confines of the preparations for Council sessions and involved all member associations. That having been said, particular importance was attached to the prompt issuance of reports. For example, the report of the FAFICS representatives attending the sessions of the Pension Board should be available before the issues were taken up in the General Assembly.
56. Awareness of pertinent issues among member associations could be heightened by the introduction of e-mail alerts and bulletins, although preference was expressed for having such alerts and bulletins posted on the FAFICS website.
57. One of the major hindrances in terms of communications was the lack of crucially important documents in languages other than English. AAFNU-Burkina Faso committed itself to translating some documents into French. Cohesion among members would be enhanced, were the Council reports to be available in both French and Spanish. AFICS-Argentina offered to translate the Council report into Spanish; BAFUNCS offered to translate short documents in French and Spanish into English and prepare brief summaries in English of longer documents. It was also hoped that ways could be found of overcoming a further hurdle to effective communication and securing interpretation services for Council sessions on a *pro bono* basis.
58. The Bureau could be brought closer to the constituent associations and *vice versa* by issuing regular reports of the President's missions and the outcomes of those missions.
59. A plea was entered for a clearer hierarchy in terms of the various informal groups, working groups, contact groups and standing committees. More precise guidelines on communications were needed, in particular the handling of e-mails and the use of blind copies. It was agreed that the Bureau would draw up guidelines on communications.

*Enhanced use of technology and expanded use of the website*

60. As indicated in paragraph 40 above, the Federation's website was seen to be a most effective medium with great potential. Important reports should continue to be posted on the website. Similarly the organisation of 'virtual' or 'remote' meetings using modern technologies would not only be to the economic advantage of the Federation, but it could also strengthen ties between the Bureau and other associations. For example, after Bureau meetings, briefing sessions could be held using electronic means and selected associations could be brought up to date on latest developments within the Federation. Furthermore, the President agreed to discuss with the Bureau the possibility of having the Bureau hold four 'remote' meetings a year on a trial basis.
61. All member associations were encouraged to complete the checklist annexed to the report that sought information on the electronic and other facilities to which they had access. Their responses would provide a base line for determining the feasibility of the many proposals that had been put forward relating to communications and meetings. The responses to the questions in the checklist would be analysed by the

Working Group and the findings would be sent to the FAFICS Secretariat by November.

*Greater participation of members in the work of the Federation, including support for new members*

62. It was agreed that members attending the Council sessions for the first time should be made to feel welcome and their potential talent effectively tapped. A mentor or 'buddy' system could be introduced and the new members should be encouraged to participate in discussions at Council sessions.
63. Council agreed that studies should be conducted on the greater participation of members, training and development and the role, composition and functioning of the Bureau. General support was expressed for the topics outlined under those headings.
64. Maintaining the expertise of the Federation was an essential component in the endeavours to enhance its effectiveness. It was hoped that the newly established Standing Committees would act as 'centres of excellence'; for example, they might organise workshops during or around a Council session. New talent had to be recruited and, to the degree possible, developed further. That was all the more important as the current bearers of expertise were ineluctably growing older and fresh blood was of the essence. Member associations were encouraged to help in that endeavour and make pertinent suggestions.
65. In the final stages of the discussion, it was recognised that certain improvements suggested in the report had already been introduced. It was further recognised that implementation of the changes accepted by Council be the responsibility of the Bureau, where necessary in tandem with the Convenor.
66. It was pointed out that in future when discussing changes it would be necessary to record what statutory modifications were necessary and then implement those changes once the moratorium on the statutes and the rules of procedure had been lifted. The Federation should not claim that it could not move forward because the rules did not permit such changes. If the Federation believed the changes were necessary, it could at the appropriate time modify the rules to accommodate the changes it had agreed upon.
67. In the interest of providing an overview of the changes that had been discussed, a bullet-point list of the changes was presented. Council adopted that list, which is contained in Appendix 7.
68. In closing the debate, associations and the President paid tribute to the time and effort that the Convenor and the team had invested in the report and the proposals it contained. It was hoped that their endeavours would bear fruit and contribute to greater efficiency and effectiveness in the deliberations of the Council.

(b) *Establishment of Standing Committees on:*

- (i) *Pension issues*
- (ii) *ASHIL issues*

69. It was agreed to take as one item the proposals for the establishment of the two Standing Committees documents Council 40/2011/D.6 and 40/2011/D.7.b (i)). It was recognised that the emphasis lay on the committees being technical committees requiring knowledgeable members. A question was raised about the proposal that the Committees would submit their conclusions and recommendations only to plenary. The success of both committees would hinge on the preparation of technical papers. It was very much a question of having the right people in the right jobs.

70. It was recalled that among the proposals that AFICS-Uruguay had put forward for improving the functioning of the FAFICS Council (document Council 40/2011/7.c), emphasis had been placed on using all available information and communication technologies. It was thus asked whether the proposals before Council relating to the committees and their modes of operation were compatible with the proposals submitted by AFICS-Uruguay. It being confirmed that there was no such incompatibility, Council approved the establishment of two Standing Committees on Pension Issues and ASHIL issues, respectively.

71. Council elected the Presidents and Rapporteurs of the two Standing Committees:

Standing Committee on Pension Issues

Chair: Gerhard Schramek  
Vice-Chair/Rapporteur: Pauline Barrett-Reid

Standing Committee on ASHIL Issues

Chair: Roger Eggleston  
Vice Chair/Rapporteur: Linda Saputelli

*(iii) Proposals by AFICS-Uruguay for improving the functioning of the FAFICS council*

72. Jacques Meylan noted that the proposals of AFICS-Uruguay (document Council 40/2011/D.7.c), which were driven by the need to reduce costs and increase the efficiency of Council meetings, were to a large measure compatible with the proposals put forward by the Working Group. The proposals put forward at a later date by AEFNUC-Cuba and introduced by Ana Maria Gudz Robak (document 40/2011/CRP.2) emphasised a number of changes that went beyond heightening the efficiency of FAFICS Councils, be it the number of Vice-Presidents or the securement of voting rights for the Federation at the Pension Board. In that connection it was pointed out that in the report of the Working Group, it had been suggested that a broader review of the Bureau be undertaken as a follow-up thereto. Helene Hasselbalch confirmed that the proposals put forward by ASOPENUC-Colombia (document 40/2011/CRP 3) did not diverge greatly from those contained in the report of the Working Group.

**Agenda item 8: Strengthening the gender balance in FAFICS - report of the Contact Group**

73. In introducing the report (document Council 40/2011/D.8), Mary Johnson recalled the inclusion of retirees in the discussion of pension benefits lending the necessary momentum to that discussion at a time of crisis in the UN Pension Fund. By analogy, in an organisation representing all retirees, the claim to 'representativity' would be invalid, if the Federation did not include women who had an equally important role to play. She remarked on the tendency within the Federation to counterpoise regional and gender representation to competence. In the ultimate analysis, true equality was achieved when incompetent women were elected in place of incompetent men. She went on, however, to point to the large number of men and women at the Council who were fully competent and qualified.
74. The ensuing protracted discussion was marked by a host of conflicting opinions. It was claimed that men were not to blame for the current situation, further to which an insistence on gender balance constituted an imposition on sovereign associations. In another instance at a later juncture in the debate, it was reported that the gender problem was irrelevant as it bore little bearing to the culture or understanding of the country where the association was located.
75. It was also pointed out that of the 13 (out of a possible 49) respondents to the survey only three associations had responded negatively to the question whether they were satisfied with the gender balance in governance and organisational structures of their associations. Furthermore, two of those responses had pointed to a predominance of women in those structures. It was felt more appropriate to determine whether functional problems arose that could be attributed to a lack of gender balance. Judging from the findings of the survey, it would seem there was no problem with the constitutions or statutes of the associations, but rather that the inclusion of women in delegations to the FAFICS Council did not reflect their numbers adequately. Table 1 clearly indicated that shortcoming.
76. It had to be recognised that improvements in the functional efficiency of the Council pertained to all retirees regardless of gender. Taking that further, another suggestion was made that in all important appointments, the governing criteria were competence and expertise, to which a third and equally important criterion could be added: commitment. The association making the latter suggestion declared that it had no gender-related problems, further to which it was convinced that balance could be achieved without resorting to statutory changes.
77. One member association felt that the debate was a throwback to the seventies. Participation of women was not being contested, but it was more a matter of that participation being apparent on entering a conference chamber. It was further pointed out that objections to the notion of gender balance and equal representation ran counter to the very principles of the United Nations. Furthermore, associations were merely being asked to keep gender balance in mind; it was not a case of insistence. It was not to be forgotten that if it were to increase its membership, the Federation needed to be truly representative. An essential component in such an endeavour was creating a 'public face' that was balanced in both gender and geographical terms.
78. The importance of the issue was borne out by the length of the debate; it was indicative of a problem that called for solution. It was felt that over the course of time with the retirement of the following younger generation, the executive committees of

most associations would see a shift in their composition. Some associations called for a gradualist approach without resort to changes in the rules of procedure; others called on FAFICS to make its position on gender balance clear and unambiguous. There were slightly more women beneficiaries than men in the UN pension scheme and FAFICS had to protect its claim to be the universal representative of all UN retirees. The policy statement on the issue should address the geographical and gender aspects, it being left to individual associations to take a decision on their approach to the matter.

79. Several associations pointed to the host of contradictory views, while claiming that gender balance was not a problem for most associations. At the same time, many delegations pointed to the poor response that did not provide a real basis for an assessment of the issue, although it undoubtedly pointed to a need to impress upon associations the importance of achieving gender balance.
80. In the light of the extensive discussion, it was agreed that no statutory changes should be introduced, since a five-year moratorium on changes to the statutes and the rules of procedure had been declared in 2007 and 2008, respectively. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Contact Group and the Bureau would draft a policy statement that placed firmly on record the Federation's aspiration to the achievement of gender balance. It was further agreed that a re-run of the survey should await the end of the moratorium. In the meantime, however, the findings of the survey would be amended and duly reissued to include the data provided in those responses that had been lost in transmittal.
81. At a later stage, Council adopted a draft policy statement on strengthening gender balance in FAFICS, the final text of which is contained in Annex 8.

**Agenda item 9: Situation of the former UNJSPF participants from the former USSR, Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR**

82. Mikhail Gunar introduced the note that it had submitted on the current plight of the UN retirees in the former Soviet Union, Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR (document Council 40/2011/D.9). While fearing that he might bore the participants in the Council, the representative of AFICS-Moscow reported that that risk should not detract from the gravity of the issue under discussion. He summarised the history of the issue and described the commitments that the former USSR had entered into at the time of the transfer of funds from the Pension Fund, yet had subsequently failed to honour. He also described the manner in which the Russian staff-members were coerced into complying with that transfer. Regrettably for most people, the General Assembly resolution on the issue was deemed to have effectively closed matters. That notwithstanding, AFICS-Moscow was persisting in its search for a solution: a task in which they had been supported by Katia Chestopalov, Linda Saputelli, Witold Zyss and the President.
83. The sad nature of the problem was recognised: a major contributory factor to the lack of success thitherto being the difficulty of securing legal advice on an issue that involved different legislations. A letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations had remained unanswered and despite being rebuffed by various Ministries on an earlier occasion, AFICS-Moscow had launched a new initiative targeting the Ministry of Public Health and Social Development and the Office of the President of the

Russian Federation. Initial contacts had been made, but it had to be seen as a long-haul exercise with no immediate resolution to the problem. AFICS-Moscow did not stand alone in terms of receiving no reply from the Secretary-General's office, even though it was undoubtedly easier to obtain a response from Ban Ki-moon than from President Medvedev. Council hoped that the new initiative would bear fruit and urged the FAFICS representatives to the Pension Board to keep the issue open.

**Agenda item 10: Information on the benevolent funds of FAFICS member associations and Emergency Fund of the UNJSPF**

84. Member associations provided details of their benevolent funds during the discussion on the AFICS-Uruguay proposal for a FAFICS Emergency Revolving Fund (see agenda item 15 (e)).

**Agenda item 11: Meeting with the CEO/Secretary of the Fund and the Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Investments**

85. Council met on 7 July 2011 with Mr. B. Cochemé, the CEO/Secretary of the Fund, Sergio Arvizu, Deputy CEO/Secretary, Alan Blythe, Chief, Geneva Office, Frank De Turrís, Chief, Operations, Jaana Sareva, Chief Legal Office, Dennis Liberatore, Chief, Finance, Caroline Kaiser, Special Assistant to the CEO, and Patricia Ryder, CEO Assistant, as well as Mr. Warren Sach, the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Investments, and Suzanne Bishopric, Director, Investment Management Division.

86. Bernard Cochemé provided a comprehensive update on the status of the Fund and Frank De Turrís gave a presentation on the two-track system. Hard copies of both presentations would be provided and circulated to member associations.

87. Following the two presentations, the speakers and other members of the Pension Fund Secretariat fielded a broad range of questions on pension-related matters. In addition to the in-session questions, a list of questions had been submitted by member associations well in advance of the Council session and included in a consolidated questionnaire that was passed on to the CEO/Secretary of the Fund. Answers had been received in written form and were duly circulated (document Council 40/2011/D.11).

88. At the end of the meeting, the President thanked Mr. Cochemé and his colleagues on behalf of Council for their replies and looked forward to continued close cooperation with the staff of the Pension Fund Secretariat.

89. Warren Sach gave a presentation on the performance of the Fund's assets at a time when assets and liabilities of the Fund were at their highest levels ever. Together with Suzanne Bishopric, he answered a series of questions on investment issues. Replies to the questions that had been submitted in advance would be duly answered and sent to the FAFICS secretariat. Warren Sach also agreed to provide a simplified PowerPoint presentation on the Fund's financial performance that would be duly tailored to needs of member associations; it would greatly facilitate the associations' task of briefing their constituents back home on the current situation.

**Agenda item 12: Efforts to increase FAFICS membership**

90. In an oral report, the President described the initiatives that had been launched in the past year to increase the number of members and member associations. Strengthening the Federation would strengthen the Federation's claim to being the retirees' unique representative. He spoke of attempts to set up new associations in Afghanistan, Fiji and the Pacific Islands, as well as in the eastern Caribbean. Things in Trinidad and Tobago were said to be 'shaping up'.
91. He spoke of the possibility of there being 60 member associations in the near future. China would probably set up an association by 2012, and Japan had already formed a contact group. Nicaragua was another potential candidate association, while the efforts of the Vice-Presidents in Africa had focused on: Benin, Chad, Mali, Niger, South Africa, Togo, Uganda and Zambia. The President also hoped that the Senegal issue could be resolved swiftly.
92. The above endeavours notwithstanding, certain 'black holes' persisted. Germany, for example, had not set up an association on account of the fact that it had its own national organisation for German nationals working in international organisations that was open to both active and retired staff. That national organisation had even sought observer status in the Pension Board. It was hoped, however that the growing UN presence in Bonn might prove conducive to setting up a UN retiree association. Another 'black hole' was Belgium.
93. The President expressed his gratitude for the support that the Pension Fund lent to local associations by transmitting letters on behalf of those associations to all UN retirees resident in the respective countries.
94. In the ensuing discussion, IAFICS-Israel described how the letters sent out by the Pension Fund had attracted three new members to the current complement of 23 members in a country where 280 UN retirees were resident. In Canada, on the other hand, the letters had reaped a harvest of 100 new members. Overall, as the President emeritus pointed out, the members of the Federation, some 18,000 in number, accounted for more than a third of all UN retirees.
95. It was essential to offer something to the constituents that went beyond pension and ASHI. In some countries, associations provided pertinent information on tax matters and assisted retirees on their return to their home country after years of absence, as well as to newcomers to the country. A social element, be it in the form of outings or dinners, were also an attractive feature.
96. One association had attracted great interest in its seminars on long-term care, wills and settlements, and managing old age. Others had impressed potential members by the help rendered, while others only provided assistance to people who had joined the association.
97. Associations should act as their own personal advocates. Publicity material could be downloaded from and links established through the FAFICS website, Other associations were willing to share pamphlets that they had drafted describing the benefits of membership.
98. Associations could also help retirees by assisting in contacts with such entities as UN Volunteers, emergency management and election monitoring. A major constraint



upon working with such bodies, however, was the current limit on earnings that did not allow UN retirees receiving UNJSPF pensions to receive more than US\$ 22,000 net salary from UN sources in any one calendar year [UN Volunteers, for example, were paid US\$ 24,000 a year]. It was pointed out, however, that in certain organisations and agencies circumvention of that limit, which, for the most part, related to UN organisations (ST/AI/2003/8), was rife.

99. Upon conclusion of the debate, Council thanked the President for his oral report that had been most inspiring. The President took it upon himself to prepare a compendium describing ways and means of increasing membership.
100. AAFI-AFICS introduced a paper on the increased participation of member associations in pre-retirement seminars (document Council 40/2011/D.12). The need for such seminars both at headquarters and in the field was pressing in the light of the quality of the information provided to active staff on retirement-related matters. It was reported that UNDP offices had often provided misinformation, if any information at all was forthcoming. It was thus suggested that not only did incipient retirees require extensive briefing on retirement, but the staff in human resources management would also benefit from training in matters related to retirement.
101. For the associations, pre-retirement seminars constituted a recruitment tool. Consequently, associations stood to gain from the active involvement of retirees in such seminars at all locations. At some headquarters, retirees had already established a niche for themselves in the context of pre-retirement in the sense that they provided living proof of the joys of retirement and often played a substantial role in the organisation and management of the pre-retirement seminars. Others were already well on their way to finding their niche as evidenced by the experience of the economic commissions. Further out in the field, in Burkina Faso, for example, the United Nations, the staff council and the retiree association had joined forces in launching a pre-retirement exercise.
102. It was also pointed out that the services of retirees could be used to good effect in the initiation/introduction courses for incoming staff [in a manner of speaking a cradle-to-the-grave approach]. Furthermore, retirees in various countries could provide current information on living conditions for use in the UNDP country briefing material.
103. When all was said and done, retirees were a valuable source of information. They could play a vital role in helping others to prepare for retirement. Council invited the Bureau to reflect on the matter and circulate its ideas and suggestions to all associations so that they might be active in that area.

**Agenda item 13: Advocacy efforts by FAFICS in support of the ideals and work of the UN system organisations**

104. Frances Zainoeddin introduced the report on the advocacy efforts in support of the ideals and work of the United Nations (document Council 40/2011/D.13). that had been prepared by AFICS-New York on the basis of submissions from member associations in 18 countries.
105. Council noted the many activities undertaken throughout the world to promote and advocate the ideals of the United Nations common system in a broad variety of

areas ranging from (but not limited to) ageing, health, gender to sustainable development. Associations also worked closely with NGOs and participated in public debates on issues related to the United Nations. Of particular note was the Federation's engagement in deliberations on violence against women of all ages and the feasibility of developing an international instrument on the elderly.

106. The President stressed the importance of advocacy, a key activity in the Federation's mandate. In view of the broad range of issues currently addressed by FAFICS in respect of advocacy activities, he suggested reducing the number of issues covered. After an intense discussion, it was decided that member associations should focus on human rights, ageing, gender and health. Council also considered a proposal put forward in the paper on the rotation of focal point functions related to advocacy activities (document Council 40/2011/D.13/Add 1). AFICS-New York had been performing that function for three years, and it was suggested the task be rotated among member associations that had the capacity to do so. AAFI-AFICS offered to undertake that task and prepare the advocacy report for the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the Council, at which time consideration could be given to passing that responsibility on to another member association. AAFU/AFUS agreed with the need to focus on a limited number of issues; the sharing of the focal point responsibilities would be drawn to the attention of the association's executive. In a similar vein, ARICSA also offered to consult its executive committee on the issue and inform the Secretary of FAFICS accordingly.

107. Council noted that AFICS-New York would continue to be the focal point for the preparation of the quadrennial report to the ECOSOC Committees on NGOs, since that committee met in New York.

#### **Agenda item 14: Reports of FAFICS representatives at meetings**

- (a) *Report by AFICS-New York as focal point on meetings attended in New York*
- (b) *Reports by FAFICS representatives at other meetings*

108. Council took note of both reports (documents Council 40/2011/D.14 and D.14/Add1), the first of which focused on meetings held in New York, with second focusing on FAFICS participation in the FICSA Council session held in Washington in February 2011. Council also recalled the report of the FAFICS representatives to the ICSC session in March 2011 (see agenda item 5(c) above) and the palpable progress that the Federation had achieved in respect of small pensions.

109. The President recalled his suggestion that given the broad range of issues currently covered by FAFICS representatives at meetings, member associations should focus on half of the nine fields it was currently covering (see paragraph 106 above). He further suggested that focal point responsibility for the preparation of a consolidated report on FAFICS representation at meetings should likewise be rotated. He recalled the view expressed by AAFU/AFUS on the need to focus on a limited number of issues and to rotate the focal point responsibilities: a matter that would be drawn to the attention of that association's executive.

110. After a protracted discussion, Council agreed that representation be limited to meetings on human rights, ageing, gender and health so as to relieve AFICS-New

York of its focal point responsibility for preparing the report on representation. Pending confirmation by other member associations that they would assume responsibility for the preparation of a consolidated report on representation, the President voiced his appreciation and that of the Federation for the contribution that AFICS-New York had made to date.

111. With respect to the meeting of CoNGO held in January in New York, Peter Lillie reported that at the latest CoNGO Board meeting it had become very apparent that CoNGO (of which FAFICS was a member) was in dire financial straits. As for the FICSA Council in Washington, two staff associations had paid CHF 300 on behalf of FAFICS and requested that FAFICS be designated an honorary, non dues-paying member. FICSA had agreed to study the matter and report back accordingly.

#### **Agenda item 15: Administrative and financial questions**

*(a) Report by the Auditors, including income and expenditure accounts for the year ended on 31 December 2010, balance sheet as at 31 December 2010 and summary of travel expenditures during 2010*

112. The auditors had approved the balance sheet and the income and expenditure account for 2010. Council took note of the report for the year ended 31 December 2010 (document Council 40/2011/D.15.a) and thanked the auditors for the conscientious manner in which they had gone about their work.

113. In keeping with the auditors' recommendation, Council approved the balance sheet and the income and expenditure account.

*(b) Proposed budget for 2012*

114. Council took note of the proposed disbursements; they were very close to those presented at the Council session in London. The Treasurer was commended for keeping expenses down.

115. Council approved the budget for 2012. The approved budget is contained in Appendix 9.

*(c) Interim report on the management of the budget for 2011*

116. Attention was drawn to the drop in membership revenue and a plea was entered for the early payment of dues at the outset of the year. The Treasurer provided information on the most efficient methods of transferring payments to the Federation. Council noted with satisfaction that the Treasurer and Secretary expected to close the accounts for 2011 with an approximate savings of income over expenditure in the amount of some U\$300. Council expressed its thanks to both the Treasurer and the Secretary for the meticulous care that they had exercised to date in managing the budget for the current year.

(d) *Report on the questionnaire on annual membership fees practices sent by the President and circulated to all FAFICS members. Report by AFICS-New York*

117. Linda Saputelli introduced the report (document 40/2011/D.15d/Rev.1 and D15.d/Add.1) that sought to introduce criteria for the payment of dues. A common understanding was needed on the issue whether members no longer paying for reasons of age or status were to be included in the member count.

118. In the subsequent discussion, it was submitted that a member was a member (by any other name) and all members should be paid for. The associations present confirmed that they did not restrict their count to those members who paid their dues. It was posited that all members should pay as all members enjoyed the benefits of FAFICS membership regardless of status or age. Furthermore, it was felt that the rules of procedure were clear on the issue and offered no scope for interpreting the term 'members' to mean 'dues-paying members'.

119. It was argued that the issue had been raised on account of an internal issue that AFICS-New York was facing that was directly attributable to the longevity of a group that enjoyed the benefits of membership, yet paid no dues. The problem had simply been shifted to the Federation whose members did not have such problems.

120. At the close of the session, Council reaffirmed that associations had to report and pay for all their members, irrespective whether their membership fees were waived by the individual associations.

(e) *Proposal for a FAFICS Emergency Revolving Fund*

121. Jacques Meylan introduced the proposal (document Council 40/2011/D.15.e). The idea of FAFICS establishing an emergency benevolent fund had sprung from dissatisfaction with the manner in which the UNJSPF Emergency Fund was administered. It was felt that a fund managed by the Federation would be able to provide a more efficient response.

122. Questions were immediately raised about the feasibility of financing such an initiative. In its reserve the Federation retained funds in an amount twice that of the annual budget; however, at present the reserve did not even cover one year's budget. The recent drop in membership income merely compounded the funding problems and excluded any possibility of taking monies out of the reserve to fund the proposed fund. The proposal, which was seen as a good idea, would have to await the day when the Federation had surplus reserves or the FAFICS membership fee had been increased and a specific amount earmarked for the benevolent fund. In any event, the assets of the Federation had to be protected and local associations would have to provide a legally binding commitment to reimburse the Federation and have assets that could be used as surety. The assets of FAFICS could not be put at risk.

123. A number of member associations had funds of their own, some of which were open to applicants from other associations. Eligibility to the largest such fund, the BAFUNCS fund, was limited to members of that association. AFICS-Brazil had established a fund and was ready to share its experience with interested associations.

124. With respect to the UNJSPF Emergency Fund, the President reaffirmed his determination to secure the participation of FAFICS in the review of cases rejected by the Emergency Fund.

125. AFICS-Uruguay accepted that the Federation could not set up a fund at the present juncture. The delegate, however, requested that the use of the Federation's reserves be taken up when discussing the proposed and current budgets.

(f) *Appointment of the Auditors*

126. A vacancy had arisen in the ranks of the auditors following the resignation of André Weber. Council adopted the recommendation that FAFICS should appoint Mohammed Rharha, who had extensive experience in financial matters. The second auditor, Mr Ventura Garcia had accepted re-appointment.

127. Council confirmed both appointments and thanked André Weber for his stalwart services on behalf of the Federation.

**Agenda item 16: Election of FAFICS Officers**

128. The Secretary introduced the slate of candidates. In a first round, the following officers of the Federation were re-elected by acclamation:

President:	Andrés Castellanos
Secretary:	Jayamaran Sundaresan
Assistant Secretary:	Lydia Ontal
Treasurer:	Juan Mateu

129. After the election, both the President and the Secretary thanked Council for the trust it had placed in them and assured the Federation of their unswerving commitment. While conscious of the faith placed in him, Juan Mateu expressed the fervent hope that the Federation would be able to find a replacement candidate in the coming months as he would very much like to pass on the baton to qualified successor.

130. Nine nominees had come forward for the election to the seven posts of Vice-President. Immediately prior to the election, Tedla Teshome, the longest serving Vice-President in the Bureau, withdrew his candidature. Peter Lillie also announced the withdrawal of his association's nomination of Gerhard Schramek so as to create space for newcomers, secure gender balance within the Bureau and make for the essential independence of the newly created Standing Committees, neither of which should be chaired by a Vice-President.

131. Council accepted the withdrawals and elected the seven remaining candidates by acclamation:

Katia Chestopalov  
Mary Johnson  
Pierre Adama Traoré  
Josiane Taillefer

Mario La Fuente  
Linda Saputelli  
Ahmed Hussain

132. Following the election, the candidates expressed their thanks and reaffirmed their commitment to the Federation.
133. Pursuant to Rule 6.9 the Council fixed the date on which those elected to the Bureau should take up their seats. Council determined that they should take up their seats on 1 October of the current year, as was customary practice
134. Full agreement was expressed for the reasoning behind the withdrawal of Gerhard Schramek as it was essential to maintain the independence of the Standing Committees. Certain concerns were expressed, most notably that in future elections, more candidates should step forward and perhaps consideration could be given to the importance of the small island developing states, which numbered 51 out of a total of 159 sovereign states.

**Agenda item 22: Appointment of FAFICS representatives to the Pension Board and its Audit Committee in 2012**

135. At the outset of the discussion of the agenda item, the President informed the meeting that Josiane Taillefer was ill and hence unable to attend the Pension Board at its current session. For reasons of delicacy, he himself was not in favour of finding a replacement for her as it created the impression of somebody automatically stepping in her shoes. AFUS expressed its appreciation to the President for the position he had adopted on the matter. After an extensive deliberation, Council elected Katia Chestopalov to attend in her stead for the current session.
136. Council appointed the following persons to represent the Federation at the Pension Board in 2012:
- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Representatives | Andrés Castellanos<br>Roger Eggleston<br>Mary Johnson<br>Gerhard Schramek |
| Alternates      | Ana Maria Gudz Robak<br>Tedla Teshome                                     |
137. Council appointed Mr. Ventura Garcia to replace Mohammed Said on the Audit Committee in the same year.

**Agenda item 24: Date and place of the 41st session of the FAFICS Council**

138. The President informed Council that AFPNU-Mexico had invited FAFICS to hold its 41<sup>st</sup> session in Mexico. The association had confirmed that it would be able to meet all requirements in terms of conference facilities available in CEPAL in Mexico City.

139. In the course of the extensive debate that followed, a number of countervailing arguments were put forward. It was pointed that one should await the formal decision of the Pension Board as to the venue and date of its session in 2012. Others pointed to the budgetary implications that had not been taken into account in the Federation's budget adopted the very same day. It was contrary to good financial management to take far-reaching decisions in the absence of an indication of the financial implications.
140. The upcoming session was being held in 'non-budget' year. That made it all the more important to hold the Council session back-to-back with that of the Pension Board and in the same location. It was also pointed out that 2012 would be an even more important session than usual. In addition to it being a non-budget year, it would also bear witness to the election of the new CEO. FAFICS stood to gain by being close to the action.
141. Questions were also asked about the easy availability of visas for the participants, should the Council hold its session in a venue other than that of the Pension Board. The association holding the proxy for Mexico confessed to being in two minds on the issue. He saw the merits of meeting in Mexico City, just as much as he appreciated the convenience of meeting in the same place as the Pension Board. Other associations did not see that FAFICS Councils were inextricably linked to Pension Board sessions.
142. It was appreciated that Mexico City was highly sophisticated and disposed of good conference facilities and was easily accessible by air. However, it was felt that given the significance on the Pension Board session in the coming year, it would be better to defer the decision on taking up the offer of AFPNU-Mexico and look to 2013 as offering a unique opportunity to establish closer ties with another association in a completely new setting.
143. In view of the circumstances, the Federation should express its gratitude and appreciation to AFPNU-Mexico and recognise the major lengths to which that association had gone. However, given that 2012 was such an important year in the light of the policy topics being taken up, it would be more rational to hold the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the FAFICS Council in the same venue as the Pension Board immediately prior to the Board session.

#### **Agenda item 23: Other business**

144. No issues were raised under the agenda item

#### **Closure of the session**

145. Tribute was paid to the role of the President in managing the Federation's affairs and ensuring the success of the deliberations. It was remarked that international committees invariably comprised but two persons: the President and the Secretary. FAFICS was no exception
146. The role of the outgoing members of the Bureau was recognised. It was further hoped that a successor would soon be found to the long-serving and highly committed Treasurer.

147. The host association was thanked profusely for its kindness and hospitality, as well as the excellent facilities it had provided. The Honorary Secretary was thanked for his unflagging assistance both prior to and during the session.
148. Tedla Teshome spoke of the friendship within the Federation and paid tribute to the contribution of the present and past Presidents. He would cherish memories of them all.
149. In his closing statement, the President thanked the Presiding Officer, the Rapporteur, the Secretary and Assistant Secretary, as well as the Honorary Secretary and the support staff for their contribution to ensuring the success of the session. He paid fulsome tribute to Tedla Teshome and Oscar Larghi and thanked them both for their contribution to the work of the Federation over so many years. They would be sorely missed. On behalf of all, he wished them both well in their new endeavours.
150. He transmitted greetings from Amir Ali, President emeritus, together with the best wishes from a number of associations that had been unable to attend, such as Cameroon, Costa Rica and Thailand.
151. In concluding, the President reminded Council that what counted was good intent and good objectives. He recalled the message that Angela Butler, former Executive Secretary of FAFICS, had sent to the previous year's session. She had exhorted the Federation with the following words:
- '... and above all don't forget that the world is always better when work is leavened with a good mix of fun and laughter'.*
- He wished the participants a safe journey back home.
152. The Presiding Officer declared the session closed at 5.50 p.m. on 7 July 2011.



## Appendices

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Appendix 5	Report of the working group on pension issues
Appendix 6	Priorities for FAFICS representatives at the Pension Board
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Appendix 9	Approved budget for 2011

## Appendix 1

### List of participants

#### Participants

President	Andrés Castellanos del Corral
AAFICS-Australia	Mary Johnson
AAFI-AFICS-Geneva	Roger Eggleston Elisabeth Belchamber Katia Chestopalov Samuel Mbele-Mbong Dev Ray
AAFIB-Brazil	Carlos Goulart
AAFNU-Burkina Faso	Pierre Adama Traoré Louis Dominique Ouedraogo
AAFU/AFUS-Paris	Witold Zyss
AEFNUC-Cuba	Ana Maria Gudz Robak
AFICS-Addis Ababa	Tedla Teshome
AFICS-Argentina	Oscar Larghi
AFICS-Chile	Mario La Fuente
AFICS-Kenya	Peter Simkin
AFICS-Malaysia	C. P. Ramachandran
AFICS-Mauritius	Michael Atchia
AFICS-Moscow	Mikhail Gunar
AFICS-Netherlands	Anton Kruiderink
AFICS-New York	Linda Saputelli Frances Zainoeddin
AFICS-Ukraine	Aleksei Kostomarov
ASOPENUC-Colombia	Helene Hasselbalch
AFICS-Uruguay	Jacques Meylan
AFUNSOB-Bangladesh	Ahmed Hussain Mozammel Haque

ARICSA-Austria	Peter Lillie Gerhard Schramek
BAFUNCS-UK	Enid Stewart Goffman Ben Goffman Ms W. Sikkens Ms Sue Block Tyrrell
CAFICS/ACAFI-Canada	John Northcut
FFOA-Rome	Edward Seidler
FOA-Turin	Rimedia Rossa
IAFICS-Israel	Michael Suess

Council staff

Secretary Jay Sundaesan  
Treasurer Juan Mateu  
Back-up Secretary Anders Tholle  
Short-term Secretary Pauline Glaser

Proxies received for absent member associations as of 7 July 2011

<u>Absentee</u>	<u>Proxy to</u>
AEFNUP-Peru	AFICS-Chile
AFICS-Bolivia	AFICS-Chile
*APNU-C.R.-Costa Rica	AFICS-Uruguay
AEFSNU-Ecuador	AFICS-Uruguay
APEFONU-Paraguay	AFICS-Argentina
AFPNU-Mexico	AFICS-Argentina
AFICS-Philippines	AFICS-New York

\*: Proxy note received after the final list was published and distributed in the Council

## Appendix 2

### Agenda

1. **Adoption of the Agenda**
2. **Election of a Presiding Officer**
3. **Report by the President**
4. **Admission of new members**
5. **Pension issues**
  - (a) General
  - (b) Report of the Working Group on Pension Issues
  - (c) Pension adjustment system
6. **After-service health insurance and long-term care (ASHIL)**
7. **Improving the functioning of the FAFICS Council**
  - (a) Report of the Working Group
  - (b) Establishment of Standing Committees on:
    - (i) Pension Issues
    - (ii) ASHIL issues
  - (c) Proposals by AFICS-Uruguay for improving the functioning of the FAFICS Council
    - (i) Pension Issues
    - (ii) ASHIL issues
8. **Strengthening the gender balance in FAFICS – report of the Contact Group**
9. **Situation of the former UNJSPF participants from the former USSR, Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR**
10. **Information on the benevolent funds of FAFICS member associations and Emergency Fund of the UNJSPF**
11. **Meeting with the Secretary/CEO of the UNJSPF and the Representative of the UN Secretary General on Investments**
12. **Efforts to increase FAFICS membership**
13. **Advocacy efforts by FAFICS in support of the ideals and work of the UN system organisations**
14. **Reports on FAFICS representation at meetings**
  - (a) Report by AFICS-New York as focal points on meetings attended in New York
  - (b) Reports by FAFICS representatives at other meetings
15. **Administrative and financial questions**
  - a. Report by the Auditors, including income and expenditure accounts for the year ended on 31 December 2010, balance sheet as at 31 December 2010 and summary of travel expenditures during 2010
  - b. Proposed budget for the year 2012
  - c. Interim report on the management of the budget for 2011

- d. Report on the questionnaire on annual membership fees practices sent by the President and circulated to all FAFICS members. Report by AFICS-New York
- e. Proposal for a FAFICS Emergency Revolving Fund
- f. Appointment of the Auditors

- 16. Election of FAFICS Officers**
- 17. Appointment of FAFICS representatives to the Pension Board and its Audit Committee in 2012**
- 18. Date and place of the 41st session of the FAFICS Council**
- 19. Other business**

## Appendix 3

### List of documents

#### Council pre-session documents (D-series)

<u>Council 40/2011/</u>	<u>Title</u>
D.1	Adoption of the Agenda
D.1.Add.1	Annotated Provisional Agenda
D.3	Report of the President
D.4	Admission of New Members
D.5	Pension Issues. Report of the Representation of FAFICS to the 57 <sup>th</sup> Session of the Pension Board 2010 and its outcome
D.5.Add.1	Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly
D.5.c.	Pension Adjustment System. Elimination of Negative Cost-of-Living Adjustments
D.5.c.Add.1	Pension Adjustment System. The Situation of Small Pensions and their Review
D.6	After-Service Health Insurance and Long-term Care (ASHIL)
D.7.a	Report by the Working Group on Improving the Functioning of the FAFICS Council
D.7.b(i)	Establishment of a Standing Committee on Pension Issues
D.7.c.	Proposal by AFICS-Uruguay for Improving the Functioning of the FAFICS Council
D.8	Strengthening the Gender Balance in FAFICS – Report of the Contact Group
D.9	Situation of the former UNJSPF participants from the former USSR,Ukrainian SSR and Byelorussian SSR
D.11	Meeting with the CEO/Secretary of the UNJSPF and Representatives of the UN Secretary- General on Investments
D.12	Efforts to increase FAFICS membership. Some Thoughts on the Increased Participation of FAFICS Member Associations in Pre-retirement Seminars.
D.13	Advocacy Efforts by FAFICS in Support of the Ideals and Work of the UN System Organizations. Report prepared by AFICS/NY as Focal Point for Consolidating/Summarizing Advocacy Activities of member Associations, Including Celebration of UN Day
D.13.Add1	Advocacy Efforts by FAFICS in Support of the Ideals and Work of the UN System Organizations.Rotation of functions of Focal Points for Reporting on Advocacy Activities
D.14	Report on FAFICS Representation at Meetings
D.14.Add.1	Report on FAFICS Representation at Meetings. FAFICS delegation to the 64 <sup>th</sup> FICSA Council. Note by FAFICS representatives.
D.15.a	Report by the Auditors, including Income and Expenditure for the year ended on 31 December 2010,balance Sheet as at 31 December and Summary of Travel expenditures during 2010

- D.15.b Proposed budget for the year 2012
- D.15.c Interim report on the management of the budget for 2011
- D.15.d.Rev1. Report on the Questionnaire on Annual Membership Fees practices sent by the President and circulated to all FAFICS members. Report by AFICS-NY (item proposed by AFICS-New York)
- D.15.d/Add.1 Associations' replies to questionnaire on annual membership fee practices
- D.15.e FAFICS Emergency Benevolent Fund. Proposal by AFICS-Uruguay
- D.16 Call for Nominations for Election of the Officers of the Federation
- D.16.Add.1 Candidates nominated for Election of the Officers of the Federation
- D.16/Add.1 CVs of candidates
- D.16.Add.2 Note by the Secretary of the Candidates for Election to the Posts of Vice-President
- D.17 Call for candidates for FAFICS Representativeness to the UNJSPB
- D.18 Date and Venue of the 41st FAFICS Council

**In-session documents ( Conference Room Papers (CRPs))**

- CRP.1/Rev.1 Provisional List of Participants as of 7 July 2011
- CRP.2 Agenda item No. 7 - Improving the functioning of the FAFICS Council –  
Message received from AEFNUC-CUBA: FAFICS-Some ideas on improving its Role in the Defence of the Rights of United Nations Pensioners and Beneficiaries
- CRP.3 Agenda item No. 7 – Improving the Functioning of the FAFICS Council –  
Comments by ASOPENUC – Colombia on the Report of the Working Group on the Functioning of the FAFICS Council
- CRP.4 Agenda item No. 16 – Election of Officers – Correction of D.16/Add.1
- CRP.5 Not Used
- CRP.6 Agenda item No. 15.f - Appointment of auditors

## Appendix 4

### Report of the President

Mme Presiding Officer, Mr. Clemens Adams, Chief of Administration of the United Nations Office at Geneva, representing the Director-General of UNOG, Under-Secretary, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokaiev, Members of the Bureau, Mr. President and other officers of AAFI–AFICS - Geneva, our host association.

Dear colleagues representatives of FAFICS member associations present at this 40<sup>th</sup> Council.

Firstly, I wish to convey the appreciation and the gratitude of FAFICS to AAFI–AFICS for the extraordinary facilities they have arranged, jointly with the Administration of the United Nations Office at Geneva, headed by its Director General, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokaiev and Mr. Clemens Adams, in providing the FAFICS Council with an excellent framework for the holding of its session, the one-time only gathering opportunity every year for an already major Federation such as ours, to jointly review a myriad of important issues on which to decide a proper course of action, as well as its continuing membership increase worldwide, and the running of its administrative and financial operations.

Since my arrival in Geneva last week, I had the opportunity to meet with the Director-General of the United Nations Office, Geneva, and his close associates. I was accompanied by colleagues from AAFI–AFICS - Geneva, its President, a FAFICS Vice-President, the Secretary and Treasurer of FAFICS. We conveyed FAFICS' greetings and respect to the new Director General who warmly responded and confirmed that he would do all he could to support FAFICS and AAFI–AFICS.

Allow me as well to welcome the representative of AFICS–Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei in the person of its President, Dr. C.P. Ramachandran, who is with us for the first time following the admission of his association by the 39<sup>th</sup> Council which they had been unable to attend. Inasmuch as representatives from AFICS–Nigeria were unable to be present at the formal admission of their association by this Council. I nevertheless wish to state for the record FAFICS' special satisfaction, and of course my own satisfaction, to their incorporation after a process of several years, the details of which are contained in the relevant Council Document under item 4 of the agenda before you. However, I wish to thank the former President of AFICS–New York, Mr. Edward Omotoso, for his efforts to make it happen, as AFICS–Nigeria will now be a new member of FAFICS.

With the admission of AFICS–Nigeria, FAFICS reaches its 50<sup>th</sup> Association Member, thereby fulfilling one of the targets I set to achieve when assuming the first tenure of my function as President of the Federation. Likewise, an increase in individual affiliates numbers with the goal of 20,000, towards which, though closer, we have to continue striving until we reach it and even more.

In that regard, I wish to report that, since last year, we are still awaiting the conclusion of formalities by AFICS–Senegal for the approval of changes in their statutes by a pending General Assembly of their members, in order to conform with the FAFICS statutory requirements for the



admission of member Associations. Details of the circumstances and action by the Council are set out in the relevant Council Document on the admission of new members.

The Council would be pleased to learn that, since our session of last year, efforts to increase FAFICS membership have included a stimulus and advice to member associations in the preparation of letters of invitation to all recipients of UN pensions in a given country to consider joining existing associations such as AFICS–New York, AFICS–Philippines, IAFICS–Israel, as well as for the establishment of new ones in both cases thanks to and through the courtesy of the UN Pension Fund Secretary for their onward transmission to each recipient.

Activities to increase our membership included in varying degrees of organization and/or readiness to become FAFICS members, in some potential AFICS in Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Fiji and other Pacific Islands, Benin, Uganda, South Africa and Trinidad and Tobago. This, and the efforts described previously, have been carried out thanks to the proactive participation in that quest by the FAFICS Secretary and the Honorary Secretary, some of the Vice-Presidents and some Presidents of Associations, in conjunction with my own efforts, all of us taking part in what I consider a collective responsibility for the worldwide expansion and strengthening of FAFICS, as the only and unquestionable representative voice of the retirees and beneficiaries of the UN pension system.

Direct contacts continued to be maintained by myself with member Associations and direct intervention on my part in the resolution of many problems of individual affiliates or their survivors continued through the year. In that respect, problems of a pension and/or health insurance nature were resolved favourably thanks to the personal action taken by the respective chiefs of service in the Pension Fund Secretariats in New York and Geneva as well as the Disbursement and Insurance Service when drawn to their attention.

This year I attended and addressed the annual assembly of AAFI–AFICS- Geneva after their kind invitation, as well as the annual assembly of AFICS-New York after a similar invitation, as has been the case every year of AFICS–New York with myself and my predecessor FAFICS Presidents. To both Associations, I am thankful for the courtesies extended to me as FAFICS President.

As a continuum, I maintained excellent relations with the leadership of the Pension Fund Secretariat, Mr. Bernard Cochemé, and all senior staff of the Fund, always ready to be of assistance whenever requested. Similarly, though with less required frequency, with the UN Chief of Disbursement and Insurance Service, Mr. Christophe Monier. Other such relations have been kept with the Secretary-General’s Representative for Investments, Mr. Warren Sach, and as necessary with the Investments Management Division senior staff, with the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission, Mr. Kingston Rhode, as well as with senior officials of the United Nations Administration.

Ongoing contact throughout the year was kept with the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary, the Treasurer, the Vice-Presidents and the Convenors of the Working Groups on Pension Issues and on After Service Health Insurance and Long-Term Care. Last, but not least, with the Honorary Secretary because of his invaluable experience necessary for the transition period between his formally concluded long service as Secretary of FAFICS, and the new Secretary, Mr. Jay

Sundaresan, whom we have welcomed and to whom we wish to express our thanks for his contribution.

In terms of Pension Issues, we shall have, as usual, the meeting on Thursday, 7 July, with the CEO of the Fund and the Representative of the Secretary General for Investments.

I am sure our guests will be confirming the steadily higher level of Pension Fund assets being reached; that is good news.

For their part, I can assure you that your delegates in the Pension Board will continue to reaffirm FAFICS' trust and conviction in the merits of a defined benefit pension plan. They will uphold the two-track system which has operated for over 30 years as part of that plan. And they will insist on the right of retirees to vote.

FAFICS' representatives will continue to insist on the restoration of the pending 0.5% adjustment of the first pension payment after retirement.

On other pension matters, I am especially pleased to note that, thanks to FAFICS' efforts and concerns for several years on the situation of small pensions, the Pension Fund has already begun a review of small pensions in respect of the special adjustment provisions and methodology applied within the Pension Adjustment system. This review should be completed by next year for consideration by the Pension Board in 2012. A document has been issued on this subject in the context of the report on representation of FAFICS at ICSC where the decision to pursue the matter was endorsed.

As the Council will recall, last year we were faced with the unpleasant and unwelcoming news that the UN General Assembly, when discussing the question of the unfunded liabilities for ASHI plans, had adopted resolution A/RES/63/25, requesting the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as Chairman of the Chief's Executive Board (CCEB), to submit a report to the 67<sup>th</sup> session which included, *inter alia*, a request for information on the legal and financial implications to discontinue ASHI if found necessary. Since then a number of developments have taken place as well as some steps taken by FAFICS.

More and more Organizations are making provision to fund their ASHI liabilities. We have learned that most recently UNGCR made such a commitment, besides a number of other organizations. On the other hand, there has been relatively little action so far on the part of the UN to prepare the report for the General Assembly's 67th session next year (2012).

The FAFICS President has written to the Chairperson of the High Level Committee on Management of the CEB to ask what action UN Organizations have taken in response to the General Assembly's request and to repeat FAFICS' offer to assist in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report if we can help.

More details are contained in the ASHIL Working Group Report which is before you in Council Document D.6.

The Council will be seized with several important reports calling for action, such as the comprehensive report on improving the functioning of the Council, the establishment of Standing Committees on pension issues and on health matters to replace the current working

groups, the report on the survey on gender balance across the Federation, the report on financial practices by Member Associations on their payment of annual membership fees by FAFICS, an update on the continuing unresolved situation of unpaid pensions to former UN system staff from the former USSR, Byelorussian SSR and Ukrainian SSR by the successor governments of those former States, the report on advocacy in support of the ideals, goals, programmes and achievements of the UN system, and on FAFICS' representation at meetings, in addition to the standard reports on FAFICS Working Groups on Pension and ASHIL and on administrative and financial questions.

I wish to highlight the importance of the report on improving the functioning of the Council resulting from the work of the Working Group established by last year's Council, as a road map for actions to be taken. I am especially grateful to the members of the Working Group and the FAFICS Bureau liaison for their untiring efforts to come up with such a valuable comprehensive report which for the first time brings together a clear analysis of the manner in which the Council has been working over the years. In particular, I invite the Council to join me in recognizing the extraordinary work put into the preparation of the report by Enid Steward-Goffman and its finalization with the dedicated and attentive contribution of Vice-President Katia Chestopalov as the Bureau liaison. As well, I wish to recognize the important contribution provided by AFICS-Uruguay as reflected in the report. Other contributions received from the Associations in Cuba and Colombia after the report had been concluded are appreciated and are available to the Council as Conference Documents.

Thanks must also be expressed to the Contact Group which has prepared the report on the survey on strengthening the gender balance in FAFICS and a draft policy thereon. In particular, our thanks to Vice-President Mary Johnson for spearheading this work. The results of the survey should serve as a most useful basis for further consideration with regard to gender balance in FAFICS. I am only sorry that only one fourth of FAFICS Member Associations responded to the survey and wish that many more if not all Member Associations had done so.

Regarding the report on the questionnaire on annual membership practices prepared by AFICS-New York, in its consideration the Council should take into account the responses received, as reflected in the table which will be made available as a Conference Document. We thank AFICS-New York for its initiative and Vice-President Linda Saputelli for its preparation.

The FAFICS emphasis on advocacy in support of achievements initiated in 2008 during my first tenure has gradually stepped up, as demonstrated by the responses to my yearly appeals to all member Associations, in particular on the occasions of United Nations Day and Human Rights Day on 24 October and 10 December, respectively, while not limited to those celebrations, as shown by the consolidated report prepared and submitted by AFICS-New York as FAFICS' focal point for advocacy, and by the responses provided by many associations for the preparation of the quadrennial report on FAFICS activities as an NGO for the period 2007-2010, also prepared by AFICS-New York. According to the established schedule, the report was submitted by FAFICS to the corresponding ECOSOC service for presentation along with reports from other non-governmental organizations to the ECOSOC Committee on NGO status for their review in January 2012 or in May 2012. Once approved, it will be provided to the next FAFICS Council like in the past with similar reports.

We are grateful to AFICS–New York for the preparation of both reports, as well as for the reports on representation to UN and other meetings, in particular to its Committee on NGO Relations.

The Council will agree that much burden of work on advocacy and representation has been placed upon and carried out indeed excellently by AFICS–New York on an expanding basis, given the fact that both undertakings have been increasing in recent years. In my view, the time has come for the Council to: (a) reduce the number of meeting topics by half if not more, from the agreed number of nine broad fields for FAFICS’ representation, as agreed by the Council in 2002 in Montreal, namely: human rights, ageing, gender balance, economic and social development, education, human settlements, health and HIV/AIDS, peace (including disarmament); (b) rotate to another Member Association the responsibility heretofore of AFICS–New York for the collection and preparation of FAFICS’ representation reports, for the consolidated report to the Council every year on participation at UN meetings; and (c) consider the request by AFICS–New York to be relieved of their responsibility as FAFICS’ focal point for advocacy for the UN, through their proposal of rotation with other associations.

For the first time, FAFICS has received a formal invitation from a Member Association, in this case from AFICS–Mexico, to hold its Council session next year in Mexico City, independent of the location where the Pension Board will meet, as well as the timing of the Council session itself. The Council should consider this initiative in the context of its discussion of the functioning of the Council to which I have already referred.

In concluding, I wish to thank AAFI–AFICS - Geneva and AFICS–New York for their support to the FAFICS Secretariat and to me as its President. As well, I also thank the Secretariat of FAFICS, its Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer, and members of the Bureau for their collaboration in the arrangements for this session. Last but not least, a special recognition to the FAFICS Honorary Secretary, Anders Tholle, for his steadfast disposition, dedication and support provided to this session.

I thank you for the confidence and support you have shown in me as President of the Federation and wish us all a successful 40th session of the FAFICS Council.

## Appendix 5                      Report of Working Group on Pension Issues

### Conclusions of the Working Group

1. The draft agenda was adopted.
2. Gerhard Schramek (ARICSA) reported on the participation of the FAFICS representatives in and the outcome of the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Pension Board, in particular the actuarial evaluation, the Committee of Actuaries, the Working Group on Plan Design and the conclusions of the Board.
3. The Working Group took up items of interest to be discussed at the 58<sup>th</sup> session of the Pension Board. The Working Group concluded that given the current financial situation it was unlikely that the Board would approve any benefits. It was decided to keep the issue of the elimination of negative CPI adjustments open and seeks its deferral to the following session. The Working Group also focused on the study prepared by the Pension Fund secretariat on the Emergency Fund. FAFICS, it was felt, should keep the Emergency Fund high on its list of priorities which should also include such items as the amendment to Article 35 *bis*.
4. The Working Group considered the issue of small pensions. Oscar Larghi (AFICS-Argentina) informed the meeting that a study in three countries had revealed that small pensions in all three countries had suffered a major loss in purchasing power. The President decided not to take any other steps in view of the current financial crisis.
5. The same approach was proposed with respect to Articles 21 and 25 of the pension Fund regulations.
6. The plight of retirees in Argentina and Colombia was discussed. At the previous Council session in London The CEO of the Pension Fund had informed Council that he would visit Argentina, Chile and Colombia in the autumn of the current year. In February 2011, however, he informed the Federation that he would not be visiting Argentina until the IMF has published its findings in respect of the CPI in that country. After visiting Chile and Colombia, he had suggested that the solution lay in the application of special measures. As for Argentina, the Vice-Director of the IMF had announced that in 2010 the countries with the largest inflation rates had been Venezuela (27%) and Argentina (22.3%).
7. The Working Group considered the issue of bank charges. FAFICS had been negotiating with the UNFCU on possible solutions (involving the use of UNFCU credit cards) to the problem of bank charges being levied on UN pensions. Oscar Larghi (AFICS-Argentina) considered it a good idea and informed the meeting that he would contact WHO/PAHO Credit Union to establish whether a similar solution could be found for retirees in Latin America.

Oscar Larghi  
Convenor

Ana Maria Gudz  
Co-convenor

## **Appendix 6            Priorities for FAFICS representatives at the Pension Board**

1. Defending the two-track system
2. Eliminating the 0.5 per cent reduction in the first adjustment due after retirement
3. Improving the pension adjustment system
  - (a) Allowing a return to the dollar track, subject to certain conditions
  - (b) Eliminating the negative CPI adjustments
  - (c) Improving data collection for CPI adjustments
4. Adjusting small pensions
5. Increasing the normal retirement age up to 65
6. Absorbing bank charges
7. Improving the functioning of the Emergency Fund
8. Reviewing the entitlements of family members (including Article 35 *bis*)
9. Defending the claim to voting rights
10. Returning to the 2 per cent accumulation rate for all participants and retirees

## **Appendix 7**

### **Decisions and conclusions on agenda item 7 (a): Improving the Functioning of the FAFICS Council**

#### **Meetings management**

- Endorsement of integrated meetings management package in paragraph 20 (with one minor amendment)
- Endorsement of skills and competences required of presiding officers (paragraph 22)

#### **Agenda management**

- Agreement on submission of additional agenda items from any source (combination of options 2 and 3)

#### **Documentation**

- Agreement on a three-week deadline for distribution of all documents, excluding comments on Pension Board issues (amended option 4)
- Finalisation of guidelines for the preparation of documentation in time for use in the run-up to the next Council

#### **Frequency of Council sessions**

- Maintenance of annual cycle (option 8)

#### **Duration of Council sessions**

- Acceptance of agenda-driven duration
- Maintenance of current arrangement: five-day session (option 9) with the first day being devoted to pre-session meetings of the Standing Committees. If experience showed that the Standing Committees yielded the efficiencies expected of them, Council could consider the possibility of reducing the overall duration to four days

#### **Timing and location of Council sessions**

- Agreement on the Bureau presenting to Council at 2012 session a paper-cum-cost analysis on the timing and location of its sessions, outlining pros and cons of various alternatives

#### **Communications**

- Agreement on introduction of e-mail bulletins, including regular reports of the President's missions, and general improvement in communications between the constituent parts of the Federation
- Agreement on availability of documents in languages other than English
- Efforts to be made to secure interpretation services on a *pro bono* basis

### **Enhanced use of technology**

- Agreement on the use of the FAFICS website as a most effective medium for the preparation of reports and Council sessions

### **Items for further study**

- Agreement on the conduct of further studies on: greater participation of members in the work of the Federation, including support for new members; training and development; and the role, composition and functioning of the Bureau
- General support for the topics outlined under those three headings

### **Implementation**

- Implementation of the changes agreed by Council to be the responsibility of the Bureau, where necessary in tandem with the Convenor of the Working Group



## Appendix 8

## Policy Statement on strengthening gender balance in FAFICS

The Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS), at its 40<sup>th</sup> session,

*Recalling* that the purposes and functions of FAFICS include the support and promotion of the principles and achievements of the United Nations system,

*Recognising* efforts to promote gender balance and gender mainstreaming in the work of all organisations of the United Nations system,

*Recognising further* that gender balance in both the FAFICS Bureau and the Council depends largely on measures taken and implemented by member associations; and

*Taking into account* its Statutes and Rules of Procedure,

1. Stresses the importance of gender balance in representation on the Bureau and on the Council and in its activities;
2. Urges member associations to make greater efforts to achieve gender balance in their representation to the FAFICS Council.

## Appendix 9

Approved budget for 2012  
All income and expenditure is in US dollars,  
unless marked otherwise

### INCOME

Members' contributions (17,706 x 1.35)	23,903
Bank interest	300
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Rounded up to	24,250

### EXPENDITURES

Travel expenses	20,100
Hospitality	600
Secretarial Assistance	2,000
Contributions	600
Details: CoNGO membership contribution during 2012: USD 300 Reduced FICSA contribution: CHF 300	
Equipment	0
Office supplies	500
Bank charges	200
Communications	200

**Total estimated expenditure** 24,200

