



11 December 2017

Dear Secretary-General,

As the members elected to the Board of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund from the Specialized Agencies, we should like to draw your attention to concerns we have, on behalf of the Participants Group, whom we represent. Although elected by the participants in our respective Organizations, as Board Members, it is our common duty to consider the core interests of all participants. This duty we seek to discharge with the diligence and professionalism expected from international civil servants. It is in this spirit that we highlight these concerns to you.

Our principal concern is that the due process for oversight by the Fund's Board is, regrettably, potentially circumvented by the actions and indiscretion exercised by some colleagues on the Board, elected as Participant Representatives from the UN Secretariat (i.e. the UNSPC). Two specific instances serve to illustrate this.

First, the case of a communication to you dated 28 August 2017, requesting you to ignore the recommendation of the Fund's Board and urging you not to renew the contract of the CEO¹. We understand that at this time the CEO's contract remains to be renewed in part because of this intervention, made without consultation with Participants' Representatives from the Specialized Agencies. This suggests a direct circumvention of the established procedures of the Board, including the consensus reached across the three constituent groups (Member States, Executive Heads, and Participant Representatives), is available for those who prefer to undermine it. It also questions whether there is any need for the role of the Board at all.

Second, the circulation on 14 November 2017 of two OIOS reports, one incomplete, encouraging what appeared to be some form of *de facto* oversight by Board members of audit reports, allegedly demonstrating financial mismanagement within the Fund. The Chair of the Board's Audit Committee immediately rebuffed this on 15 November 2017, pointing out the Committee's role in addressing any concerns to do with audit, and noting the accountability of the representatives on that Committee to examine these on behalf of the Board between sessions². As the Chair of the Audit Committee stated, there are clearly established channels through which to address such concerns.

¹ See Annex 1

² See Annex 2

We as members elected to the Board of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund from the Specialized Agencies are also concerned that the letter to you of 28 August also refers, in its second-to-last paragraph, to the UN's management also being "against recommending any reappointment of the CEO..." when the Board's consensus was based on text proposed by your very own representatives on the Board.

Based on the above, we unequivocally dissociate ourselves from both the communication of 28 August 2017 and of 14 November 2017 - and urge you to honour and respect the role and consensus-driven decisions of the Board.

In 2005, the General Assembly made it clear that it expected the Board to support the Fund from a position of consensus. In fact, "consensus" is the most common and by far the preferred decision-making standard in the UN Common System. In our considered view, it is regrettable that the actions of our UNSPC colleagues appear to undermine such consensus, of which they were indisputably a part, between the Participant Representatives' group, and those representing Member States and Executive Heads on the Board.

Such behaviour is, we feel, neither consistent nor compliant with the standards required of international civil servants nor with the responsibility entrusted to us as Board members; sowing the seeds of division is not conducive to maintaining a strong and credible Fund.

It is in the interests of all the Participants whom we represent to ensure that a collective, considered and wise position is adopted, independent of any alternative agendas pursued. Only in this way can the Board operate through its established procedures to provide the General Assembly, to whom it reports, and you, with the requisite recommendations and oversight. And only in this way can the Fund operate effectively.

We should like to request that the UN participants representatives, like all Board members, be requested to uphold the necessary standards of professionalism and integrity and ensure that the role of the Board, and its recommendations, be given its due respect.

With our sincere regards,

Specialized Agencies Participants' Representatives Pension Board Members

Members for Group II
FAO/WFP and WHO

Members for Group III
UNESCO, IAEA and ILO

Members/ Representative for Group IV
UNIDO, WIPO, ICAO and ITU

Member for Group V
WMO, IMO and IFAD