

GATT Office Circular No. 233

GENERAL SERVICE SALARY SURVEY

1. The Director-General wishes to inform staff members of the outcome of the dispute which arose with regard to the negotiations on salaries paid to General Service staff in Geneva under the UN common salary system which GATT also applies.
2. It was formally agreed in May 1975 at a Plenary Meeting between the representatives of the Executive Heads of the Geneva-based organizations and the staff representatives that a survey of the rates prevailing in Geneva would be made according to an agreed methodology, and that this survey would be conducted by the Battelle Institute. It was the common understanding that the methodology and results of the survey would be accepted as binding, but that discussion of their translation into salary scales would not be precluded.
3. At a subsequent Plenary Meeting on 11 February 1976, the representatives of the Executive Heads, without rejecting the Battelle report which had been produced in the meantime, expressed doubts about the validity of its preliminary conclusions, and the negotiations were then broken off.
4. To dispel any misunderstanding the Executive Heads decided that they would each meet the staff representatives of their respective organizations, to provide them with the assurances necessary to bring about a renewal of the negotiations. Accordingly, the Director-General met with the GATT staff representatives on 18 February and gave them such assurances.
5. On 20 February, the Plenary Meeting reconvened. At this meeting most of the staff representatives indicated that the assurances given by their Executive Heads were sufficient for them to resume negotiations. However, because staff representatives of the United Nations Office at Geneva stated that the assurances given to them had not been satisfactory, negotiations could not be pursued and a strike was called by UNOG staff on 25 February 1976.
6. On 27 February, the Executive Heads of the seven Geneva-based organizations agreed to reiterate in writing the oral assurances referred to above. This was done by confirming in identical terms (attached, Annex 1) their concurrence with a statement made by one of them, Mr. Blanchard of ILO, to an organ of his Governing Body.

7. However, the representatives of the staff of the United Nations Office at Geneva indicated that they were still not reassured. The Secretary-General of the United Nations thereupon entrusted to Mr. Debatin, Controller of the United Nations, the task of conveying to them the same assurance as had already been given by the other Executive Heads to their own staff representatives. Intensive negotiations have taken place since 28 February and resulted in a declaration by the Executive Heads dated 3 March 1976 (attached - Annex 2). The staff representatives have expressed their full agreement with the statements contained in this declaration, and have stated their willingness to abide by its contents. As a result of this agreement the strike of the UNOG staff was terminated during the afternoon of 3 March 1976.

ANNEX 1

The Executive Heads of international organisations in Geneva, having been informed of the following statement by Mr. Blanchard, Director-General of the International Labour Office to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee of the Governing Body of the ILO on 20 February 1976:

"10. The Director-General noted that the salary survey to which the staff representative had referred had recently been completed and was under study. The United Nations organisations and the staff associations in Geneva considered themselves bound by the results of the survey. The ILO would abide by its commitment and would use the report as the point of departure for a systematic examination with the staff representatives of the problem of salaries in Geneva. The report was complex and contained crude results which left numerous points to be refined and interpreted. He was opposed to submitting the problem to the International Civil Service Commission. He proposed that the representatives of the administration and staff proceed jointly with an examination of the report in order that precise and equitable proposals on salaries and allowances might be put before the Governing Body at its next session. It was essential that the negotiations be conducted on both sides by competent officials and with a sense of responsibility."  
(GB.199/PFA/32)

concur with this statement, taken as a whole.

The organisations stand ready, without preconditions, to meet and discuss with representatives of the staff in the Joint Inter-Agency Meeting on General Service Salaries, in order to construct a new salary scale for the General Service staff.

Geneva, 27 February 1976

ANNEX 2

Declaration of the Executive Heads of the  
UNOG, ILO, WHO, ITU, WMO, WIPO, ICITO/GATT

Having reconvened on 29 February and 2 and 3 March 1976 to consider the General Service question in Geneva, the Executive Heads recalled their statement of 27 February 1976 and stated further:

1. It is of paramount importance to maintain a uniform policy among the organizations in the UN common system in respect of the implementation of a new salary scale for the General Service category in Geneva.
2. The agreements contained in the approved minutes of the Joint Plenary Meetings of 30 April and 7 May 1975 are reaffirmed. It is further confirmed that, in carrying out the present salary review, the methodology used in respect of the 1968/69 survey should be applied without alteration. It is further agreed that, in view of the need to analyze the Battelle Institute's results, the findings of its report should be checked jointly with a view to the construction of the new salary scale and the establishment of revised rates of family allowances. This exercise should be completed and the new scale and revised rates be established as quickly as possible and the Joint Plenary should report not later than 15 April 1976.
3. It is the intention to implement the new salary scale with effect from 1 August 1975 and the revised family allowances from 1 April 1975, and to introduce an interim adjustment mechanism for family allowances.
4. Each organization will, where required, submit the new salary scale and the rates of allowances to their respective legislative bodies at the earliest possible date.

UNOG )  
ILO )  
WHO )  
ITU )  
WMO )  
WIPO )  
ICITO/GATT)

Signed by or on behalf of Executive Heads

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The staff representatives of UN/Geneva, ILO, WHO, ITU, WMO, WIPO, and ICITO/GATT, having taken cognisance of the above declaration, express their full agreement with the statements contained therein and will, as far as they are concerned, abide by their contents.

UNOG )  
ILO )  
WHO )  
ITU )  
WMO )  
WIPO )  
ICITO/GATT)

Signed by Staff Representatives

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ANNEX

The UN Geneva staff representatives have indicated their intention to request that the existing interim adjustment procedure for salaries be reviewed.