

ANNEX III

WIPO STAFF ASSOCIATION'S COMMENTS
ON THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT'S REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT AND
ADMINISTRATION IN WIPO: BUDGET, OVERSIGHT AND RELATED ISSUES
SUBMITTED TO THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE
WIPO PROGRAM AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

The WIPO staff representatives would like to thank the members of the Program and Budget Committee for providing us the opportunity to present some comments on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU).

Before commenting on any recommendations, the WIPO staff representatives would like to make a request concerning the studies undertaken by the JIU inspectors.

The staff representatives have noted that all the studies presented by the JIU are exploring all the aspects of the activities in the Organizations taking into consideration only management's point of view. Even if the staff representatives recognize that there is a necessity to look at the functioning of the Organizations in order to improve performance, the staff representatives regret that the employment conditions of all categories of staff, including temporary staff, are not analyzed and are not the subject of recommendations.

We are accustomed to hearing from management in all the organizations that the staff must be considered as the organizations' most valuable asset. Please, in all your studies concerning the functioning of the organizations, also take into consideration the rights and needs of the staff.

Personnel Practices

SHORT-TERM STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

1. The staff representatives would like to draw the attention of the JIU to the fact that most short-term staff have been recruited for core activities, and that the number of short-term staff fluctuates in accordance with the needs of the Organization which are defined by the number of international patent, trademark and copyright applications received. To compare with the practices of the United Nations and to apply the same guidelines, as recommended by the JIU, needs further investigation.
2. In the United Nations there are many categories of staff employed for different activities such as conferences, projects on a short-term or long-term basis, peacekeeping operations and other consultancies. At WIPO we can recognize two categories of short-term staff : (1) those employed for core activities who must be regularized on a long-term basis ; and (2) consultancies related to project activities.
3. The staff representatives have no objection to having guidelines, but these must be guided by the real needs of the Organization and not only by the intention to make savings,

forgetting that all the staff working on core activities have been doing their best in the interest of the Organization for many years and that their status on a long-term basis must be recognized.

TRANSFERS AND RECLASSIFICATIONS OF POSTS

4. The staff representatives are very concerned by the staff movements and by the modalities to ascertain that every staff member can have an expectation of career development. Therefore, any initiative to organize the human resource practices at WIPO must not be with the sole intention of reducing costs. All possibilities must be explored to maintain incentives in order to encourage the staff to always perform at their best. Therefore, the staff representatives are of the opinion that a maximum amount of flexibility must be provided to management for within-house redeployment in accordance with the increase and decrease of activities.

5. To put in place a system by which a decrease in activity would free posts without the possibility to redeploy said posts to an area where there is an increase in activity would be a lengthy and cumbersome system which would be counterproductive to the rapidly changing and ever evolving needs of the Organization. This new system would also be contradictory to polyvalence practices in place for many years now, practices in which the staff are strongly encouraged to acquire additional knowledge and skills in order to ensure mobility in the interest of the Organization so as to avoid doing the same job for the entire life and thus leading to demotivation.

6. The staff representatives are also concerned by the JIU's comments concerning staff movements from General Service to Professional posts. In each Organization there is always an overlap between some General Service and Professional posts where the level of responsibility for some staff in the higher level General Service posts are increased and, through the normal reclassification exercise, are recognized to have Professional category responsibilities. This must be recognized by a promotion to the Professional category. At the same time the staff representatives recognize that, due to geographical distribution, this would perhaps create some difficulties and would therefore need to be managed with care. Perhaps, as in the United Nations system, a certain number of posts could be reserved for such cases.

DIRECT RECRUITMENT

7. The staff representatives share the analysis of the JIU concerning the practice of direct recruitment for Professional staff, namely that it circumvents competition. Direct recruitment should henceforth be strictly limited to urgent staffing needs of limited duration. Regular professional staff members should normally be recruited through open competitions, duly advertised as soon as a vacancy is identified. This will ensure for the Organization recruitment of the best candidate for each post, while not depriving existing staff of career development opportunities.

8. The staff representatives are of the opinion that existing WIPO Regulations 4.8(b), 4.9(a) and 4.3(e), if properly interpreted and applied, are a sound basis for the fair and transparent recruitment of persons with the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The staff representatives suggest applying them as outlined above, and as described in more detail in a memorandum we have prepared for discussion with the Administration.

PERSONAL PROMOTIONS

9. The policy regarding personal promotions is linked to the career development system. As the JIU pointed out, perhaps some staff members received a personal promotion after having been stuck in a grade for ten years or more. The exceptional cases where staff received a personal promotion without having demonstrated exceptional performance would not occur if there was a career development system with clear guidelines and an improved performance evaluation system encouraging the staff to acquire additional skills and to accept mobility.

10. The staff representatives request that, before there is any change to the current system, a new career development system be put in place, and the staff representatives would request to be associated to the elaboration of this new system.

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