

SPEECH SG VISIT ADDIS ABABA DECEMBER 1st ,2022

Dear Mr. Secretary General

It is always an honor and a pleasure to have you in our walls and to be able to address you on behalf of ECA Staff and the entire UN staff in Ethiopia.

My name is Nassirou Ba, Am from Mali and I am the President of ECA Staff Union and also the President of the Federation of United Nations Staff Associations in Ethiopia.

Sir, we have been interacting with your team on some critical issues: USG Catherine Pollard and her team and USG Larbi Jacta and his team. These issues are not easy, and they require a special attention.

- 1. Reclassification of Addis Ababa and several other duty station in Ethiopia:** The Staff Union has been talking about this for the last 6 years if I recall right. The reclassification of Addis Ababa from B to C duty station. There is a need to grant an early review to look at this and there might also be needed to further downgrade several other duty stations in Ethiopia. We have been raising this issue with ICSC persistently. The problem here in Ethiopia is that there is not a strong collaboration between Staff Union and UNDSS in one hand and Staff Union and the OMT. Sir we the staff are the core raison of every decision in this duty station, It has been now 3 years , we are still not part of the OMT?
- 2. G to P:** Sir, we know your firm stand on this and we appreciate but we need to always bring it up. The Staff-Management Committee (SMC), where all Staff Unions under the Secretariat are represented, has been working hard in the past years to provide compelling reasons including, positive effects on gender parity, equitable geographical representation, ensuring the highest standards of efficiency, competency and integrity, amongst others, to provide strong arguments for the discontinuation of what they feel to be a clearly discriminatory practice against colleagues serving in the General Service (GS) and related categories or as Field Service Staff (FS). Given the importance of the matter in promoting a flexible, dynamic and motivated UN workforce, the staff side calls on both the S-G and DS-G to consider both the recommendations of the ACABQ and the SMC working group to promptly establish, under the SG direct authority, an internal programme targeted at improving the career opportunities of the GS and related categories as well as those of the FS staff across the Secretariat.
- 3. Multi-linguism:** Sir, another topic, where we know you support us, because yourself you speak at least 3 international languages. Sir, we want the multi-linguism to be taken seriously in the UN and particularly at ECA where our flagship meetings are all conducted in English while we have the 4/6 subregional offices which are French speaking: IDEP/ Dakar, SRO/ CA- Cameroon, SRO/WA -Niger, SRO/NA-Rabat. Since French is an official language of the UN, we the staff Union on behalf of the staff request that starting immediately that all the flagship meeting be simultaneously translated from English to French by a touch of a button, to give the sense of belonging to this vast majority who feel excluded. I have toured the ECA subregional office Sir, this is their demand and we feel very strongly about it. No more APPR, in strictly English. It is possible to do the translation for ARFSD and COM, there must be a way to do it for the rest of the big meetings.\

- 4. Staff Union Participation at OMT:** Given that the Operation Management Team (OMT) provides guidance, recommendations and management support to the UNCT on operational matters and importantly nurtures the mandate and purpose of “Delivering as One initiative”, the Staff Union, namely FUNSA , the Federation of the United Nations Staff Associations in Ethiopia, has asked to be part of the OMT whenever staff issues are discussed. The Staff feel that the lack of representation on the OMT when discussing staff-related matters forces them to react to decisions instead of participating in them. We want to collaborate; we are not the opposition party. We have repeatedly written to the RC Catherine Soszi , without a response. We respect the RC and commend her for her good job in handling the so many crisis and we interact with her and she frequently talk to me whenever I need briefing. But when it come to us sitting at OMT she is irresponsive, and we do not understand. From New York to Geneva, the Staff Unions reps from SMC (Staff Management Committee) and CCISUA (Coordination Committee for International Staff Union and Associations) are consulted on critical issues and by the way, I am the Vice President for Condition for Work for CCISUA. We would like the RC to consider FUNSA to sit at the OMT.

That lead me to the next issue

- 5. Harassment, Retaliation and Abuse of Authority:** We know very well your stand on this. The Staff Union is aware of cases of harassment, retaliation and abuse of authority, reported by staff members against very senior functionaries in the organization. The staff side claims to provides support and resources to staff members about the various channels that are available within the organization to seek redressal of their complaints. However. The staff side feels that not all such staff members use the official channels to submit their grievances, due to the fear of further retaliation and possibly loss of job as well. The instances of staff coming to the Staff Union with such grievances has only increased in the past 2 years.

It needs to be understood by Managers, First reporting Officers and Second reporting officers that this will not be tolerated and We the Staff Union will accompany staff in their journey of redressal and stood by them. It is not Ok because you are Director, Chief of Unit, DES and even ES that you can take the liberty to harass the staff. Sir the increase of such complaints reaching my desk is just phenomenal and honestly it needs to stop at ECA and it needs to stops everywhere.

- 6. Locally Recruited ICs with Precarious Contracts:**

Mr Secretary General, I would like to talk about the Individual Contractors who are a good 30% of our workforce and with precarious contracts. In fact, it is a known fact that we cannot achieve our work without them These men and women, some with 20 to 25 years of service with the UN have no benefits whatsoever and they have to break the service every 9 months for 3 months and then come back again. Sir, when they reach retirement, they have nothing to live on. Many wanted you to hold a townhall so they can interact with you . Although, this issue is on our plate at the SMC level, we want you to help convince the Management side that something needs to be done for this category of Staff. This is then United Nations. How come the funds and programs have successfully dealt with this and the Secretariat can't. Sir, please do something about it. This is about Inclusion and Humanity. We call on you to support their cause for sustainable jobs.

7. Key Performance Indicators (KPI): Geographical representation and Regional Diversity

Mr Secretary General, we are proud as Staff Union to report that ECA is the most diverse among all the Regional Commissions. Sir, in the last year only ECA has recruited the following

Level	No. of selections	Nationalities
D1	3	UK, US, India
P5	5	Cameroon, UK, Japan, Brazil, Morocco
P4	10	Bulgaria, Cote d'Ivoire, Brazil, Mauritania, Canada, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Tunisia, Niger
P3	11	Nigeria, Ethiopia (2), Burundi, Zambia, Tunisia, Botswana, Italy, UK, Uganda, Belgian
P2	6	China, USA, Brazil (2), Rep of Korea, Venezuela,

Recruitment from non-African Group aids out efforts towards regional diversification. We have seen 4 candidates from Brazil (non-African Group that is helping our efforts towards regional diversification .

While there are regional Commissions with Zero Africans, not because Africans don't qualify Sir, no...it is their hidden policy not to recruit us. Am sorry to be so blunt, when you our Boss, the Secretary General is fighting racism in this organization to its core. Isn't time to establish a quota for each Regional Economic Commission to hire from other regions which is not their own so together we install " Diversity" and " inclusion" in this organization. It is time to see African in ESCAP, ECLAC, EEC, ESCWA, etc..

Mr. Secretary General, my last point is about the selection of the future ES.

7. Selection of the ES: Sir, the Staff Union after sounding its constituency on the ground and in collaboration with the two ECA formers Presidents: President Joseph Baricako and President Emebet, whom have met you during your last visit in 2017, We the staff Union strongly wrote you and expressed our opinion on the selection of the future ES. The letter I sent you Sir speaks for itself , but let me emphasize that we feel it is important to not only make you aware of what all has transpired over the past decade and specifically over the past five years, so that you can take into consideration, these important learnings in helping select the suitable candidate for the leadership of ECA. At this point in time, we don't think gender should play too much since in your Senior Management Group (SMG)..on the current 44 members 27 are women and 17 are male. Sir if you recruit 1 more female the SRG will be 62.2% women and 37.8% male...this balance is less than 40% male, While if you hire a male the SRG will be 60% female and 40% male which is OK , Sir, these are just some small statistics we put together. There for Gender should not be a problem this time

We need a leader who believes and practice the UN values and behaviours.

We need a leader who understands the value of humility, humanity, integrity and inclusion.

We need a leader who is not only a competent professional but is also humane.

We need a leader who believes in servant leadership.

We need a leader who not only has a vision but is also willing to invest in people and in the team to build ownership for the vision, in support of advancing Africa's cause as well.

Thank you for your attention