

UN Special

The Golden Age

N°764 – NOVEMBER 2016

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GARRY ASLANYAN

Rédacteur en chef adjoint/Deputy Editor-in-chief

Keep calm and carry on

J'ai du mal à croire qu'une année s'est écoulée depuis que j'ai eu le privilège de participer à la cérémonie de remise des «UN Awards» par le Secrétaire général. *UN Special* avait fait partie de la liste des nominés dans la catégorie des contributions bénévoles des membres du personnel. Je considère qu'il est symbolique que je sois responsable de la coordination éditoriale de ce numéro un an après ce moment essentiel pour le magazine.

Le thème de ce mois ne constitue pas une préoccupation centrale pour la plupart d'entre nous. La tyrannie de l'immédiateté ne nous laisse guère le temps de la réflexion, dans notre vie quotidienne. L'âge d'or, la suite, l'ex-emploi, la prochaine étape: les expressions ne manquent pas pour décrire ce «phénomène» (et voilà une expression de plus pour qualifier la retraite!).

A la lecture des nombreux articles et entretiens liés à ce thème, il est clair que la manière dont nous appelons cette phase de vie compte peu. Ce qui est important, c'est le fait de la vivre pleinement. Et, au fond, cela est vrai pour toutes les facettes de nos vies de fonctionnaires de l'ONU. Notre attitude vis-à-vis de la retraite – que nous prendrons tous un jour – ne diffère en rien de celle que nous avons dans le contexte de notre vie professionnelle. Pour certains d'entre nous, ce sera un moment particulièrement agréable, pour d'autres non. Pour chacun, le chemin est pavé d'opportunités et d'obstacles. Et c'est cela que nous avons voulu vous montrer à travers les histoires que nous vous faisons partager dans ce numéro. ■

It's hard to believe, but it has been a year since I had the privilege of attending the UN Secretary General's awards ceremony, at which *UN Special* was nominated for staff volunteerism. And it is symbolic that I should have the opportunity to edit this particular issue a year after this milestone for *UN Special*.

The theme of this issue is not immediately on our minds. The tyranny of the immediate does not allow us the time in our daily routines to reflect on these topics. Retirement. Golden age. Moving on. Former staff. Next phase. Second Act. There is no shortage of terms people use or suggest to refer to this “phenomenon” (seems I just invented another one).

When you read through the breadth of articles and interviews related to this theme, you will realize that it really doesn't matter what we call it, what matters is that this stage of life is embraced. And in the end, attitude affects every facet of our lives and as UN staff who will eventually retire, this is no different. The reality is that retirement is going to be different from the life you had while you were working. For some it will be better and for others it will not and there will be challenges and opportunities. And we have got it all covered in this issue with the stories we are sharing with you. ■

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M^{me} Odette Foudral,

Présidente de l'Association des Anciens Fonctionnaires Internationaux – Association of Former International Civil Servants



GARRY ASLANYAN, OMS

La plupart des fonctionnaires ont entendu parler de votre association sans en connaître pour autant les approches. Pouvez-vous décrire brièvement les objectifs majeurs et les activités de votre association?

L'AAFI-AFICS est la plus ancienne association d'anciens fonctionnaires à Genève. Elle regroupe 3400 membres dans plus de 90 pays. Par son affiliation à la FAFICS (Fédération des associations d'anciens fonctionnaires internationaux) elle a accès aux réunions du Comité Mixte des Pensions et aux différents groupes de travail de la Caisse des pensions. Actuellement M^e Chestopalov siège en qualité de membre de la délégation de la FAFICS composée de 6 membres. Toujours via la FAFICS M^e Chestopalov participe depuis 18 mois au Groupe de travail concernant ASHI. Ce groupe est de la plus haute importance pour le maintien de la couverture d'assurance maladie aussi bien pour le personnel que pour les retraités.

C'est ce rôle international qui peut avoir le plus d'impact pour la défense des intérêts des retraités.

L'AAFI-AFICS a par ailleurs 2 représentants observateurs au sein du Comité Exécutif de l'assurance-maladie UNSMIS (UNOG-OMM-HCR).

L'AAFI-AFICS a bien sûr un rôle local en informant les futurs retraités lors des séminaires de pré-retraite et en organisant des activités sociales. L'AAFI-AFICS organise aussi régulièrement des séminaires à thème pour sensibiliser ses membres par exemple sur l'importance d'informer son conjoint ou sa famille de la spécificité de nos couvertures sociales.

Quels sont les résultats tangibles obtenus par votre association? De quelle façon les objectifs et les centres d'intérêt de votre association ont-ils évolué au fil du temps?

Notre association a été un des membres fondateurs de la FAFICS en 1975 et c'est par le biais de la Fédération que la voix des retraités peut être entendue. Les retraités sont disséminés dans le monde entier, mais ayant un statut particulier car ils doivent s'adresser soit à New York soit à Genève pour résoudre leurs problèmes d'où l'importance des soixante associations locales.

Au fil des années les nuages se sont obscurcis sur les retraités et il convient pour notre association et la FAFICS de rester vigilantes vis-à-vis de notre Caisse des Pensions et de la couverture maladie.

Par exemple, la situation qui a prévalu en 2015-2016 au sein

de la Caisse des pensions en matière de retards de versement de la première pension aux nouveaux retraités et l'absence de gouvernance en matière d'investissements a été un des sujets de préoccupation et de travail de suivi pour notre association.

Il faut noter aussi que l'association doit se tenir au courant des modifications de règles en matière fiscale, en France tout particulièrement, où résident de nombreux membres.

Une fois par mois, le Comité de l'AAFI-AFICS, qui inclut les représentants des associations des diverses organisations à Genève, se réunit pour traiter les problèmes et définir une politique commune de défense des intérêts des retraités.

Elle s'est approchée des associations genevoises et de France voisine pour mieux aider les retraités à trouver leur place dans la vie locale.

Comment les membres s'engagent-ils dans le travail de l'association? Y a-t-il beaucoup de retraités qui deviennent membres? Quels sont les défis et les problèmes auxquels doivent faire face les retraités?

Les membres sont principalement intéressés à recevoir des informations mais s'engagent hélas trop peu dans le travail de l'association. Par exemple il nous manque des candidats pour la procédure d'élections au Comité. Il y a peu de retraités qui s'affilient car la plupart retournent dans leur pays

d'origine. C'est d'ailleurs souvent là que se posent les problèmes de réadaptation dans un pays qui a changé drastiquement pendant les 20, 30 ou 40 ans de carrière.

La plupart des lecteurs de UN Special sont en activité, ils ne vont pas forcément anticiper le fait de devenir retraité. Si vous deviez faire une liste des choses à penser dès aujourd'hui, quelle serait-elle?

La première chose à dire aux futurs retraités même si la date est lointaine c'est de s'insérer dans la vie locale et de parler la langue pour permettre une retraite sans risque d'isolement.

La deuxième serait de prévoir financièrement l'avenir car les revenus des retraités sont bien inférieurs à ceux du personnel. La dernière chose qui me semble cruciale pour les futurs retraités est de voir cette tranche de vie comme un extraordinaire bonus avec toutes les opportunités possibles d'apprendre.

Voudriez-vous ajouter autre chose?

Nous sommes ravis de l'opportunité qui nous est donnée par cet article pour nous rapprocher du personnel en poste qui forme le creuset des retraités de demain. ■

Dr. Jean-Paul Menu, President, Association of former WHO staff



Dr. Jean-Paul Menu,
President AFSM, 2016-2018

GARRY ASLANYAN, WHO

Most active staff at the agencies have heard about your Association but they probably don't know the actual details. What are you? What are your goals, what kind of help can a member expect from you?

First of all, thank you for giving us this opportunity to address your large readership. We appreciate it!

We celebrated our 25th anniversary in 2015. Our founders were leaders of the Staff Association Committee and did not want to just stand around with their arms folded! They dared to believe that they still had a lot to offer to help our retired colleagues, both individually and collectively. From the beginning, they set criteria for the Association based on three equal principles, friendship, solidarity and efficiency. Above all, they did not want an Association without a "soul" and the intention was not to let material and financial matters take over at the expense of social and cultural aspects. These principles have not changed and are still guiding us.

Historically, our first objective was to secure the representation of retirees on the health insurance committees and we succeeded after a long fight. Naturally, the situation has evolved over the years, but we are still most active in this area, defending and promoting the interests of retirees.

We also pay close attention to pension issues, which are a common concern of all UN retirees.

In addition to these two key areas, we respond to the best of our ability and means to all kinds of requests made by our 1,000+ members in most countries of the world, our aim being that they should still feel part of the greater WHO family.

We organize flu vaccinations free of charge and social events such as regular trips and cruises and we participate, often with the Staff Association, in many events organized by WHO. We keep our members regularly informed of events and issues of interest, mainly through our bilingual English-French Quarterly News magazine.

You just said that staff health insurance is one of your main areas of concern, how does this translate in concrete terms?


Largely as a result of our past efforts, retiree representation is now well-established at several levels of the management of our health insurance. This is not yet the case in some other UN Agencies. Due to legal considerations, the representatives are now elected directly by all retirees who choose to remain insured by WHO. The representatives maintain close links with our Association, thus enabling our Executive Committee to respond efficiently to queries and problems experienced by retirees and to ensure appropriate and timely attention from the Administration.

And what about pensions?

While our health insurance is specific to WHO, the Pension Fund is common to all UN agencies. Retirees are currently represented on the Pension Board by the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS). Our Association is a member of the Committee of the Geneva

Association of Former International Civil Servants (AFICS-AAFI), thus allowing us to be rapidly informed of any issues and to provide feedback on concerns affecting our members. In the same way as for the health insurance, we are able to help our colleagues when they have difficulties in getting responses from the Pension Fund.

Many readers may be aware that since 2015, new retirees have often had to wait for months before receiving their first pension payment. The same delay has been experienced by widows/widowers of pensioners. Together with other associations,



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we have collected hard evidence and protested energetically. Since then, the outlook is somewhat better. We are also very watchful of the situation regarding the management of the Pension Fund.

Obviously communication is important for an Association. How do you manage?

We are very fortunate to receive substantial logistical support from the Director-General and the WHO Administration. Well integrated into the Headquarters office, we have very close and friendly relations with the Staff Association.

We use a wide range of means, including a weekly "permanence", telephone, mass and individual emails and letters. We publish a Directory of members – most useful for finding out about former colleagues. Our website (www.who.int/formerstaff) is part of the official WHO website and is a useful source of all kinds of information, both for retirees and those soon to retire.

Highly valued by our members is the regular distribution of our bilingual English-French Quarterly News magazine. You can have a look at past issues on our website.

What do you see as the main challenges for the future?

We want to increase our membership. Around 25% of WHO retirees are members, approximately the same percentage as for other UN retiree associations. The more we are, the more our voice will be heard. Nearly half of our members live outside the Geneva area and we have to be of value to them wherever they are. In this respect, we attach great importance to reinforcing our links with existing regional associations of WHO retirees, as well as promoting the creation of new ones.

Lastly, but not less important, we are always short of volunteers to carry out the work. ■

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Breaking age-old stereotypes

Mandatory Age of Separation (MAS) within the UN: Balancing the needs of serving staff and those of the retirees



Kabul, Afghanistan, 5:30 a.m. My students and I warming up on a cold December morning, waiting for the rest of the class to arrive.

© Maria Dweggah

MARIA DWEGGAH, FORMER PRESIDENT OF WHO STAFF ASSOCIATION AND FORMER DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *UN SPECIAL*

“You can’t really understand another person’s experience until you’ve walked a mile in their shoes.” Writing for the *UN Special* in the “old days”, I focused on issues of concern to serving staff. As an elected staff representative I bought into the stereotyped assumptions about retirees, not so much as to their ability but more to do with unproven beliefs that hiring retirees stopped the career progression of serving staff. I complained, as others did, (some more vociferously) about the indiscriminate hiring of retirees, especially if they returned to their former jobs, when what was actually needed was an effective workforce succession planning policy.

I am now a retiree myself and an elected member of the Executive Committee of the Association of Former WHO Staff Members. I did not understand at the time the relevance of compulsory aged-based retirement or that there were retirees who were driven by economic and social conditions, who also had a right to work. I have since learned that while retirement

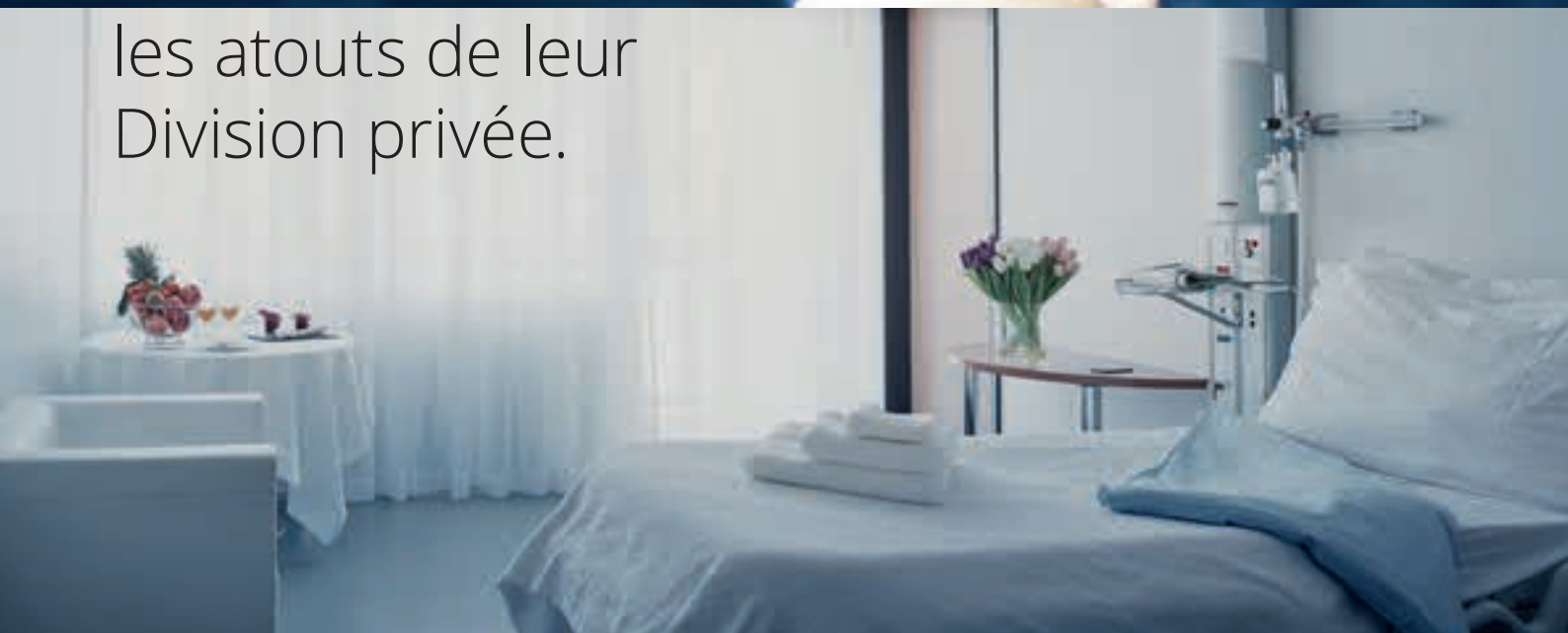
fulfils its promise of golden years for some and while many look forward to retirement and can’t wait to leave, others do not fare as well, especially those “individuals whose job represents a major source of social status, creative satisfaction, social relationships or self-respect.” In closing the door behind them, they “lose their familiar landmarks, their points of reference and with them their personal identity.” It is even more poignant for those retirees who have spent years within the “family” of an international organization. Their experience of being all at once unnecessary and unwanted, with the deprivation of an opportunity to continue their accustomed work, may precipitate in some... restlessness, weariness and dejection.¹

In my research, I came across an interesting article “The Effect of Retirement on Physical Health” whose authors argued that these negative views of retirement are not proven and that they are “consistent with a Western cultural ideology that celebrates work and identifies it as the locus of self esteem, identity, and personal fulfilment”² They might have a point. But it was written over 30 years ago and with globalization,



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maybe that ideology has since spread worldwide. In her July 2016 *Report on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older Persons*, the expert confirmed that “participation in the labour market enhances the self-esteem of older persons, their social inclusion and their financial security.” She also added that “older workers should enjoy equality of opportunity and treatment in relation to all aspects of work and conditions of employment in all sectors.”³ Food for thought.

In keeping with global trends, A/RES/67/257 followed the recommendation of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and raised the Mandatory Age of Separation (MAS) to 65 for new staff no later than 1 January 2014. However, debates in the ICSC sessions on raising the MAS for serving staff were quite heated. There was a sharp distinction between the views of the administration and finance specialists and the staff associations and human resources management specialists, who generally opposed an extension of the MAS for serving staff. By contrast, the federations and the administration and finance specialists were generally in favour of such a change.⁴

In July 2013, I was part of the Federation of International Civil Servants’ Associations (FICSA) delegation at the 77th Session as acting Information Officer. During the debate on the MAS for serving staff, a specialist from a large UN agency argued with conviction that at age 60 one can no longer learn new technologies. I could not believe my ears! that this person could utter such unsupported and condescending bunk, especially in front of Commissioners whose average age was at least 70 if not older and me who was 65 at the time. The statement unfortunately manifested the stereotypical perceptions on the need “to purge the workforce of incompetents in an expedient manner.”⁵

The 2015 ICSC Report reflected the persistent stand of the executive heads, and employers in general, on how they assess the productive value and the price of their labour services, specifically of the negative impact that an increase in the MAS for current staff would have on efforts within organizations to rejuvenate and reprofile their workforces in terms of skills, gender parity and geographical distribution, as well as efforts to reduce staff costs.^{6, 7}

While the staff representations and the ICSC supported the implementation of the MAS for serving staff as early as 2016, the UN GA Resolution 70/244, of 23 December 2015, decided that “...the mandatory age of separation for staff recruited before 1 January 2014 should be raised by the organizations of the United Nations common system to 65 years, at the latest by 1 January 2018, taking into account the acquired rights of staff.”⁸ Albeit with a bit of a lag, and much dissention, the Resolution brought the UN into the 21st century.

And what of the retirees, oft characterized as double dippers, codgers, job robbers, impediments to workforce rejuvenation and obstacles to career development opportunities for serving staff? Conditions for hiring retirees are not harmonized and may be quite dissimilar across the UN system; some organizations are more demanding than others. There are two main conditions applicable to retirees rehired at most United Nations organizations with few exceptions: the earnings and time limits per year. While one can understand the needs of serving staff, policies which define and regulate the retention of staff beyond the MAS and the employment of retirees should reflect a more positive view of the person other than someone who can only be hired subject to restrictive conditions, i.e. when a suitable replacement cannot be identified in a timely manner, giving little or no consideration for the interests of the organization and whether it needs the experience and expertise of a given person after his or her normal retirement age.⁹

So, how to balance the needs of all? The UN Second World Assembly on Ageing (Madrid, 2002) considered the issue of the goal of employment for all and made a number of recommendations. It recognized that “the continued employment of older workers need not reduce labour market opportunities for younger persons and can provide

an ongoing and valuable contribution to the improvement of national economic performance and output for the benefit of all members of society. The overall economy can also benefit from other plans to use the experience and skills of older workers to train younger and newer employees.”¹⁰

Some will welcome retirement whether at 55, 60, 62, 65 or why not 70? They will have plans for travel, spending time with family, volunteering, care giving, taking part in political or community organizations, sports or even career changes (see photo). Others, who on retirement will still have the energy, ability, and high level of productivity, will want to continue, perhaps not all because of financial motives, but because they derive enjoyment from work, their need of a sense of purpose and identity, their social and psychological need for recognition of their experience, skills, and continued contribution to the work of the organization. So, when you see them in the corridors, keep the foregoing in mind and walk in their shoes. ■

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And the winner is...

(Some thoughts on “budget” retirement, and on those who can afford only a “second-class ticket”)

EVELINA RIOUKHINA, UNOG

EDITED BY DAVID WINCH, CHIEF EDITOR, ICAO

This article voices the concerns of many colleagues who might otherwise be embarrassed to speak out. From my interviews, I have understood the preoccupations of many who will not receive the magic sum of CHF 6,000 per month that the pre-retirement programme recommends for decent living here. What about all those who have less than that, and not just “second-class” or “budget” staff, but those who love the Organization, who are no less devoted to it, who have worked honestly for it? (For many – the Organization is their only home!). They want to live decently too and to stay connected to the UN.

There might (should!) be a solution for a respectful and decent living for all those who have so much in common, and who together can do so many wonderful things if they remain connected and if they are not obliged to be “second class”. They might be many more than you think: from all regions, duty stations and field missions. We work as a family, “One UN”, and we can continue to live decently together in tune with this motto after our official UN career is over – a UN Retirees Community (or living as a Community) maybe could be the solution!?

Retirement is a painful time, from my observations. I have noticed that around

10 per cent are really happy to leave, while most want to stay at work and be active and needed. Some people die during the first one to three years after retirement, and often we hear “Oh, I just saw him/

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her... Oh, he/ just retired..." I thought it was just my perception until I came across the study "Association of retirement age with mortality", conducted recently by Oregon State University in the US¹. This study shows that even one more year of work after the due retirement age can diminish early mortality by 11%.

The idea of the Secretary-General to extend the retirement age to 65 years – and he gave us his word on this during his visit and the Swearing-In Ceremony for our new UNECE Executive Secretary in 2014 – will extend lives for years and help many UN staffers, especially those who do not have enough years of pensionable service. If implemented for all as of 2018, it will be tremendous. However, some of the "budget" options, even considerably improved, will not turn into the magic CHF 6,000 a month "ideal" that the pre-retirement course recommends.

I raised this issue recently, but was cut short publicly – "If you do not have enough, go away and choose a cheaper place". I still hope to find colleagues, who, within their high responsibilities, or with their big heart and commitments to others, will try to explore options and to find human solutions, before sending me away. Knowing that there are many like me, I did my own research and want to share it, to save others from the embarrassment I experienced. For many of us, the UN is our home (despite a good work-life balance, the UN is our life – I am sure this is how it should be!). I am utterly convinced that together we can make a difference, and who knows – maybe change or save lives... In my opinion, several options should be explored, and offered. In a recent study, it was noted that the average age when people start working for the UN is 40 or older, which means they might have a retirement income based on just 20 years of service. While some do come from wealthier countries and can add a couple of thousand to their UN retirement income, others come from countries which can only add a couple of hundred. This will not push them over the magic 6,000 CHF. Other factors, such as mobility, working in different duty stations/different salary scales, or family reasons (divorce, remarriage) come into play. The result is that a majority of today's retirees will have from 3,000 to 4,000 USD (or – in the best case – 5,000 USD). This is also a good pension one

can live decently with today. Don't chase us away, just help us to raise other options!

First, I am sure, a solution can be found here, in Geneva (access to *Habitations à Loyers Modérés* (HLMs) for low-income retirees (whose annual income falls within a precise *barème*), options for low rents for them, or discounts on medical care can be discussed locally. (Even article 15 (b) of the Accord of 1946 could be, perhaps, revisited/adjusted to this group?)

One other option would be to ask our future Secretary-General to grant UN staff the right to a retirement residence (under certain conditions, i.e. if retirement

is equivalent to the SSI, 3,500 USD, and maybe after 20 years of service for the Organization). Such a 3,500 USD income is a good amount and can ensure a decent living in the US. We could even create a global UN Community there for retired UN staff (why not somewhere in Florida?). This US option seems valid and sustainable, especially as our retirement is paid in USD; people will not lose on the exchange rate, our medical and life insurer AETNA is also in the US, as well as our UN bank. Having a UN Community in the US, where UNHQ is located, seems like a good idea and will ensure more solid links to the UN in line with the basic principle "One UN" (at work and beyond)!

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However, the advice of younger colleagues to move away to look for a cheaper place affected me; I decided to do my own research. Several studies on international living and the best places to live on retirement (studies in the US, in Switzerland at Bilan.ch, and in other European countries) were the basis for my research. I did not try to find the cheapest living, because cheap living is not necessarily the best living. It seems to me that people would still like to be connected to the UN, to have some UN Community and common interests, while working for common goals on a voluntary basis on retirement. And more importantly – access to good healthcare, political stability, proximity to a big UN international or regional centre or office, and of course, financial stability with the USD, our basic “universal” UN retiree currency. I also had in mind an idea of unity, or living in a Community.

These are the findings of my studies: the leaders in Asia are Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. With a big UN office in Bangkok, Thailand is an interesting option, while Malaysia provides a special retirement residence for 10 year within the MM2H programme for all those who have 2,400 USD monthly for life (plus deposit). This country has perfect medical care, and is safe and stable – worth examining!

In Europe – clearly, Switzerland (with the stable CHF) is the best country to live in, if financial conditions are met. Spain and Portugal are cheaper locations (with the Euro currency), Austria, has a big UN European Office and is tax-exempt for UN retirees. Other countries such as France and Malta are worth exploring further. The real discovery for me turned out to be Latin America. All the above studies, as

well as the World Retirement Index Report for 2016, list the top five, which include Ecuador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Belize, but all lists give the same winner.

And the winner is... Panama!

Panama offers a “retirement paradise” – not only in terms of standards of living, but it also provides anyone who can prove a pension for life of 1,000 USD with a retirement visa (for life). It has USD as its official currency, good health care, it is stable, safe, and has a big UN Regional Office for the Caribbean in Panama City. The country has unique fauna and flora, and is also a link between the Americas and two big Oceans connecting the Americas – the Pacific and the Atlantic. The country is in an economic boom, and today it is often called “the Switzerland of the Americas”. It could be an interesting option for many UN retirees. I propose this retirement paradise so maybe the UN Regional Office there and the Permanent Missions might also come up with some preferential proposals for us UN staffers!

No, I do not have the magic CHF 6,000. I am a devoted UN staff member, as are most of my colleagues, and yes, I am privileged to work for the UN (unfortunately not for as long as I would have wanted to reach the “magic” retirement number). Like many of my colleagues, I fall into the “budget” category, but I am so grateful and privileged that I have this! I want to live a decent life, not trying to make both ends meet, and to be able to stay connected to the UN and to do voluntary and humanitarian things after I leave. And I do have the right to dream of a life in retirement paradise, and would not mind playing golf, riding horses, wind-surfing, or going for long walks on a white-sanded beach.

And what a miracle – today I know that I can realise this dream with my “budget” retirement – and for only 1,000 USD per month I can do all the above in welcoming Panama through its *Visa de Pensionado* and its gracious benefits (unique in the world for retirees!)

But even if I can have all this there, I know that I will desperately miss my floor-mate François’ daily morning “*Bonjour*” or small talk in the Delegates’ Lounge over a *ren-versé-croissant* with Nicolas! (which, incidentally, can be easily organized – *ça vous dit*, a “UN Retirees Lounge” in Coronado, Panama?). ■

1. Association of retirement age with mortality: a population-based longitudinal study among older adults in the USA. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, March 2016.



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Age Esteem at any age

Ageing is a part of life. We may have different expectations about ageing, but for some, having no control over this natural course triggers anxiety and denial. Not so for Bonnie Lou Fatio (pictured here), an internationally recognized motivational speaker and author and founder of AgeEsteem. Her vision is a world where age and ageing are celebrated and people of all ages are respected as contributing members of society.



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VERONICA RIEMER, WHO

With a background in education, human resources development and career planning, Bonnie is on a path to start a metaphorical pandemic. This, however, is a pandemic with a difference. “I want to infect people with positive thinking so that they infect others with “AgeEsteem”. I want to inspire individuals to become role models, become icons – we don’t need to feel younger, or ageless, but just vital, alive, engaged and connected; passionate about what we do and still feel we have that purpose in life”.

Talking about the theme for International Day of Older Persons 2016, “Take a Stand Against Ageism”, which challenges everyone to consider the negative attitudes and discrimination based on age, and the detrimental impact it has on older people, Bonnie feels we are often our own worst supporters. “How frequently do you catch yourself thinking, “My memory has gone! I can’t find my words.” or “I wish I could do that.”? Both infer that we are lacking because we are too old. I find much of ageism is how you feel about yourself and it is why I launched AgeEsteem”.

Bonnie aims to feel good about herself and to walk tall with confidence and a smile. As a result she is treated with respect as a person. She stressed the importance of

interacting with people of all ages and remaining current on trends and technology. In this way there is a sharing of knowledge and experience in meaningful ways as we learn from each other. “With knowledge, you will be more comfortable and confident in all situations and thus dispel negative attitudes and discrimination based on age. If each of us were to feel confident and secure with our age, so would society”.

Bonnie (aged 73) has recently been presented with the Women’s International Networking (WIN) Global Inspiring Women Worldwide Award which she found to be a humbling yet empowering experience. “As women we applaud others, yet rarely recognize our own contributions” she explained. “This award is so meaningful to me as it focused on what I have done since turning 60; for opening new paths and improving the confidence of senior women, mentoring young ones and bringing an innovative voice to the space of women’s leadership”.

Having recently retired as Global Ambassador of Women’s Leadership of the World Young Women’s Christian Association (World YWCA), where she helped to introduce programmes in intergenerational shared leadership and mentoring, she has more time and energy to take forward Inspired

10 daily practices To live with pizzazz at every age

- 1 When you wake up, give thanks for the day that is about to unfold
- 2 Say to yourself “I am going to have a wonderful day”
- 3 Speak to yourself and others with encouraging words
- 4 Eat your meals leisurely; savour the flavours
- 5 Give your full attention to the present moment
- 6 Look in the mirror and tell yourself what a beautiful person you are
- 7 Have contact with people who are younger and older than you
- 8 Laugh! Dance! Sing!
- 9 Plan one activity that will make a difference in the life of someone else
- 10 Praise yourself for three qualities you admire in yourself.

Women Lead, a cross-border, cross-culture global leadership mentoring programme. She explained how the programme works. “I mentor 10 women from 10 countries during six months. It is my gift – to them, and to myself. In return, they each pledge to mentor another woman using the leadership mentoring model for the following six months. My present mentees reside in Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, Malawi, Lesotho, Portugal, France, Switzerland, and USA and their ages range from 18 to 58”. Her vision is to encourage more women of all ages to join the movement so that it grows

exponentially. The award has already drawn eight women into the next programme to begin in December 2016, two of whom are 60+, and she is always looking for more members.

With all United Nations agencies (except FAO, WFP, and WIPO) implementing the Mandatory Age of Separation (MAS) at 65 by 1 January 2018, many of us will still have a third of our lives yet to live, and that is increasing daily. Bonnie recognised that many retirees today must continue to work in order to have enough to live on, but she would like to see a system where you work much longer, with fallow years built in regularly to enable people to leave work for a period of time to travel, develop new interests and skills, and gain a richer perspective of life. "With our world transforming so rapidly, this constant reinvention will become a necessity" she said. "At the same time, this approach would stagger the times when people are receiving pay without working, rather than having several generations of seniors on social security all at one time. I believe it would relieve burn-out and create greater productivity".

Staying healthy in later life is not just about physical fitness but also mental fitness. Bonnie explained that having a purpose in life, a reason to get out of bed, is essential. "Keep learning and we are more interested and interesting to others. If you have a dream or a burning desire to ignite the world in some way, then now is the ideal time. The world needs your experience, expertise and wisdom".

She suggests also changing a daily routine, which forces you to use your senses differently. Another possibility is to learn a new language or technical skill, enrol for a study course, join a book discussion group or be active in a group that is intergenerational. "Being with people of other ages stimulates us to think differently and keeping contact with children keeps your own inner child alive" she enthused. "Continue to play and to laugh. I love creating rain dances or sun dances with my granddaughters. The laughter, creativity and exercise is energizing and the ideas are endless. Begin with one and then add another".

And for those who are not yet retired, Bonnie advises preparing for retirement as early as possible. She recognised that women often have an easier adjustment because they are multi-taskers and many

taking responsibility for running the home. "But often people feel a sense of loss at retirement, especially those whose work has become their life and their sense of value. Having multiple interests, a hobby, or volunteer commitments outside the work environment makes the transition easier" she explained. "Cultivate your interests; seek new challenges; accept a volunteer leadership role; take classes; and do this when your work life is most active".

Bonnie reminds us all that life is a series of choices. "You choose how to accept change when you get older. You choose your attitude – to be happy or miserable.

The former is a lot more fun, and research shows it keeps you much healthier!" ■

If you would like to share your expertise, experience and wisdom and would like more information about Bonnie Fatio and her work with Inspired Women Lead, please contact ageesteem@gmail.com



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Âge et employabilité

Rencontre avec Monsieur Charles Barbey, Directeur de l'Office cantonal de l'emploi à Genève¹ qui partage sa perception de la situation des «seniors» sur le marché de l'emploi à Genève.



Les informations ci-dessous ont été aimablement fournies par monsieur José Barranco, Adjoint à la direction de l'Office cantonal pour l'emploi.

Informations pour les anciens collaborateurs de l'ONU concernant les prestations de l'Office cantonal de l'emploi

Ces prestations dépendent du statut de séjour de la personne concernée.

Pour les fonctionnaires internationaux étrangers (titulaires d'une carte de légitimation)

Les étrangers séjournant en Suisse dont le permis les autorise à exercer une activité lucrative et à changer d'employeur et de profession peuvent bénéficier de prestations de conseil auprès d'un ORP. Pour pouvoir en bénéficier, l'ancien fonctionnaire international doit présenter une demande afin d'obtenir un titre de séjour relevant du droit ordinaire, lui permettant d'exercer une activité lucrative. Le respect de cette condition est un prérequis avant l'inscription au chômage.

Pour les travailleurs qui ne sont pas fonctionnaires internationaux (titulaires d'un titre de séjour relevant du droit ordinaire)

Ces personnes étant soumises au droit suisse, elles ont l'obligation de cotiser à l'assurance chômage et peuvent donc bénéficier de la palette complète des prestations de cette assurance (conseil, placement, formations, indemnités de chômage), pour autant que les conditions soient remplies.

Ces règles sont applicables aux personnes résidant en Suisse. Pour les personnes résidant en France, la législation de ce pays est applicable.

Pour les fonctionnaires internationaux de nationalité suisse

Ces personnes ont la possibilité d'être affiliées à l'assurance chômage suisse sur une base volontaire. Si tel est le cas, elles peuvent donc bénéficier de la palette complète des prestations de cette assurance (conseil, placement, formations, indemnités de chômage), pour autant que les conditions soient remplies. Dans le cas contraire, elles ne pourront bénéficier que de prestations de conseil.

MARIE-JOSÉ ASTRE-DÉMOULIN

«L'âge n'est pas le seul facteur pour re/trouver un poste, l'important c'est «l'employabilité»! En d'autres termes, que vous ayez 35 ou 50 ans, il est essentiel de mettre à jour de vos connaissances en permanence, par le biais de la formation continue. C'est la meilleure chance de rester en emploi. Le fait d'être qualifié n'a aujourd'hui plus

rien d'exceptionnel. Pour un comptable, 7 ou 15 ans d'expérience ne changeront rien au tarif qui lui sera proposé.

En revanche, là où une différence peut vraiment exister, c'est au niveau des compétences sociales. Et le senior peut se démarquer en ayant une attitude positive, en démontrant un rôle de «modérateur». Dans les facteurs facilitants, le senior bénéficie également de statistiques en sa faveur puisque les études montrent qu'il y a moins d'absences chez les seniors que chez les plus jeunes –qui, eux, doivent s'occuper d'enfants en bas âge, par exemple.

Enfin, de nombreux seniors sont ouverts au temps partiel, dans la mesure où leurs besoins financiers sont moins importants et cela leur ouvre davantage de possibilités quant aux offres de postes.

A la vérité, les plus de 45 ans sont réalistes par rapport au marché car, dans leur grande majorité, ils ont déjà occupé plusieurs emplois et/ou ont connu le chômage. Cela dit, l'intégration des travailleurs dits «âgés» (50-64 ans) sur le marché du travail

en Suisse est élevé (80.4% en 2014).

Mon conseil aux personnes qui approchent la retraite, ce serait de se repositionner dans l'entreprise quelques années avant leur départ et mettre en place des choses telles que la création d'un binôme senior-junior, le glissement vers des fonctions de consultant interne, de spécialiste. Autant que possible, il faut se mettre en arrière-plan, demander un temps partiel si possible, faire des missions/mandats ponctuels ou se mettre à son compte.

Cela permet une préparation à la réduction de rémunération et facilite le recul émotionnel et social par rapport au statut professionnel.» ■

1 <https://demain.ge.ch/organisation/office-cantonal-emploi-oce>



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Problems continue at the pension fund

In the spring we briefed you on trouble at the top of the pension fund. Over a tumultuous summer, matters only got worse.

LORAIN RICKARD-MARTIN*

“There’s a huge problem of competence in the functioning of the Fund and Board. We must stop pretending it is fine. When someone fails they should not be rated as successful, when people are not paid we should not pretend things are fine.”

Egor Ovtcharenko, CCISUA Vice President, Conditions of Service.

From a New York perspective, the annual Pension board meeting taking place in Vienna last July seemed to unfold in an amped up atmosphere of outreach and transparency. During the week-long meeting, the Fund’s new Chief Communications Officer (COO) posted almost daily updates on a Facebook page for former and current UN staff members, with spirited exchanges taking place from time to time. A communiqué from the Board at the end of the week provided assurances that “the Fund is safe and its future is secure” and it is “able to meet its pension and benefit payment obligations over the long term.” The reassurances were welcome, although the current health of the Fund has never been in doubt. Rather, the issue has been on ensuring its continued health for current and future generations of UN retirees.

The Board’s positive face to the world, say some observers, was in sharp contrast to the increasingly non-transparent and even secretive environment in which the Board functions. It was also clearly designed to push back growing concerns over the past two years of what the UN staff federations and others see as moves intended to privatize the Fund and create a structure independent from the UN.

Adding to those concerns have been (on the Fund Secretariat side, headed by Chief Executive Officer Sergio Arvizu) unprecedented and protracted delays in processing payments to new retirees and survivors

and low staff morale; and on the side of the Investment Management Division headed by Representative of the Secretary-General for Investments, Carol Boykin, low investment performance and repeated warnings from the Assets and Liabilities Monitoring Committee that the Fund was exposed to significant governance, investment, operational and compliance risks.

The reports of the Pension Board annual meeting [A/71/9] and the Board of Auditors [A/71/5. Add. 16] landed last week. Read

together, the reports are studies in similarities and contrasts, if not contradictions, particularly concerning the payment backlog, and low investment performance that if not corrected may potentially threaten the Fund’s long-term stability.

In the run-up to the Vienna meeting, 15,000 participants and beneficiaries signed a petition initiated by the UN staff federations calling on the Board to reject proposed financial rules including outsourcing of investments; rescind a new

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human resources policy that would remove UN protection from Fund staff; and pay new retirees on time.

According to the CCISUA President, Ian Richards, at a staff briefing at UN HQ New York on 7 October, the petition created press coverage and brought the issues to the attention of the Board. Nevertheless, the Board decided to approve the new financial rules; retain the new human resources policy; and provide a positive evaluation of the CEO, despite allegations that mismanagement had contributed to the backlog and related payment delays.

The issue of the backlog has been fraught with tension over the past year. The CEO claimed to have met performance targets and to have reduced the backlog by 90 per cent by the end of May 2016. Yet published figures demonstrated that the backlog had only been reduced by 50 per cent.

The Pension Board report glosses over IPAS implementation and provides the CEO with a positive performance. It has little to say about the backlog beyond stating that the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) will issue an audit report in Fall 2016 (PB343). The Board of Auditors report, however, reveals that fully 85 per cent of death-in-service cases and 91 per cent of retirement and withdrawal cases “were processed with delays ranging from 16 days to more than one year” (more than 3000 cases because of missing documentation). (BoA.10, 11, pp.8-10).

The UN staff federations contend that the CEO has consistently deflected responsibility for payment delays on to adjustment problems with the new IT technology (IPAS) and to retirees and parent organizations for failing to provide necessary documentation. In reality, says CCISUA, the CEO failed to put a credible backup plan for IPAS in place; refused an offer from the

UN Department of Field Support to provide staff to help with the backlog; that he and the Board Chairman had failed to accept proposals for paying compensation to affected retirees and survivors; and that serial special task forces are convened while funds for temporary assistance are unused. The Pension Board decided that payment would be authorized by the CEO three months after all documentation is submitted, which has no rationale, since a regular benefit is due at that time.

As to missing documentation as cited by the Board of Auditors report, CCISUA contends that tasks for which the Fund receives \$10 million from the General Assembly every two years for the Pension Committee to ensure required documentation are neglected. The CEO is expected to take the Board’s positive performance evaluation to the General Assembly hoping to secure a contract renewal (some observers say, in order to pre-empt the participation of newly elected participant representatives at the 2016 Pension Board meeting).

Concerning the overall financial health of the Fund, the Pension Board report notes that according to the latest actuarial report, the present contribution rate is sufficient to meet the benefit requirements. However, investment underperformance, unless rectified, could place the Fund’s long-term sustainability at risk.

Both the Pension Board and Board of Auditors reports reveal that while the Fund was not meeting its 3.5 per cent real return objective, other pension funds had delivered better performance in 2015 and were meeting theirs. (PB95, BoA57). The Board of Auditors noted that total vacancies at the professional level inIMD for more than six months was at the level of 25 per cent (BoA24).

The Board of Auditors also identified

incomplete or incorrect financial disclosures, and foreign exchange losses of \$3.45 billion (with no mitigating mechanism in place) and investment income losses of \$7.38 billion, for a grand total of \$10.83 billion for the period 2014-2015). (BoA 4,10,11,pp.8, 13).

The Pension Board endorsed the recommendations of the Assets and Liabilities Monitoring Committee, including for a clear investment policy; an in-depth review by an independent expert; for the SG to ensure proper composition of the Investment Committee; as well as information on RSG performance. (PB397) The RSG expressed strong support for internal management of investments (PB248); the Board Chair stated that no outsourcing, hedge funds or privatizations are contemplated (PB249); and the new financial rules provide for the Fund to continue to use UN Financial Regulations and Rules for procurement and administrative activities (PB245). That may all be good news taken at face value. Note, however, that the Board of Auditors report states, alarmingly, that in 2011 the Fund decided to treat the selection of external managers as an investment rather than a procurement exercise and that guidelines for selection and evaluation had four years later not been finalized. (BoA86)

At the CCISUA briefing, a retired Fund staff member noted that the Board members attend a single meeting per year for which they undergo two days of training at the Fund and are expected to make policy decisions on matters of which they know very little, and in some cases, have not read the background material, which they receive in large amounts no more than a week before the meeting. The Board’s response to criticism was to adopt a “secrecy code”, he said. Many reports to the Board were done by consultants paid for by the stakeholders; yet, documents are restricted and not available to stakeholders.

The advertisement for Lindegger Optique features a blue and white color scheme. On the left, the text "LINDEGGER" is in large, bold, blue capital letters, followed by "OPTIQUE" in a slightly smaller font, and "maîtres opticiens" in a smaller, lowercase font. Below this, the address "COURS DE RIVE 15 - GENEVA - 022 735 29 11" is listed. On the right, a dark blue background contains the slogan "your best eyesight is through our eyewear and care" in a white, italicized font. At the bottom right, the services "optic - optometry - eyewear - instruments - contact lenses" are listed in a smaller white font.

Citing a lack of respect for beneficiary rights and a failure in the primary mission of the Fund Secretariat headed by the CEO, to pay benefits on time, CCISUA noted that the staff federations have taken a strong stance that the CEO should be evaluated at the end of next year, that consideration should be given to considering other candidates, and that any an extension of contract without the Board's recommendation would be a breach of contract.

Richards noted that this year, staff federation representatives, who hold observer status and are normally allowed to make a statement to be attached to the report, were "muzzled." Board members were made to sign a confidentiality agreement stating that they were not allowed to share information, even with stakeholders (participants and beneficiaries of the Fund) and the Board attacked press coverage in strong terms. In addition, retaliation against staff in the Pension Fund since the Board meeting had become a serious concern.

At the CCISUA briefing, the Fund's Chief Communications Officer announced that there would shortly be town hall meetings

in Geneva and New York, where the CEO and RSG would "answer questions".

The concerns of participants and beneficiaries about the continued health of the Fund are based on well-founded misgivings about a growing UN-wide culture of financial and managerial deficiencies and weaknesses, which the General Assembly resolution adopted on 15 December 2015 (A/RES/70/238 dated 23 December 2015) attempted to address "given the high-risk environment in which the United Nations and all its entities operate"; low whistleblower protection; and a history of OIOS findings of Fund irregularities.²

There are troubling developments since the Board meeting, including a move on the part of the Fund leadership to terminate the contract of a Fund staff representative. Were this allowed to stand, it would represent a new low in staff-management relations and a violation of UN staff rules and regulations.

In the current UN system-wide environment of non-transparency and impunity, it is crucial that responsible and accountable

participant representatives are elected to the Board to ensure that stakeholder interests are fairly represented. Election will take place before the end of the year. There is also no doubt that a combination of staff and retiree activism has worked to focus attention on ongoing concerns related to the Fund. However, the level of denial, obfuscation and intractability that persists on some fronts provides clear evidence of growing staff-management dysfunction. There are hopes that the incoming Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres will, among his many formidable tasks, take steps to address chronic management deficiencies in the Fund. ■

1 Loraine Rickard-Martin is redactor of the blog: unpension.blogspot.com – unpensionblog.info@gmail.com.

2 OIOS ID Case No. 0543/05, 28 March 2006, investigation into alleged conflict of interest, favoritism and mismanagement in the Fund. Recommended disciplinary action regarding senior Fund staff was never implemented. OIOS Assignment No. AS2007/800/06, 4 June 2008 found several weaknesses in the procurement process including recurrent use of direct procurement outside of established provisions and consultancy services used to discharge core functions.



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Take a stand against ageism

SILVIA PEREL-LEVIN¹

Older persons worldwide experience discrimination and the violation of their human rights at family, community, institutional and societal levels. The unprecedented ageing of the global population means that discrimination is likely to increase. We live longer in every region of the world and it is one of the greatest achievements of humanity. But do we live well in our old age? Sadly, older people encounter numerous barriers to their enjoyment of human rights.

Older persons are not a homogenous, separate group. Age alone does not define them. In fact, ageing applies to the whole population regardless of group or identity. Unless you die young, you will grow old. Human rights should apply to everyone everywhere throughout the course of life. But in reality, upper-age limits in all fields of life prevent older persons from exercising their rights, whether it is employment, access to health and care services, training, housing or participation in decision-making. Age becomes the only basis for discrimination that is still accepted and enshrined in legislation and policies.

Ageism, the stereotyping and discriminating against individuals or groups on the basis of their age, is the root cause of the specific challenges that older persons face in all aspects of life. Ageist attitudes lead to lower quality of life, lack of access to preventive health care or rehabilitation services, and to abusive practices, such as denied or undignified treatment. Pension



The Executive Committee of the NGO Committee on Ageing with the Independent Expert, Ms Rosa Kornfeld Mate, following a Human Rights Council side event on older refugees.



Side event at the 33rd session of the Human Rights Council organized by the Group of Friends of Older Persons. On the panel, The State Secretary of Slovenia, the ambassadors of Namibia and Singapore, the deputy permanent representative from Brazil, The Independent Expert on the Rights of Older Persons, Representative from Age Platform Europe and the Chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing as moderator.

schemes are inadequate, as they are not conceived to cover care-related needs, but for the loss of work-related income. In fact, only one in four people over 65 in low and middle-income countries receives a pension at all.

Abuse, including social isolation, neglect, physical restraints, disrespect for individual choices, being deprived of day-to-day decisions, of liberty, of privacy or of palliative care can be a reality for older persons both at home or in an institution. This abuse is mostly hidden and tolerated with no legislation or regular monitoring, a lack of adequate quality standards, no training of caregivers and austerity measures.

While most international human rights treaties apply in principle to people of all ages, specific reference to older persons is rare. Very few Member States include older persons in their reports to the Universal Periodic Review and the various Committees of the human rights mechanisms.

The Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG) was established by the General Assembly in 2010 with the mandate to examine the existing international framework to protect the human rights of older persons, identify possible gaps and how best to address them, including by considering further instruments and measures. In the six meetings of the OEWG to-date, the

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Au Berceau d'Or

debate has been divided between those who promote a new convention on the rights of older persons and those who are against it.

The Independent Expert on the human rights of older persons, in her report to the Human Rights Council last September, urged Member States to address the protection gap, to step up efforts to determine the best way to strengthen the human rights of older persons and to consider the various proposals that have been made, notably the elaboration of a convention.

The NGO Committee on Ageing at the UN in Geneva works to raise awareness of ageing issues and to ensure that the UN System adequately addresses them. It brings together organizations and individuals with an interest in the wellbeing and human rights of older persons. Beyond the international NGOs that focus on ageing in their mission, we also work with organizations that focus on human rights, women, palliative care, mental health, dementia, environment, education, large faith-based organizations, and also youth organizations. We interact with all generations because we believe that by protecting the rights of older persons we are protecting the rights of all of society. We see every day that the majority of volunteers representing civil society at the UN are older persons supporting a myriad of causes.

The NGO Committee on Ageing in Geneva interacts with sister Committees in New York and Vienna. We are members of the stakeholder group on ageing that advocates and monitors the inclusion of older persons in the 2030 agenda to make sure that Leaving no one behind is more than a slogan. We participate in Habitat 3 to make sure that urbanization takes into account the unprecedented number of older persons living in cities. We organize events at the Human Rights Council and around the International Day of Older Persons and we contribute to processes such as negotiations of resolutions, the WHO Global Action Plan on Ageing and Health and the UNECE Working Group on Ageing.

We monitor and make sure that the UN and specialized agencies are aware of what the others do in the field of ageing, promoting interagency and intra-agency cooperation. We disseminate messages and news to our organizations around the world in a true cascading fashion.

Member States should recognize the systemic, multifaceted, structural discrimination faced by older persons, systematically include older persons in consultations and monitoring mechanisms, ensure an equal application of rights across the life course and eliminate arbitrary age barriers that serve to justify the exclusion of older persons. Governments should engage in a constructive discussion around a Convention on the rights of older persons to tackle ageism and the social injustice that older persons suffer. ■

1 Silvia Perel-Levin is Chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing, Geneva

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Réussir son passage vers la retraite

Suisse formée à l'Université de Lausanne, le Dr Ariane Froidevaux a récemment soutenu sa thèse intitulée «Adjusting successfully to retirement». Elle mène actuellement ses recherches au Département de Management de l'Université de Floride dans l'équipe du Professeur Mo Wang, spécialiste international de la psychologie de la retraite. Elle nous parle en quelques mots de ce changement de vie majeur.



Ariane Froidevaux

© Marie-José Astre-Démoulin

L'un des changements majeurs, souvent, c'est qu'à la retraite on devient «son propre patron».

MARIE-JOSÉ ASTRE-DÉMOULIN, UNOG

La «Psychologie du conseil et de l'orientation» part du principe qu'un individu se positionne pour développer sa carrière, qu'il prend conscience de ses caractéristiques personnelles et de la nécessité de les développer en vue d'effectuer des choix d'activités professionnelles, extra-professionnelles, et de carrière, tout au long de sa vie.

notamment familiale, comme interreliées – et non plus distinctes. En anglais, on parle de «life design», ce qui montre bien qu'il s'agit de faire une construction de sa vie au sens large, en fonction de qui on est. Dans ses recherches, le Dr Ariane Froidevaux applique cette approche dans le contexte des personnes, au travail, qui se dirigent vers la soixantaine.

L'idée est d'apprendre à concevoir la vie professionnelle et la vie extra-professionnelle,

De plus en plus, les gens ne prennent pas une retraite dans le sens où on l'entendait traditionnellement, en passant du

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jour au lendemain d'un emploi à plein temps à une retraite à temps plein. On est passé de la notion de «j'ai 50 ans, j'ai plus qu'à attendre ma retraite» vers la notion de différents temps de vie professionnelle, qui se créent en fonction d'objectifs professionnels et personnels en évolution constante.

Au niveau identitaire, les personnes qui se sentent bien au travail expriment généralement que le travail reflète qui elles sont. Les Onusiens ont la chance de contribuer à une belle mission humanitaire reconnue sur le plan international, ils peuvent donc tirer parti de cette ressource afin de construire leur image personnelle. De fait, bien que pour certains, l'appartenance professionnelle disparaisse durant la retraite – comme un chapitre clos; pour d'autres cette appartenance professionnelle représente une source identitaire importante, reflétant des valeurs qui continuent de guider leurs choix d'activités au quotidien à la retraite. Cette identité positive peut toutefois devenir source de souffrance à la retraite, lorsque les personnes qui n'exercent plus ne se reposent que sur elle pour définir qui elles sont; il est donc important que d'autres rôles viennent l'enrichir.

En d'autres termes, il s'agit de prendre des initiatives

nouvelles pour sa vie. Si l'on s'est principalement conformé-e à la structure pendant la vie professionnelle, le fait de devoir tout à coup tout décider de nouveaux projets professionnels et de vie par

«À la retraite, on est son propre patron, il s'agit de prendre des initiatives nouvelles pour sa vie. Si l'on s'est principalement conformé à la structure pendant la vie professionnelle, le changement risque d'être plus difficile»

soi-même, mais surtout pour soi-même, risque d'être plus difficile. Ainsi, quand on n'a plus d'horaire obligatoire, il faut trouver d'autres manières de se structurer, car la structure représente l'un des besoins fondamentaux de l'être humain. Mais il ne faudrait pas croire que devenir son propre patron ne soit qu'une étape difficile: au contraire, cela peut être très «grisant» et procurer un intense sentiment de liberté, et/ou de vivre sa vie (plus) pleinement.

La gestion du temps est donc une question complexe car il s'agira d'apprendre à être plus conscient de ses cycles personnels, de ses priorités.

Les quelques mois – et même plutôt les quelques années – avant la retraite constituent le moment idéal pour faire preuve

de créativité et pour prendre des initiatives, afin de, comme l'a écrit anonymement un participant à ses recherches, faire de la retraite «le dessert de sa vie»!

Dans sa thèse, le Dr Ariane Froidevaux a exploré quatre enjeux psychologiques essentiels lorsqu'on approche de la retraite. Ils étaient bien souvent donnés d'emblée par le travail, sans qu'il y ait besoin de trop y réfléchir:

Identité – le fait de traduire les parts importantes de «qui l'on est» dans ses activités quotidiennes. Selon les personnes, le métier et/ou l'organisation (comme l'ONU) peuvent définir des parts importantes de qui elles sont. À la retraite, il est nécessaire d'explorer, voire de créer, de nouvelles parts de soi, dans la vie extra-professionnelle.

Sens – le fait de trouver du sens dans les domaines professionnels et extra-professionnels. Différents éléments peuvent donner du sens, à différents moments de vie. Notamment, la recherche a

montré que l'altruisme tend à devenir une source de sens plus importante dans le troisième tiers de la vie.

Sentiment de compter pour autrui

– le fait de ressentir que l'on est important pour les autres. Lorsque l'on entre à la retraite, il est important de réfléchir à comment l'on peut continuer de contribuer par ses actions, que ce soit au niveau de la société (p.ex., s'engager en politique ou pour l'écologie) et/ou de ses proches (p.ex., s'engager pour ses petits-enfants ou pour aider ses voisins). ■

Pour accéder aux recherches et travaux publiés en anglais: www.researchgate.net/profile/Ariane_Froidevaux – Contact: ariane.froidevaux@unil.ch

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The Golden Age





50th anniversary of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

*An interview with Frank Van Rompaey,
UNIDO Representative to the United
Nations and other International
Organizations in Geneva*

SARAH JORDAN, SDLS, UNOG

How will the Organization be celebrating its 50th birthday?

Celebrations will be taking place worldwide as we have 173 member states, but the main events will be held in Vienna, where we have our headquarters.

What does UNIDO do?

Our Director-General (DG) LI Yong always says of UNIDO – “U and I do” because we are target-oriented in the way we do things and we are about partnerships. We work for and with our member states and with the private sector. We try to be both effective and efficient and, if the evaluations made of us are anything to go by, we

succeed! We aim to do two things: to ensure that industry contributes to job creation and sustained economic growth more generally, and to ensure that industrial development consumes far fewer resources and pollutes the environment less than in the past. “Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID)” is our mandate. The new international sustainable development agenda aims to eradicate poverty and create prosperity for all. This is a big challenge and some seem to think that low-income countries can develop economically by by-passing industry and so avoid the pollution and social exploitation that so often has

gone with it. The fact is that no country has achieved an advanced stage of development without industrializing. Africa and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) will have to industrialize, but should do so in a more environmentally-benign and socially inclusive manner. To eliminate poverty, industrial development is necessary, but we need to do it in the best way possible. Our main Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is number 9 – “build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”, but we contribute to a number of other goals too – number 7 (affordable and clean energy),

number 8 (decent work) and number 13 (climate action), for example. Indirectly, we contribute to all 17 goals.

Partnerships with the private sector are fashionable now, but we have always worked with the private sector. State-owned industry is now pretty much a thing of the past and we welcome the SDGs and the emphasis on public-private-partnerships because industrial development goes hand-in-hand with the private sector. Interestingly, many of our staff at UNIDO have a private sector background. At UNIDO, engineers and economists work together. A large





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part of our portfolio for instance is in safeguarding the environment and improving industrial processes. We were one of the main signatories and biggest implementing agency of the Montreal Protocol, which came into force in 1989. Its goal was to limit the usage of substances that deplete the ozone layer. Today, thanks to UNIDO's work, the hole in the ozone layer is significantly smaller. This is a direct example of the type of environmental management we do. We were also present at the COP 21 in Paris last year and our DG participated in many high-level conferences and side events.

How do you see the future – 50 years old and here to stay?

Here to stay for as long as our member countries need our services. At present, the demand for our services is high –for technical cooperation, for policy advice and for knowledge transfer, networking and industrial cooperation. More than 50% of our delivery is currently in the areas of environmental management and energy – mainly because donor funding is available for this type of activities and UNIDO has to rely on third party funding. While safeguarding the environment is important, many countries want our support in developing a more competitive industrial sector and integrating into the world economy. With the new

2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, funding for industrialization should become available –from public and private sources. Developing countries are convinced of the relevance of industrial development and the effectiveness of the services we are providing, but the developed countries – not all but some – have been more dubious about the continued relevance of industrial development for socio-economic advancement. With the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution there are some doubts about the future job creation potential of industry. Still, manufacturing will remain an important source of jobs at lower levels of income and, at higher levels of income, the indirect contribution of manufacturing industry to job creation is still high.

For every job created in manufacturing, there are 2.2 additional jobs created in other sectors – in services and agriculture. Our message therefore is that industry is needed if countries want to advance from a low-income status to a more advanced status. We are happy that prosperity is a clear goal now, a clear pillar of the SDGs. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were social – and to a limited extent environmental. We collaborate closely with UNCTAD, ILO, ITC and WTO. WTO is hosting the Aid for Trade initiative and this

is another justification for our presence here in Geneva. Trade and industry are closely linked.

And what about industry in the developed world?

Over the last two decades, industry has been shifting from developed to developing countries, as firms move to benefit from lower production costs and growing markets. Nevertheless, industrialized countries still account for the bulk of world industrial production. Manufacturing still matters a great deal, but its primary importance is as a driver of productivity growth, innovation and trade; and its indirect contribution to employment is still important. Hence, the decision by the Obama administration to support the car industry, the European Commission's Strategy for a European Industrial Renaissance and Theresa May's decision to develop an industrial strategy for the UK.

The new industrial revolution – Industry 4.0 – might even lead to a reshoring or the repatriation of production from low-cost locations back to developed economies. Look at what's happening in Japan, where Japanese manufacturing companies are relocating back. In Germany, Adidas recently decided to automate shoe production and relocate part of its operations back to Germany – to enable the shoes be made

more quickly, more customized and closer to its sales outlets.

UNIDO is closely following such trends and especially its implications for developing economies. Together with the UAE, we are organizing a major Global Manufacturing and Industrialization Summit (GMIS) in March of next year. GMIS will define a global vision of manufacturing to promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

We want to demonstrate the continued relevance of industry and support developing countries –and Africa and LDCs especially – in a more meaningful way. We want to mobilise public investment in infrastructure and private investment in industry worldwide – and make sure that industry is inclusive and safeguards the environment. With the ongoing migration crisis, the importance of alleviating poverty and creating decent, quality jobs in Africa is even higher on our agenda and industrialisation is the key. We have our work cut out for the next 15 – if not 50 – years at least with job creation, the reduction of environmental impact and this new and exciting industrial revolution. With new technology and fresh thinking we can strike a durable balance between increasing prosperity and sustaining the environment. ■



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Contribuer au bien-être collectif après la retraite

De très nombreux collègues continuent à apporter une contribution à la communauté après avoir pris leur retraite. En voici quelques remarquables exemples.

MARIE-JOSÉ ASTRE-DÉMOULIN



Sylvie Jacque

Sylvie Jacque est un bel exemple d'une carrière réussie puisqu'elle est entrée pour la première fois à l'ONU avec un grade G3 à New York et qu'elle a terminé sa carrière comme Administrateur de haut rang à la Bibliothèque de l'ONUG.

Elle a pris sa retraite après 37 ans au service de l'Organisation et elle affiche aujourd'hui un emploi du temps rempli d'activités bénévoles dans différents domaines.

D'une part, elle conduit à Cité Seniors¹ des ateliers de conversations françaises. Il s'agit d'animer des groupes réunis pour deux heures autour d'une table. Non seulement elle contribue à cette activité de manière gracieuse mais il lui arrive d'apporter de l'aide à de jeunes étudiants qui ont besoin de la langue française pour leurs études.

D'autre part, elle est impliquée dans l'association Grey Cells² et contribue à des projets de

développement. Elle a ainsi participé à la création d'un répertoire de sites d'intérêt pour les missions diplomatiques afin de faciliter leur travail au sein de l'ONU et des organisations internationales à New York et à Genève.

Hormis ces activités essentielles, elle joue du piano, assure la promotion du MEG³, fait de nombreuses activités physiques, veille à maintenir à niveau ses quatre langues étrangères et est un membre actif de la troupe de théâtre de l'ONU qui nous propose des représentations chaque année pour notre plus grand bonheur.

Alors, lorsqu'elle nous dit que «il n'est pas toujours facile de redéfinir son utilité dans la société après la retraite», on a un peu de mal à la croire! On a simplement envie de lui dire merci pour son énergie et pour l'exemple qu'elle nous offre.



Friedrich von Kirchbach

L'essentiel de ma carrière s'est déroulé au Centre du commerce international, (ITC). J'y

ai passé 29 ans, à la fin comme Directeur de la Division des programmes de pays.

J'ai adoré mon travail et, quand l'heure de la retraite a sonné, ça n'a pas été facile... Je n'imaginais pas un instant, à ce moment-là, que j'allais aborder la période la plus heureuse de mon existence.

Je suis devenu le Coordonnateur du Fonds 1% pour le développement⁴ dont j'étais membre depuis 25 ans. Je pense que chacun(e) de nous a une responsabilité personnelle de contribuer à la lutte contre l'extrême pauvreté. Ce Fonds représente l'initiative de

la plus grande ampleur pour le développement du personnel Onusien. Huit millions de francs suisses ont déjà été collectés et utilisés pour 800 projets dans le monde entier. Je suis très content de pouvoir donner du temps et mes compétences pour ce Fonds auquel je crois et j'encourage tous nos collègues à contribuer s'ils le souhaitent.

De plus, sur un plan plus personnel, j'ai eu la chance de pouvoir acheter, avec mon épouse, une propriété à Bourg-en-Bresse et nous avons créé une association afin d'organiser, dans ce lieu magnifique, des événements ouverts au public⁵.

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Nous nouons ainsi de belles relations avec les habitants de la région autour de concerts et rencontres culturelles.

Je voudrais dire à tous les futurs retraités qu'ils doivent aborder ce changement majeur avec confiance, surtout s'ils ont la chance d'être en bonne santé. C'est pourquoi je les encourage à ne pas trop différer l'âge de prise de retraite et de partir dès que leurs moyens financiers le leur permettent afin de bénéficier d'une bonne énergie. Bien sûr, il est essentiel d'avoir réfléchi à l'avance pour savoir quels sont projets qui vont figurer dans cette prochaine tranche de vie.

En tant qu'Onusiens, nous avons eu la chance de pouvoir travailler pour une cause noble dans de bonnes conditions. Nous pouvons envisager sereinement de continuer à servir la communauté. Et je finirai sur

une phrase du Dalai Lama: *«If you want to be good to others, be compassionate. If you want to be good to yourself, be compassionate.»*



© Monika Spyczak

Monika Spyczak

Tous les samedis matins, je fais partie d'une action de distribution de soupe pour des sans-abris au Temple à Genève⁶. Mais j'ai du mal à parler de «contribution» bénévole car, pour moi, cet épluchage de légumes collectif est un moment de plaisir et de partage.

J'ai également suivi une formation pour apporter une

assistance physique et morale à des personnes en fin de vie à la Maison de Tara⁷. Ce sont des moments intenses et précieux que je vis dans ce centre et j'ai vraiment le sentiment de recevoir autant que je donne. Ces patients ont souvent beaucoup de choses à nous apprendre, on se sent très «petite» face à leur dignité.

Ces deux activités me permettent de faire de magnifiques rencontres. J'y croise la diversité du monde, des gens de toutes les nationalités, avec des parcours de vie incroyables. Je découvre des choses sur différents pays, sur des situations de guerre ou de souffrance mais il y a toujours un fil qui nous relie quelle que soit la situation: les enfants, nos croyances, une forme d'humanité.

J'ai l'impression d'être «payée» au centuple pour ce que je fais, simplement ce que je reçois en

échange n'est pas de l'argent!

J'ai été membre du personnel de l'ONU pendant 40 ans, principalement à la Commission économique pour l'Europe, et j'ai toujours eu le sentiment de faire partie d'une famille. J'ai eu des relations riches avec mes collègues qui sont devenus de vrais amis et, aujourd'hui, je me sens pleinement heureuse de mes activités dans le cadre de ma retraite, j'ai beaucoup de chance! ■

- 1 <http://www.ville-geneve.ch/themes/social/seniors/cite-seniors/>
- 2 <http://www.geneve-int.ch/fr/greycells-1>
- 3 <http://www.ville-ge.ch/meg/index.php>
- 4 <http://www.unstaffonepercentfundny.org/Evolution/>
- 5 <http://www.lesamisdelagarde.fr/>
- 6 <http://paquis.blog.tdg.ch/tag/soupe+populaire>
- 7 <http://lamaisondetara.ch/fr/>

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In 1983 in Pakistan, girls share books and a bench after class in their school in the city of Karachi.

Hope for every child

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) celebrates its 70th anniversary

PATRICIA CODYRE, UNICEF

Faced with the reality of millions of children suffering daily deprivations in Europe after the Second World War, the General Assembly of the United Nations announced the creation of a new entity – the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) – on 11 December 1946.

UNICEF was charged with mounting urgent relief programmes for vulnerable children, without discrimination due to race, creed or nationality. Upon his appointment as the organization's first Executive Director, Maurice Pate said its mission would "include all children" from both allied and "ex-enemy countries."



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Lao People's Democratic Republic, 2015
A girl smiles while drinking water at a water point in the village of Adone, Ta Oi District, Saravane Province. The village is home to the Pacoh ethnic group.

Seventy years later, as the world struggles to cope with a migrant and refugee crisis not seen since the 1940s – and with continuing development challenges in low- and middle-income countries around the world – UNICEF remains an ever-present advocate for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

UNICEF's 70th anniversary is more than a milestone commemorating its work

for children since 1946. It is a reminder of the reasons UNICEF was founded: to bring lifesaving aid, long-term support and hope to children whose lives and futures are put at risk by conflict, by crises, by crushing poverty and, increasingly, by the effects of climate change.

The cause of children matters now, more than ever – and UNICEF's work for the most disadvantaged, excluded and

vulnerable children has never been more relevant, or more urgent. "For in a world that often challenges our hope," said current UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake, "we can best challenge hopelessness with results. Results for children. Results for every child."

While UNICEF's original mission was emergency relief, in 1953 the UN General Assembly granted the organization a permanent mandate as a global

custodian of child health and well-being. Known since then as the United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF now works in 191 countries and territories. It is uniquely positioned to respond not only to the humanitarian needs of children displaced by disaster or armed conflict, but also to the long-term development needs of children around the world – particularly those who remain excluded and marginalized in the twenty-first century.

The conviction that every child is born with the same inalienable right to a healthy, safe childhood is a constant thread through UNICEF's history. For seven decades, the agency has honed its expertise in delivering services to children at risk, no matter who they are, no matter where they live. In 1965, that universal commitment brought UNICEF the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its work.



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TOP: Circa 1946 in Germany, a displaced girl wrapped in blankets, sits atop her belongings, waiting to continue her journey home. In 2015 in Serbia, a boy refugee rests on a suitcase at a reception centre in Preševo. He'll travel further after receiving his travel papers.

On 5 October 2015 in Serbia, (centre) a young boy lies on a bag amid other refugees and migrants in the town of Presevo, close to the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Approximately 5,000 people crowded into Presevo, overwhelming the capacity of the reception centre.

ABOVE: Greece – Circa 1950 in Greece, a girl smiles. Greece is 1 of 23 countries that both contribute to and receive aid from UNICEF. One of its contributions was used to purchase Greek dried fruits for relief distribution to Palestinian refugees.

On 28 September 2015, a person holds an emergency blanket over three newly arrived child refugees, along the shores near the town of Mithymna, on the island of Lesbos, in the North Aegean region.

Champions for children

- **1946.** UNICEF was created by the United Nations General Assembly to provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War II.
- **1953.** The UN General Assembly grants a permanent mandate and name, the United Nations Children's Fund. However, UNICEF continues to operate under the name that has become synonymous with child well-being.
- **1959.** The UN General Assembly adopts the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the first international codification of child rights.
- **1965.** UNICEF's stature was recognized and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
- **1979.** 'United Nations International Year of the Child'. UNICEF urged governments to uphold child rights as previously laid out in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.
- **1989.** The 'Convention on the Rights of the Child' (CRC), the first global set of standards to protect children from exploitation, abuse and neglect. 159 countries signed the CRC making it the most widely and rapidly accepted human rights treaty in history.
- **1990.** The first World Summit for Children, resulted in an action plan to set specific goals for child survival, health, nutrition, education and protection.
- **2002.** The Special Session on Children was the first UN General Assembly session devoted exclusively to children – and the first to include young people as official delegates.
- **2015.** UNICEF ensures that the next set of global goals are child-focused and reinforce the link between greater equity for the most disadvantaged children and the long-term social and economic development of global communities.

During its early years, UNICEF seized upon important medical and scientific discoveries for its fledgling programmes. Milk pasteurization, iodized salt and protein-enriched foods were key components of its nutrition efforts, while life-saving antibiotics and vaccines allowed UNICEF health teams to treat eradicable diseases and usher in the era of mass immunization.

In time, the sheer urgency the UNICEF mission served as a catalyst for design solutions from within the organization. To name just a few:

- The Mark II hand pump, designed by UNICEF in the 1970s to respond to devastating drought in India, is now the world's most widely used human-powered water pump.
- Oral rehydration therapy became a massive lifesaver with UNICEF's systematic adoption of the method to fight diarrhoeal dehydration and prevent child deaths in the 1970s and 1980s.
- The School-in-a-Box – a supply kit for education in emergencies – was created jointly with UNESCO in 1993 and is still deployed in crisis situations worldwide.

Also in the 1990s, the expansion of initiatives by UNICEF and partners to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV (and subsequent progress in providing paediatric antiretroviral drugs) had a dramatic, lifesaving impact on the global AIDS crisis.

UNICEF relies on the strengths and collaborations built over the years to pioneer low-cost, high-impact interventions. The organization forges links between humanitarian action and development work, builds bridges between public-sector capacity and private-sector support, and advocates for a 'first call for children' in the policy choices of every society.

Today, UNICEF works at the grassroots level, and also in boardrooms and government ministries, to address the root causes of inequity – so that all children will have access to education, health care, sanitation, clean water, protection and other services necessary for their survival, growth and development. UNICEF believes that this is not only a moral imperative, but also a strategic requirement for sustainable development and global stability.

Born amidst the ruins of war, UNICEF remains active in some of the world's toughest places. It operates with the understanding that when communities are strong and empowered, they are better able to bounce back from shocks – including shocks caused by natural disasters, armed conflict and, increasingly, the impact of climate change.

UNICEF's continued viability depends on applying past lessons learned to the challenges ahead, and harnessing the power of innovation to solve tomorrow's problems. As envisioned by current Executive Director Anthony Lake, that will require a "willingness to adapt... and find new ways to realize the rights and brighten the futures of the most disadvantaged children around the world."

The 70th anniversary of UNICEF is an opportunity to celebrate all that it has achieved, together with invaluable partners. But it is also a reminder of the work that remains to be done in keeping hope alive and advancing the rights of every child. ■




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Stop defining me by my age

In a diverse society and as human beings we tend to unintentionally group people based on what we look like for example sex, race, disability. In doing so we stereotype people and make the assumption that all members of a “group” are the same.



ALANA OFFICER, WHO

Stereotyping and discrimination against individuals or groups on the basis of their age is called ageism. It affects both younger and older people but older adults tend to experience the brunt of the problem. Stereotyping is always problematic and particularly applied to ageing as a hallmark of older age is precisely great diversity.

Ageism can take many forms, including prejudicial attitudes such as:

- categorizing older people as frail, out of touch, burdensome or dependent;
- discriminatory practices, such as health care rationing by age; and
- institutional policies that perpetuate stereotypical beliefs, such as mandatory retirement.

Ageist depictions are prevalent in everyday language and across a range of media including television, popular music and social media. A recent analysis carried out by the World Health Organization using World Value Survey data of 83,034 adults from 57 countries highlights just how widespread the problem is. Sixty percent of participants reported that older adults are not well respected, with respondents

from higher income countries being more likely to report so. Yet, unlike other stereotypes and forms of discrimination, including sexism and racism, ageism is largely accepted and commonly unchallenged because of its largely implicit and subconscious nature.

Ageism concerns us all. Children take on the attitudes and stereotypes from the family or cultural environment and are aware of their cultures age stereotypes as young as four. As we get older, we are not only subjected to external stereotyping and discrimination but the negative ageist attitudes become internalized into unconscious self-stereotypes. Internalized ageism is exhibited by older people trying to stay young, feeling shame about getting older and limiting what they think that can do instead of taking pride in the accomplishment of ageing.

Tackling ageism- both external and internalized – has great potential to improve the physical and mental health of older adults. Longitudinal research from the United States found that, after controlling for gender and socioeconomic status, older people who hold positive self-stereotypes

make better recovery from disability and live on average 7.5 years more than people with negative attitudes to ageing. Feel free to test your own attitudes to ageing and older people <http://www.who.int/ageing/features/attitudes-quiz/en/>

Changing public discourse around population ageing – which largely depicts older adults as burdens on public spending and economic growth can also help to capitalise on the great human capacity that older people represent. Older adults make significant social and economic contributions to their societies. In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the contributions older people made through taxation, consumer spending and other economically valuable activities (such as care giving) were worth nearly 40 billion Pounds Sterling, more than expenditure on them through pensions, welfare and health care combined. This is set to rise to 77 billion Pounds Sterling by 2030. Although less evidence is available from low- and middle-income countries, the contribution of older people in these settings is also significant. In Kenya, for example, the average age of smallholder farmers is 60 years, making them critical for ensuring food security.

In May, the World Health Assembly adopted the first *Global strategy and plan of action on ageing and health*, which spans the 15-year period of the Sustainable Development Goals. The vision of the Strategy is a world in which we can live long and healthy lives. A priority for action is to combat ageism. The WHO Director-General was specifically asked to develop, in cooperation with other partners, a global campaign to combat ageism in order to add value to local initiatives and to achieve an ultimate goal of enhancing the day-to-day experience of older people and to optimize policy responses.

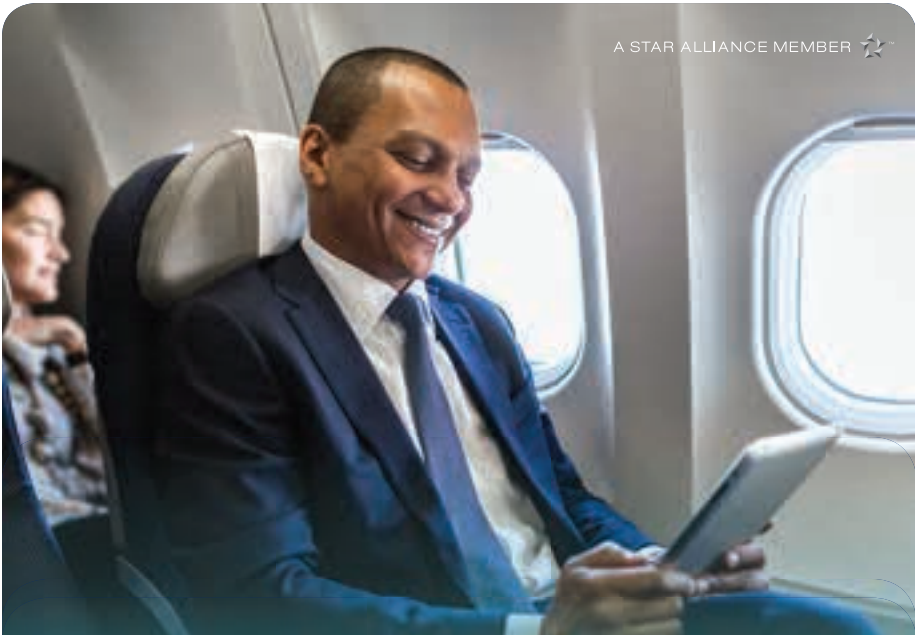
We have a number of proposed actions but look forward to working with a broad coalition of actors to decide what these should be.

- Get the evidence we need to inform effective communication and concrete actions to combat ageism;
- Develop a global coalition as ageism is everybody's business
- Create a communications platform that supports a global public campaign to reframe ageing and combat ageism;

- Make selected structural changes to health and social policy and training that will be central to combatting ageism.

While combatting ageism is a monumental challenge experience with sexism and racism has shown that changing social norms is possible and can result in more prosperous, equitable and healthier societies.


For the first time in history, most people can expect to live into their sixties and beyond. While we are living in an ageing world it doesn't have to be an ageist one. As a first step we all must stop defining ourselves and others by chronological age. ■




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Ode to Retirement

SUE BLOCK TYRRELL, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER WHO STAFF MEMBERS

“Retirement” – what does it mean to you?
You can’t wait for the day? Or it leaves you blue?
Some people adjust within a matter of days,
And others take years to adapt, find new ways
To fill their lives with tasks that bring pleasure,
Replacing professions and stress with more leisure.
Some search for work, others volunteer,
Others opt to travel for most of the year.

Many questions arise as the date becomes near,
Where will you live? Return “home” or stay here?
“Home country” holidays are mostly such fun
But can you live there again, when all’s said and done?

Will you have enough money? How much tax will you pay?
Or will you choose a tax haven, quite far away?
With more money to spend but friends are not there,
What’s more important to you? Just think with care.

Marriages/partnerships well “made in heaven”
Enter a new chapter, together 24/7!
Before it was evenings, weekends, holidays,
Another challenge ahead for this new phase
Of your life, so to downsize don’t race,
Give it time, as both of you need your own space.

“Leisurely days” aren’t quite what you think,
Most mornings rush past, before you can blink,
When working, you’re rapidly up, out, on the scene
And personal chores you fit in your routine,
Refreshments and meals are often close at hand
For rapid consumption, both simple and grand.

But retirees can take time to get up and get going
With shopping and cooking, emailing and phoning,
Time doesn’t stand still and the day is soon gone
With not much accomplished, except a few chores done.

Like all things in life, there’s both good and bad,
Some miss being needed, but others are glad,
Many positive aspects are there to be found,
Like waking up in the winter with snow on the ground,
No need to risk your life in the traffic to creep,
Just turn over in bed and go back to sleep!

Retirement will come to all in due time
Bring personal reactions as said in this rhyme,
The years pass so quickly, we don’t even see them,
Just enjoy life to the full, carpe diem!

Les Suffragettes, un film comme un cri, comme une pierre qui explose une vitrine



SOLANGE BEHOTEGUY, UNCTAD

Le long-métrage *Les Suffragettes* a été présenté par Ciné-ONU, en collaboration avec l'initiative Geneva Gender Champion, le 6 octobre dans la Salle des Droits de l'Homme et de l'Alliance des civilisations au Palais des Nations. Il nous raconte l'histoire de la lutte pour obtenir le droit de vote des femmes dans l'Angleterre du début du XX^e siècle. Le film est comme un cri, comme une pierre qui explose une vitrine, et qui nous soulage. Nous aurions aimé que la scène de l'initiatrice de ce mouvement, Emmeline Pankhurst, jouée par Meryl Streep dure plus longtemps. Nous nous attachons très vite au personnage de Maud, nous sentons que le germe de la révolte est en elle, nous sommes témoins de sa transformation, elle passe de simple spectatrice à activiste. «Ce sont les actes pas les mots qui vont nous faire gagner». «La plus grande éloquence est celle qui fait avancer les choses».

Maud est blanchisseuse depuis son jeune âge, abusée par son patron, et perçoit un salaire nettement inférieur à celui de ses collègues hommes bien que travaillant plus. Tous les panelistes ont convenu que beaucoup des revendications présentées dans le film il y a plus de 100 ans sont encore d'actualité! L'écart de salaire hommes/femmes entre autres.

Une phrase et un dialogue extraits du film: «...Pour que je respecte la loi, il faut que la loi soit respectable...»

MAUD — Si on avait eu une fille comment l'aurait-on appelée?

MARI DE MAUD — Marianne, comme ma mère. (C'était peut-être Clotilde ou Sabine...)

MAUD — Quelle vie aurait-elle eue?

MARI DE MAUD — La même que toi.

Les Suffragettes est aussi un film sur le futur. A la différence du film, aujourd'hui les attentes sont accompagnées de promesses.

Nous avons l'Agenda 2030 et «dans chaque objectif de développement il y a l'opportunité de s'engager». En 2031 personne ne pourra dire «on ne vous a rien promis». ■

<http://www.unric.org/en/cine-onu>

**Prochain film proposé par Ciné-ONU
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Photo exhibition

Geneva organizations to promote outstanding sustainability initiatives in Marrakesh during COP22

ETIENNE LACOMBE-KISHIBE, GREEN CROSS INTERNATIONAL

In October, a 40-image photo exhibition was shown at the United Nations in Geneva highlighting activities around the world that contribute to building “The Future We Want”. The images, featuring innovative projects, were contributed by international organizations, civil society organizations and private partners, many of them based in Geneva.

Green Cross International, the curator of this exhibition, is also taking these images to Marrakesh for COP22 in November. They will be displayed in the public areas of the conference venue, showing the leading role that Geneva’s international community plays in driving forward the 2030 SDG Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and a vision of worldwide sustainable development.

Around the world, clean energy is being used to power urban infrastructures, agriculture and transport. Better design is being applied to improve energy and water efficiency in cities and to produce food at a lower cost

and with less environmental impact. Locally adapted solutions are helping communities become more resilient to climate-related disasters and better able to provide quality livelihoods to their people in the long term.

With each image representing a unique example of innovation for sustainable development, the exhibition aims to inspire passers by and show them that real actions are being taken to protect the environment, create jobs and improve people’s lives.

Alongside Green Cross, other organizations participating in the exhibition include the United Nations Development Programme, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Solar Impulse, Race for Water, the International Organization for Migration, the International Telecommunications Union, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, the World Council of Churches, Swissaid, Pew Trusts, and Blue Solutions.

A special event on 13 October, hosted by the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations in Geneva (with support from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of France), officially inaugurated the exhibition in the “Passerelle” area of the Palais des Nations.

His Excellency Mohamed Auajjar, Moroccan Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, spoke about the importance of this issue to his country as it prepares for the “COP de l’Action”. While last year’s Paris Agreement saw governments come together to agree on their goals and commitments, it is now necessary to turn those promises into concrete, measurable progress.

The Moroccan and French governments have been working closely together to pave the way forward, and the French Ambassador to the United Nations also spoke at the opening.

This is the second year running that Green Cross has put together a photo exhibition illustrating the theme, “The



Future We Want”. The organization is committed to demonstrating that the solutions for a better future are here, all around us, ready to be taken to scale. All that’s needed is leadership. The deployment and scaling up of mitigation and adaptation solutions must be accelerated, and, to that end, cooperation between the private, public and civil society sectors is essential. ■

For further information:
<http://www.gcint.org/>



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Integrating and representing interns

How an intern board can help

EKATERINA PONOMAREVA, INTERN

UNECE AND LENA HUHN, INTERN OCHA

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Intern Boards were founded in 2015 with the main objective being to create structures to represent interns within their departments, to advocate for their interests and to support them in making their internships an enriching experience in a stimulating environment.

Our Intern Boards integrate new interns into the existing OCHA or UNECE intern communities before or on their arrival in Geneva through Facebook groups, welcoming new interns at the gate on their first day and distributing a welcome package with relevant

information about housing and life in Geneva. We also organize farewell presents for interns at the end of their stay. Supporting social events is an additional function of the Intern Board: for example, organizing barbecues, lakeside networking gatherings and museum visits. As interns are a regular fixture in our departments, Intern Boards have a representative function and communicate with the Executive Office, the Staff Council, other NGOs and Intern Boards from other departments. Career talks with staff members are set up, providing interns with the opportunity to ask UN career-related questions and to get inspired by the diversity of career paths available.

Since the establishment of Intern Boards, UNECE and OCHA interns have seen how

being represented by an elected board of interns truly helps to protect their interests and improve the overall internship experience. One recent achievement of the UNECE Intern Board was the procurement of new furniture in one of the intern offices.

While one might argue that an Intern Board is an unstable representative body due to the short length of internships, we have ensured the sustainability of our structures through the adoption of a continuous nomination procedure for board members.

We encourage all interns at UNOG to create their own Intern Board within their department. If you are interested in learning more about the structures and practices of

our Intern Boards, we would be happy to share templates of the Intern Board Charter, minutes of meetings and model emails. ■

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What to do when you are called in for a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

GEMMA VESTAL¹ AND LUCAS SENSUS²

Why performance appraisal is needed in international organizations

It is crucial in today's performance driven world that international organizations are able to prove themselves effective, efficient, relevant, and fit for purpose. These are gauged based on timely delivery of results, with underperformance absolutely expected to be addressed. However, an organization can achieve the above only if the rank and file of staff themselves meet their own work objectives and deadlines. This necessitates the importance of timely performance trickling down to the individual staff level through performance appraisal. The evaluation consists of an appraisal interview, which is often based on a standardized form, followed by a written evaluation report. It allows for a set time to pause and evaluate before moving on to the next performance cycle, often taking place in an official manner three times a year. If both sides are unable to work together to improve performance without official action, the next two steps would be 1) creation of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), and 2) eventually, action by management.

These actions could include anything from withholding of within-grade wage increase, non-renewal of a contract, or termination of the appointment for unsatisfactory performance.

What is a PIP?

A PIP is a disciplinary path meant for those who are underperforming. A structured and agreed upon PIP provides a mechanism for a staff member to clearly demonstrate improvement in performance. With the idea behind the PIP being that the formal paperwork will facilitate discussion to definitively clarify what needs to be done in order to improve.

A PIP with clear and measurable objectives creates a roadmap to improvement. By going a step beyond conversation there is documentation of both poor performance and the steps to improve. This ensures staff are given the tools they need to reach the goals set by managers. By working together to diagnose the potential cause of the performance issue, management and staff can agree on what would constitute improvement and work for the benefit of both parties. Poor performance often stems from issues

of motivation, environment, and lack of knowledge or skill. With collaboration, these issues can be identified and dealt with in a meaningful manner.

How can management ensure fairness?

There are methods that management must utilize to ensure the appraisal process is fair and just. A manager may avoid bringing staff through PIP by setting clear goals and expectations with regular and frequent feedback. The use of this continuous or process feedback is significantly more useful for making changes than outcome based feedback, which provides a final evaluation only once work is completed. An effective format for this is an open discussion with a focus on facts and documented examples of poor performance. This form of discussion allows one to ensure that staff understand expectations as well. In this more consistent approach to performance appraisal, staff are recognized for successful performance and any underperformance is better addressed in a fair and equitable way. Having conversations such as these helps ensure that things do not end up at the PIP stage unless they have to.

How can staff get the most out of performance appraisal?

Performance appraisal is not, in itself, a bad thing. It is a tool which staff can use to their advantage if they know how. Staff should be active in discussions, avoid defensiveness, and be open for everyone has room to improve. Staff can ask for clarification if they do not understand, and state any concerns with the timeline or doubts about their ability to meet performance goals. One must offer suggestions and be willing to compromise. If one feels ill-prepared to meet a goal or accomplish a task, one can ask about additional training or resources. By working together with management to solve performance issues before they become a major problem, one could avoid the PIP stage altogether.

Jurisprudence on PIP and the right to representation

No performance appraisal system is flawless, and staff should be able to fight performance appraisals which they deem unfair. In most international organizations, a staff member may request a rebuttal of his/her performance rating within some days before finalization of the document, the final version of which becomes a permanent part of that staff member's

employment record. If rebuttal does not work, staff should also be able to appeal the contested performance appraisal or PIP through an organization's internal justice system.

There are many cases which have been brought before the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) in regards to the performance appraisal and PIP system. ILOAT has ruled consistently that there must be clear deadlines for improvement as well as fair methods of measurement (Judgments Nos. 2414 and 3206). ILOAT has also held that objectives by which a PIP is set out must be agreed to be attainable by both the manager and the staff member (Judgment N° 3282).

As a PIP is a formal agreement with consequences if milestones are not met, it is important that staff understand fully what they agree to. Throughout the western world, union representatives may be present at PIP (or equivalent) sessions. In the United Kingdom, the Employment Relations Act of 1999 (Chapter 26 Section 10) specifically states that a worker invited by his employer to attend a disciplinary hearing must be permitted to be accompanied by a companion. In the United States, a 1975 Supreme Court case (420 U.S. 251) established Weingarten Rights for all employees represented by unions. This right states that one is entitled to have a union representation when management calls a disciplinary meeting. This is described as any meeting where management questions an employee and they have reasonable belief that they will be disciplined or fired.

The Take Away Message

Achievement of individual staff objectives is necessary for international organizations to fulfill its mandates and continue to be fit for purpose. Performance appraisals are here to stay. Therefore, it is fundamental to understand the standard by which your performance is being gauged. However, if called in for a PIP discussion to address underperformance, be aware that you are traversing a disciplinary path. Know your rights and go prepared. Be certain that you understand fully the objectives, actions points, and timelines set and that you can feasibly achieve all those deliverables within the deadline agreed to. Ask for time to consult a trusted colleague or staff representative before signing a PIP document. Or if necessary, boldly insist on bringing with you a trusted colleague or staff representative during a PIP discussion. ■

1 WHO staff who is currently serving as General Secretary of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA).

2 FICSA Intern

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Umoja in the time of cholera



What does Umoja have to do with 10,000 avoidable, agonizing deaths?

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DANNY KUTNER, UNOG

UN “culture” is literally fatal.

How fatal? 10,000 people dying of cholera in Haiti, in an ongoing and avoidable tragedy. Five years of inexcusable denial of basic human values... by the UN.

And it happened because of failings within our own Secretariat. No blaming Member States here. Somebody forgot about a few “competencies”.¹ Thank God Mr. Alston filed his report, or nothing would change. Let's remember, though, that it was late, confidential (although leaked), and filed by a Special Rapporteur, not someone within the Secretariat.

This revelation, unlike the Oil-for-Food scandal, for instance, hardly got any press. For the media it was a flash in the pan, a late-summer, one-day, low-page headline. Even within the Secretariat, it's not yet prompted any soul-searching

or introspection commensurate with the tragedy.

What does that have to do with Umoja?

Nobody has died from Umoja, and pointing now, in the wake of the cholera scandal, to its woeful implementation can seem extremely petty. It is not petty at all. The only way to fix the UN “culture” responsible for the catastrophic failure in Haiti is by constantly pushing for change everywhere. And Umoja is everywhere. Some 30,000 people, presumably at all levels, now use it, and not necessarily with glee (see sidebar). Among them, Umoja elicits universal frustration and indignation and a general feeling of resignation.

Now, if Haitians controlled the media, we would obviously be hearing more about the cholera scandal. It's human nature to feel indignation when someone steps on your toe, attacks your

Umoja has reportedly cost over 400 million dollars³ – and that is without counting hidden costs.

It was rolled out after years of development and months of hype – training sessions, hokey videos, interminable emails and a distribution of Thermos mugs touting the new system. We were instructed to log in one morning. It didn't work. No way to log in. Worse, someone forgot to tell us to stop trying. In Geneva, some 2,000 staff were not informed of the bug for hours. That's thousands of person-hours... a pure, unaccounted loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars, just that day, just in Geneva.

The Geneva roll-out was followed by yet

another broadcast video, this time of select UNOG staff in clown suits and jolly costumes, celebrating the success of the operation. "We did it!"⁴

Still "doing" it! This would be an investment if it simplified processes and improved services and performance. It doesn't. Its screens are abysmally configured and often crash. It has often led to more duplication, not less. When things go wrong, users are sent to anonymous addresses staffed generally by people with every intention to help, who are often powerless because of the system's poor design. They are getting

better, but as any user knows, Umoja has become a synonym for disruption, wasted effort and lost time.

There is, however, no going back. As indefensible as it might be, Umoja is now a fact of life, and we have to improve it.

family or bombs your countrymen; the closer the insult, the greater the indignation. Ironically, for the staff of an organization based on human values, the cholera epidemic that the UN produced and ignored in Haiti is just too distant from us.

Compared with 10,000 deaths, Umoja is obviously an insignificant little hiccup, but it exemplifies a much more important problem in the UN, and one that we all can see, can feel, and must act on to avoid not only future hiccups, but full-scale tragedies: the unaccountable, top-down culture, where poor judgment and bad decisions are presented as inevitable and

unquestionable; as "done deals" that go unchallenged.

Has anyone taken responsibility for the losses incurred as a result of Umoja? Will the failures appear on a single staff evaluation? Will anyone be moved to another job to prevent future damage? Many of us think those responsible for failure are rewarded; it's the whistleblowers who face consequences.² That's our organization's culture.

More importantly, what happened to the lawyers who advised the UN during the cholera epidemic? Did they differentiate between their

specific tasks as advisers and the broader interests of the UN, the well-being of hundreds of thousands of Haitians or the sanctity of human life? If any did, and their advice was ignored, why on Earth would they stay?

What happened to the other lawyers and the deciders who ultimately listened to their purely legal arguments? Have they been removed, or placed in jobs where they will do no harm?

Arrogance was always wasteful. It just became lethal. We must change this culture. ■

- 1 Google's motto is "Don't Be Evil". That may sound naïve, but it would have helped.
- 2 See <http://www.irinnews.org/news/2016/06/07/exclusive-top-un-whistleblower-resigns-citing-impunity-and-lack-accountability>
- 3 The figure was not given in the UN Special article, "In Defence of Umoja".
- 4 Umoja is so infuriatingly flawed that it curiously breeds giddiness. See <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/05/06/at-the-United-nations-umoja-translates-as-bureaucratic-chaos/>. For a more amusing video, see: <https://vimeo.com/149,549,517>.

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WHO response to dementia

© Cathy Greenblatt



Marie-Thérèse and Féderica painting a kite – Monaco.
Despite a ninety-year-plus age difference, Marie-Thérèse and Féderica have a good time painting a kite together. Giving children understandable information about Alzheimer's can help them cope with the disease in their family.



Liliane sharing a photograph of her grandson – France
For a reminiscence therapy session in Nice, participants were urged to bring a photo or other item of importance to them.



Elsie and Jody in a LaughterYoga session – USA
LaughterYoga shows how a combination of physical exercises, breathing exercises, and minimal verbal communication can indeed represent a moment of fun for people affected by Alzheimer's.

KATRIN SEEHER, WHO

Recently, Susan S. Williams, wife of the late US actor and comedian Robin Williams, spoke very openly about her husband's struggle with dementia touching millions worldwide.¹ Likewise, academy award winning motion pictures such as "Still Alice" and "Iris" have attracted great public attention. Yet, there remains a large amount of stigma, misunderstanding and the false belief that dementia is a normal part of ageing.

We all forget names or misplace things from time to time. We sometimes struggle recalling today's date and may even miss an appointment occasionally. Many of us write shopping lists or keep diaries to remember important events. In most parts this is not alarming. However, forgetfulness, word finding difficulties, losing items, confusing time, or becoming lost in familiar places may be early signs of dementia. Especially if someone is not able to find a missing item eventually or loses the ability to complete a familiar task such as operating the coffee machine, it is advisable to seek help.

It is not just a perception of increased media coverage: The number of people with dementia globally is increasing steadily. At the same time, more people have a family member, close friend or neighbour who has dementia. Often, family members or friends are the first to notice early symptoms of decline. Family members therefore play an important role in seeking help and receiving a dementia diagnosis. However, supporting or caring for a loved one with dementia can

be challenging, putting carers at risk for experiencing high levels of stress and burden, feelings of guilt and resentment, developing depression or anxiety, or declining physical health, general wellbeing and quality of life. Seeking help and support early may help prepare family carers for their role and the years ahead.

Despite these alarming figures it is important to emphasize that dementia is not an inevitable consequence of ageing. There are many things we can do to lower our risk of developing dementia. A good guiding principle is "What is good for your heart is good for your brain". Following this sentiment, people can reduce their dementia risk by not smoking, being physically active, eating a healthy diet and reducing the harmful use of alcohol. There are also certain conditions that are linked to dementia such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, high cholesterol, or depression. Managing these conditions well reduces the risk of developing dementia. Local doctors can provide help.

WHO response to dementia

The World Health Organization recognizes dementia as a public health priority and has taken it to the global stage. A range of activities undertaken in collaboration with Member States and regional and international partners aim to improve the lives of people with dementia and their families worldwide. ■



What can be done for people with dementia and their families?

Currently, there is no cure for dementia and no treatment is available that can stop dementia symptoms from progressing further. However, numerous clinical trials worldwide are investigating new compounds that may alter the course of the disease. Despite the lack of a cure, much can be offered to support, and improve the lives of, people with dementia and their families.

The principal goals of dementia care are:

- timely diagnosis in order to promote early and optimal management;
- optimizing physical health, cognition, activity and well-being;
- identifying and treating accompanying physical illness;
- detecting and treating challenging behavioural and psychological symptoms; and
- providing information and long-term support to carers.

As society we all should become more accepting of people with dementia and their carers; openly lending helping hands or listening ears and actively including them in social life to the same extent as we would want to be included.

How common is dementia?

Worldwide, over 47 million people have dementia. Just over half of them (63%) live in low- and middle-income countries. Every year, there are 7.7 million new cases of dementia.

For the general population aged 60 years and over, the estimated proportion of people with dementia ranges between 5 and 8 percent.

By 2030, the total number of people with dementia is projected to rise to 75.6 million. Much of this increase is due to the rising number of people with dementia living in low- and middle-income countries.

For more information visit http://www.who.int/mental_health/neurology/dementia/en/ or send an email to whodementia@who.int

Evidence, Research and Action on Mental and Brain Disorders (MER)

Department for Mental Health and Substance Abuse (MSD)

World Health Organization
whodementia@who.int

1 Neurology September 27, 2016 vol. 87 no. 13 1308-1311 <http://www.neurology.org/content/87/13/1308.full>

What is dementia?

Dementia is an umbrella term for over 100 different diseases and conditions that affect brain functions such as memory, thinking, orientation, learning, language, and judgement. These symptoms are commonly accompanied, and occasionally preceded, by difficulties in emotion control, social behaviour, or motivation as well as the ability to perform daily activities.

The most common form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease, accounting for about two-thirds of cases. Other major forms include vascular dementia (affecting smaller and/or larger blood vessels in the brain), dementia with Lewy bodies (abnormal aggregates of protein developing inside nerve cells), and frontotemporal dementia (a group of diseases that contribute to excess cell death in the front of the brain and near the temples).

Based on the type of dementia, some symptoms may be more prominent than others. Yet, the boundaries between different forms of dementia are often blurry and mixed forms of dementia co-exist.

All forms of dementia have in common that symptoms usually become worse over time and additional symptoms arise, ultimately leading to a person's inability to attend to his or her daily needs.



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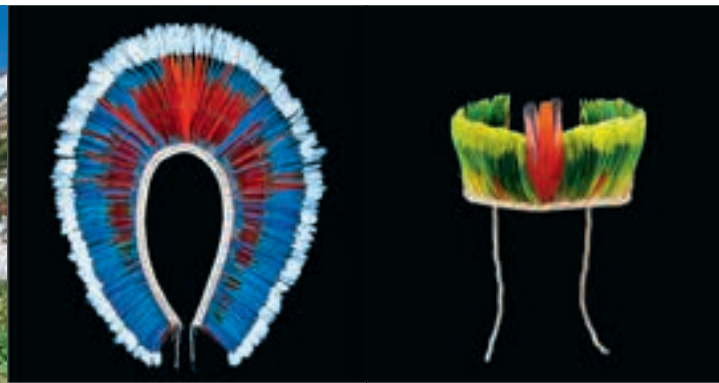
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Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

A beautiful setting and thought-provoking exhibitions are what awaits visitors to this fascinating museum in the heart of Geneva.

LAURENCE BERLAMONT AND SARAH JORDAN, SDLS, UNOG

The MEG offers a rich programme of exhibitions, concerts, workshops and performances in a brand-new, state-of-the art building. This profoundly human museum encourages visitors to explore and learn about the cultures of the world. The exhibition spaces are located deep underground, 60 m below the building's roof, which is decorated with a woven pattern reminiscent of traditional basketry.

The permanent exhibition presents a selection of more than 1,200 objects, some of them centuries old, created by close to 100 civilizations or cultures. These artefacts were chosen from among the 70,000 in the MEG archive, and include many treasures not seen for generations. The permanent exhibition is divided into seven sections: an introductory section presenting the history of the various collections, followed by sections for each of the continents and a

final section devoted to ethnomusicology. A remarkable video installation by artist Ange Lécia, entitled *Mer* (Sea), provides a contemporary counterpoint to these historical testimonials.

The MEG's most recent temporary exhibition, "Amazonia: The Shaman and the Mind of the Forest" focuses on the indigenous peoples of the Amazon basin. Comprising 5,000 artefacts, the MEG's Amazonian collection is one of the largest of its kind. For the first time, the museum is displaying a range of objects from this collection, representing many different groups, including the Kayapó, Wayana, Yanomami, Ka'apór, Karaja, Shuar (Jivaro), Tukuna and Bororo peoples.

Spread out over 1,000 m², the temporary exhibition illustrates the cultures of indigenous Americans, as observed by anthropologists from the 18th to the 21st centuries, through a selection of remarkable objects, from brightly coloured feather finery, blowpipes, bows and arrows dipped in curare, to everyday objects, musical instruments and utensils used by shamans to ingest hallucinogens. Several pre-Colombian civilizations are presented through Marajó pottery, as well as some unusual polished stone

pieces. Music also plays an important role: sound installations throughout the exhibition powerfully evoke the world of the forest and its rituals.

For over 500 years, the Amazonian peoples have resisted the destruction of their world, their cultural heritage and their ecosystem, with varying degrees of success. This exhibition is an opportunity to highlight the voices of tribal chiefs, shamans and other Indian leaders who advocate for greater recognition of indigenous peoples' rights, including greater protection of the ecosystems they inhabit, on which they depend for their livelihood, and which form part of their mythical worldview. Portraits of indigenous leaders and both archival and contemporary photographs illustrate the ways in which they have organized their resistance. The exhibition aims to reflect this multiplicity of voices through photos, videos, written quotes and sound documents.

Visit the temporary exhibition "Amazonia: The Shaman and the Mind of the Forest" at the MEG with a special "buy one ticket get one free" offer, available at the CAGI Cultural Kiosk, UNOG, door C6 until 15 December 2016. ■

A Gingko Biloba under close protection



© David Digoncelli



SARAH JORDAN, SDLS, UNOG

When I attend official ceremonies connected with the United Nations, I play a little game. I try to work out which of the besuited gentlemen surrounding the VIPs are the close protection officers. When speeches are very long, it can be a distraction! My father worked in close protection and it's just an aspect of people-watching that is probably a little over-developed in me!

On 3 October, in the Ariana Park in front of the Celestial Sphere, I was spoilt for choice. Close protection officers and the national and international press were out in force because the event I was attending was very newsworthy: the ceremonial planting of a sapling from a Ginkgo Biloba tree that had survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. And the man to wield the shovel was none other than Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in person, on his farewell visit to Geneva. The ceremony was co-hosted by UNOG Director-General Michael Møller and United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Executive Director Nikhil Seth, in

the presence of a host of other dignitaries: the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva His Excellency Ambassador Ihara, the Mayor of Ypres, Belgium and Vice-President of Mayors for Peace Mr. Jan Durnez, President of the ICRC Mr. Peter Maurer, and master-gardener Mr. Chikara Horiguchi of Green Legacy Hiroshima (GLH) Initiative.

The speeches made to mark this occasion focused on how fitting it was that a person as “emblematic” as Mr. Ban Ki-moon should be the one to plant the tree in the Ariana Park at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, a city that has championed peace, human rights and disarmament.

Amongst the spectators were several of my present and former students of English, including Mr. David Digoncelli, who is Head Gardener here at the Palais. Chatting with him in the crowd, I realised that our esteemed leaders were not the only VIPs present at this ceremony: the Ginkgo Biloba sapling itself had also

been under close protection for several months since its arrival in Geneva in May 2016, when it was presented to Director-General Michael Møller by Mr. Kazumi Matsui, President of Mayors for Peace and Mayor of Hiroshima. On that occasion, Mr. Møller announced that it would be planted by Mr. Ban Ki-moon later in the year as a symbol of “life, hope and a sustainable future” – a tribute to what the United Nations has already achieved concerning disarmament since the end of the Second World War and a reminder of all that still needs to be done. Quite a lot to live up to for one little tree.

But this sapling is no ordinary sapling – no, it is a direct descendant of a tree bombed in Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, a day which resulted in the deaths of more than 140,000 people. But the bombed tree survived – buds sprouted again and it gave hope to survivors and the courage to continue living. Some 170 trees of about 20 different species in 55 locations within the roughly 2 km radius of the hypocentre of the Atomic Bomb are officially registered by Hiroshima Municipality as A-bombed trees. Lovingly cared for over the years by ordinary citizens, they are identified by all as “hibakujumoku”, or survivor trees. Ginkgo Biloba trees can grow up to 50 metres in height, live for centuries and are particularly resistant to pollution, disease and fire. The movement to spread the seeds and saplings of trees that survived Hiroshima was founded in 2011 by the Green Legacy Hiroshima (GLH) Initiative and its co-founders Nassrine Azimi of UNITAR and Tomoko Watanabe of ANT-Hiroshima.

And so from May to October of this year, this little green shoot from Japan was nurtured and pruned by the Parks and Gardens team. Régis Fleche had special responsibility for it – and what a responsibility – if anything had happened to it, imagine what a diplomatic incident that would have been! For five long months, all through a very dry summer, the sapling thrived in and outside the UN greenhouse on a diet of sun in the morning and shade in the afternoon, quadrupling in size, as you can see from the photos. The Japanese gardeners liaised with their counterparts in Geneva via Skype on questions such as the acidity of the soil and the abundance of snow here in winter. Nothing was left to chance. And then shortly before the planting ceremony, it was moved outside definitively, surrounded by less illustrious plants so as not to attract any undue attention or covetousness. There it became acclimatised to the greater variations in temperature that Geneva autumns habitually bring and got ready for its big day.

The Parks and Gardens team must have felt both relief and pride to see it safely planted on such a splendidly sunny Indian summer morning. They were all in attendance in their red overalls, watching over the proceedings discreetly. For them, it must have felt like a graduation ceremony. For those of us lucky enough to work here at the Palais, it will be a pleasure to watch it grow and to remember and strive for what it symbolises. ■

La vanille «mauvais»

C'est ainsi que la vanille des Comores était dénommée par les acheteurs de l'époque coloniale aux enfants qui leur présentaient les crus de fin de récolte; ils disaient qu'elle n'était pas belle à voir et qu'elle sentait mauvais pour ne rien payer...



Rémi Pulvéraïl, fondateur de L'Atelier français des matières, avec des roses du Maroc

EMMANUELLE HORVAT GANTET, ONUG

Des essences rares...

Cette anecdote nous a été donnée par un passionné des fragrances, Rémi Pulvéraïl, fondateur de L'Atelier français des matières, implanté il y a maintenant plus d'un an à la Technopôle d'Archamps, entre Annecy et Genève. Rémi Pulvéraïl a mis à profit son expérience d'ancien directeur des achats de naturels chez Givaudan, pour sélectionner une dizaine de producteurs du monde entier capables de fournir des qualités de fragrances exclusives et nobles: par exemple la vanille des Kalfanes des Comores très différente sur le plan olfactif du standard malgache, la bergamote de G. Franco en Calabre, crus de début ou de fin de récolte, et dont les procédés d'extraction à l'éponge sont ancestraux, les fleurs de jasmin du début, milieu et fin de récolte, sélectionnées entre juin et octobre dans les domaines des Fakhry au nord du Caire; des racines de vétiver aux Cayes en Haïti, mais aussi les absolues, entre autres, de cacao noir de Côte d'Ivoire, de tabac blond de Turquie, de fèves tonka du Venezuela, de

fleurs de mimosa du Maroc, du safran du Cachemire... des fragrances qui font rêver.

... une parfumerie sur-mesure

Loin de la production mondialisée du parfum de masse, l'univers confidentiel de la parfumerie haut de gamme à l'échelle humaine signifie personnalisation et réactivité. Sur la base d'une palette de matières premières exclusives, L'Atelier français des matières offre la création de parfums sur-mesure pour un être cher, une occasion unique, pour signer un lieu. Comme le souligne Rémy Pulvéraïl «Un grand chef ne fait pas 20 000 repas par jour mais 100, c'est un modèle d'évidence qui m'a convaincu dans ma réflexion et mon approche». Ainsi la structure légère et réactive qu'il a développée permet de prendre des risques olfactifs.

Un outil moderne dans l'esprit artisanal

L'Atelier français des matières propose ainsi un laboratoire permettant en interne la création et la pesée de la formule, la maturation, la macération, le glaçage, la filtration, l'embouteillage, jusqu'au sertissage et l'emballage. Pour que cette

plateforme collaborative «Full service» s'exprime pleinement, l'initiateur du projet s'est associé avec Jean-Philippe Paris pour la partie scientifique, un ingénieur chimiste de la parfumerie à Grasse. Ils se sont entourés d'experts tels les producteurs de matières premières bien évidemment mais aussi d'un interprète graphique et sensoriel, d'artisans d'art pour la création de flacons sur mesure et de compositeurs et évaluateurs de parfums, partenaires indépendants. A ses «nez-collaborateurs» indépendants, la société propose un progiciel couplé à sa palette d'ingrédients d'exceptions qui leur permettent de composer de chez eux.

Essences naturelles et analyses physico-chimiques

La nature est essentielle à L'Atelier français des matières qui applique alors un ratio naturel/synthétique de 75/25, à l'inverse de la parfumerie de masse. Cette dominante de naturel donne au parfum plus de facettes, de densité et de tenue.

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Vous accompagner avec une empreinte olfactive

Si le cœur de marché de L'Atelier français des matières, 100% made in France, est la parfumerie de niches, les marques de luxe qui veulent créer des éditions limitées, des particuliers passionnés, ou encore les acteurs du marketing olfactif, cette société innovante propose un outil au service des personnes, des entreprises ou institutions, sur le chemin et l'aboutissement d'une empreinte olfactive. Cette empreinte peut s'exprimer tant par la création d'un parfum, d'une série limitée, le choix du flacon, mais aussi de voyages exclusifs chez les producteurs partenaires, ou encore d'ateliers olfactifs in situ à Archamps ou sur un lieu choisi par le client. ■

Pour en savoir plus:

www.atelier-francais-des-matieres.fr

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Nous serions heureux de recevoir votre avis. Les plus pertinents, les plus intéressants, les plus originaux seront publiés dans le magazine.

Si vous souhaitez proposer un article, n'hésitez pas à me contacter à tout moment.

Et maintenant, à vos plumes !

Adressez vos commentaires à :

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Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Genève 10, Suisse
Par courrier électronique: alex.mejia@unitar.org

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Would you like to share your opinion about *UN Special* and its contents ?

Write to us!

We will be glad to hear from you. The most interesting, relevant, or even ingenious responses will be published in the magazine.

Should you wish to submit an article, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Now, put pen to paper!

Send your thoughts to:

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Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
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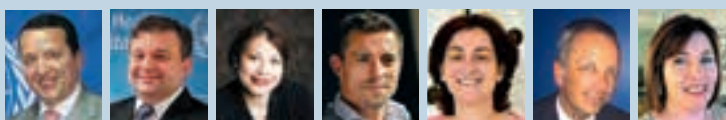
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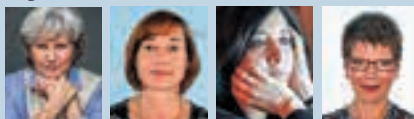
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