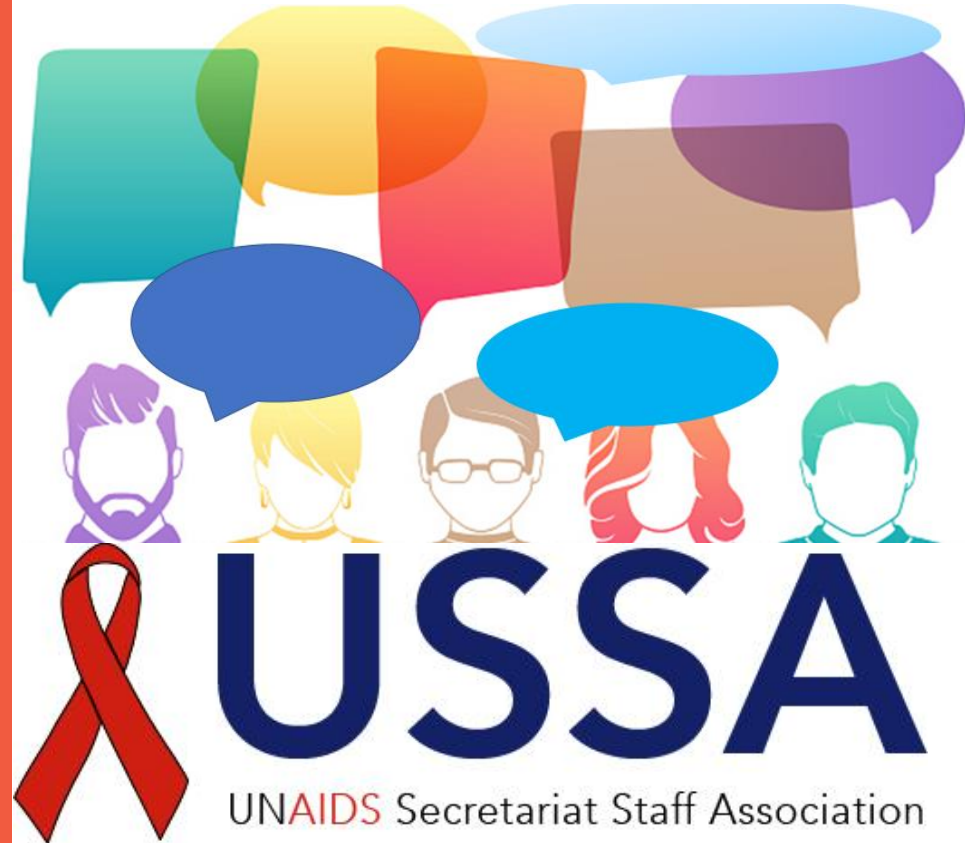


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# STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNAIDS SECRETARIAT STAFF ASSOCIATION

AGENDA ITEM 6 UNAIDS/PCB (52)/23.15  
52nd PCB Meeting, 27 June 2023

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# 1. Overview

This year, USSA statement draws on data from

- the Global Staff Survey;
- the USSA mid-year check-in questionnaire direct communication from staff

The USSA will also provide you with an update on the implementation of recommendations that USSA made last year.

## 2. Background USSA

Since 2005, USSA became an independent staff association for UNAIDS- with Constitution setting out our mandate to

- (i) Ensure that the conditions of employment of all staff of the UNAIDS Secretariat conform to labour standards and Staff Rules and Regulations;
- (ii) Safeguard the rights and interests of all members of the UNAIDS Secretariat staff and to promote their welfare; and
- (iii) Cooperate in achieving the objectives of UNAIDS.

While the USSA looks out for all 700 UNAIDS staff our 380 dues paying members are eligible to claim limited legal support should the need arise during their employment with the Organization.

### 3. USSA Recommendation 1

Support eligible internal staff to be prioritized for reassignment or new positions

- a) USSA appreciates efforts made by Senior Management to provide opportunities for internal candidates to compete for reassignment and new positions.
- b) A Review Board with USSA participation, has been established and has been functioning to review recruitment and selection procedures. USSA working with management to use existing Review Board to fill the oversight gap from abolition of Mobility and Reassignment Committee
- c) Staff still presents concerns around alignment, transparency in recruitment decisions particularly in view of large number of positions abolished and staff losing jobs and the creation of new positions and external recruitments

## 4. USSA recommendation 2

Revise staff recruitment policies to ensure fair, transparent, competitive process for all position

- a) The USSA remain concerned with low scores on key issues (decisions are made in fair and transparent manner, alignment handled effectively, high performers supported to grow, cabinet understands views and opinions of staff)
- b) The USSA continues to contest the 2022 updated recruitment policies (for fixed term and short-term positions), including a) litigation on failure to properly consult the reference group and b) advocating on the need to revise to strengthen competitive processes and opportunities for internal staff. We are working closely with Senior Management on a recent pilot of screening of job applicants' social media profile.

## 5. USSA recommendations 3 and 4

Revise staff recruitment policies to ensure fair, transparent, competitive process for all position & Secure additional resources to cover anticipated human resource gap to safeguard core functions of the Secretariat

- a) Alignment resulted in loss of 131 staff in 2022 through voluntary separation, secondment, resignation and contract termination.
- b) From our mid-year check in, workload and mental health was the top priority identified by staff for the USSA to focus on.
- c) Should further funding cuts occur, USSA calls on Senior Management to reduce the scope of UNAIDS work to match the current staffing level that we have and ensure staff access support measures without delay.
- d) USSA has also asked for more frequent communication to update staff on the Joint Programme resource situation to facilitate workplan adjustments and securing of essential human resources to deliver results.

## 6. Relationship between Management and USSA

The USSA participates in number of oversight and human resources related bodies at UNAIDS: Senior Leadership Team, Alignment Task Team, Alignment Steering Committee, Review Board, Duty of Care Working Group, Mental Health Task Team.

We will be collaborating with Management to improve staff health insurance in the next year. We have regular meetings with Director of Management, Human Resources and Change Management.

We have met with the Executive Director twice in the last year and we appreciate the commitment of the Executive Director to meet us and to hear us out.

## 7. Challenges faced and way forward

The difficulties that we see from budget deficit and global instability that impact us all are also felt by the USSA. There are considerable hurdles in keeping the USSA functional to fulfil our mandate.

- a) We have gone from a full team of 15 volunteers to 9, due to staff departures from the organization, competing priorities and fear of retaliation
- b) We have been without any administrative support for the past year (since 30 June 2022). Recruitment is ongoing for an assistant based in Bonn, following abolition and relocation of the Geneva-based post – a decision that the USSA continues to oppose.
- c) USSA will be holding new elections for staff reps in July-August, and we are hoping that staff will be encouraged to step up to take this important job
- d) We also urge Senior Management to fully support, facilitate and protect staff to empower them to take on this duty.



## 8. Request for Senior Management Actions

- a) A townhall to comprehensively report to staff the conclusion of the Alignment and the People Strategy- particularly around the personnel situation, what is the human resource plan?
- b) Quarterly update on the UNAIDS resource situation, including number of staff on longer-term medical leave, shared to all staff to allow workplan adjustments resource allocation reviews and securing of essential human resources to deliver results.
- c) Implementation of support measures for staff to cope with high workload
- d) A supportive and enabling environment for the USSA to operate within, adequately resourced

THANK YOU

We thank the PCB for acknowledging our work and we count on your continued support to fully fund the Joint Programme so we will be able to complete the work to End Equalities. End AIDS.