

UNAIDS PCB Bureau meeting

DATE: Friday, 18 June 2021

TIME: 10:00-11:00 (Geneva time)

VENUE: Virtual Teams Meeting

PARTICIPANTS

PCB Bureau: Mr. Theo-Ben Kandetu (Namibia: representing the Chair); Mr Natee Vichitsorasatra (Thailand: representing the Vice-Chair); Ms Julia Martin (United States of America: representing the Rapporteur); Mr Alexander Pastoors and Ms Jules Kim (representing the PCB NGO Delegation); and Mr Andy Seale and Mr Hywel Jones (WHO: representing UNAIDS Cosponsors).

UNAIDS Secretariat: Mr Morten Ussing, Director Governance and Multilateral Affairs, Ms Samia Lounnas, Senior Governance Advisor, Governance and Multilateral Affairs, and Ms Maggie Lemons, Governance Officer, Governance and Multilateral Affairs

Oxford HR Consultants: Mr Thibault Mills, Director; Ms Zoe Greenwood, Head of environment, climate and conservation; and Ms Martine Billanou, Principal Consultant, Europe

MEETING DRAFT AGENDA

1. Discussion with selected search firm on the establishment of the independent oversight advisory committee
2. Any other business

SUMMARY

1. Discussion with selected search firm on the establishment of the independent oversight advisory committee

Due to the exceptional absence of the PCB Bureau Chair, the representative of the Vice-Chair, Natee Vichitsorasatra, chaired the meeting. He opened the meeting, offering condolences from the PCB Bureau Chair, and thanked participants for their engagement.

The Vice-Chair recalled that, at its previous meeting, the PCB Bureau had agreed to meet with the selected search firm, Oxford HR Consultants, to discuss the establishment of the independent external oversight advisory committee (IEOAC). The contract for the search firm was being finalized and they would shortly begin their work. Prior to the meeting of the Bureau, the selected search firm had submitted questions in advance to both the Executive Director and the PCB Bureau. The search firm has met and discussed these questions with the Executive Director prior to meeting with the PCB Bureau.

The members of the Oxford HR Consultants team introduced themselves and thanked the Bureau for their time and consideration. Oxford HR provided a brief introduction to their work and noted that they looked forward to the Bureau's perspective on next steps and priorities for their work, including on range of advertisements and size of the applicant pool to be submitted to the selection panel for consideration.

A summary of the questions raised by Oxford HR and the responses from the Bureau are included below:

- The IEAOC is a new committee for UNAIDS but not for other UN agencies. The JIU gives general recommendations but, from the Bureau members own experience of the system, what are the key factors necessary for a great, functional oversight committee?

The Bureau stressed the importance of relying on the terms of reference, which were carefully crafted by the PCB Working Group on the follow-up to the JIU Recommendations and were approved by the PCB. The Bureau noted that the key was to achieve a collective balance of skills to have a successful committee that the PCB can depend upon to facilitate and support their role in the oversight of the Joint Programme. They suggested that potential key factors would include:

- Balance of backgrounds relevant to cover all necessary components of oversight as outlined in the TORs, which will include review of financial and performance reporting, accounting, external and internal audits, risk management and internal controls, financial regulations and rules, compliance, monitoring issues and trends in reporting, reviewing and advising on the ethics function, and tracking JIU report recommendation implementation.
- The terms of reference of the IEOAC as approved by the PCB provide the following key elements:
 - The IEOAC shall be comprised of not fewer than five and up to seven independent expert members serving in their personal capacity in an ethical manner.
 - To undertake their role effectively, members of the IEOAC must possess knowledge, skills and senior-level experience in at least one of the following areas: (a) finance and audit; (b) organization governance and accountability structure; (c) risk management and internal control; (d) investigations; and (e) senior-level management. Collectively, the committee shall possess knowledge, skills and senior-level experience in all of the above areas.
- Close collaboration with the Executive Director and the PCB Bureau
- Diversity of geography, gender, and experience
- Experience with investigations

- The importance of experience within civil society as an important reflection of the Joint Programme work
 - Commitment to multilateralism and ethical administration of international organizations
 - Understanding of the complexity of the Joint Programme and the challenges that it makes for oversight in particular that the oversight would be focusing on Secretariat.
- In view of the extensive criteria laid out above, the PCB Bureau was requested to confirm the appropriate number of candidates? The initial proposal was based on running full interviews with 15 candidates to arrive at a shortlist of 8-10 candidates for the selection panel. In view of the above list of criteria, this may require a greater list of interviews to arrive at a slate of candidates for the selection panel. How will this selection panel be established?

The Bureau indicated that the initial proposal should be adequate to form a committee of 5-7 members. In the event that it is not possible to fill the shortlist based on these interviews, the Bureau and Executive Director can explore additional options with Oxford HR. The selection panel will be established later this year in accordance with the terms of reference for the Independent External Oversight Advisory Committee.

- Press advertisement: Oxford HR noted that, in the PCB discussions relating to this process, a wide range of advertisements was anticipated. This is highly recommended as qualified individuals are not looking at job postings or registered in most database. Oxford HR's experience in recruiting for an Ombudsman at WWF, indicates that The Economist (the paper option comes with one-month online advertisement) is highly effective. Would the Bureau be interested in pursuing this option?

The Bureau noted that, as outlined in the statement of work, the search firm is responsible for advertising the post in a wide variety of publications with vast regional reach, and that it considered this to be part of the agreed upon budget. Oxford HR indicated that most advertisements are included in the agreed budget with a few exceptions, most notably the Economist. The Bureau agreed that, if the advertisements are an additional cost, these fees must be submitted for approval to the Bureau prior to being accepted. In addition to the traditional advertisements, a call for submissions would also be circulated to all PCB constituencies.

- To which extent should all the committee members be very familiar with UN and inter-governmental institutions? Would the fact that they have worked in complex international organisations and settings, together with a reasonable understanding of how the UN functions, be sufficient? What constitutes reasonable understanding of how the UN agencies work?

The Bureau stressed the importance of UN experience. While noting that not all members needed to have UN experience as part of finding the appropriate mix of skills and experience, they stressed it was important to understand the learning curve that would be required for those without UN experience, which would be particularly important given the complexity of oversight in the Joint Programme. They noted that members of the committee would also receive briefings from UNAIDS Secretariat and some Cosponsors including the Chair of the CCO to support their understanding of the Joint Programme.

- Any additional advice as the process begins?

The Bureau stressed the importance of having a diverse, experienced, committed and ethical committee engaged and interested in global health work and in supporting the Joint Programme to best fulfill its work. The Bureau looked forward to more clarity on the timeline from Oxford HR and the Secretariat as the process continues. The Secretariat clarified that the committee is expected to be established by the 49th PCB meeting in December and will provide their first report to the PCB in June 2022. The Bureau looked forward to continued collaboration with Oxford HR throughout this process and thanked them for their engagement.

2. AOB

There was no other business raised. The Chair thanked Bureau members and Oxford HR colleagues and closed the meeting.

[End of document]