



**Union
Syndicale
Bruxelles
Eurocontrol**

Brussels, 13.12.21

Dear members,

The end of an eventful and demanding year at EUROCONTROL is near.

Many of you have been affected by the effects and concerns of the COVID-19 pandemic, and some of you have even lost loved ones or friends to this terrible disease. We have been with you in spirit and share your losses.

In addition, the impact on your daily work and life cannot be underestimated. We hope that you can still look back at this year with some satisfaction with regard to some of the good things that may have happened and changes that may have contributed to increasing your quality of life.

For the USB delegation, it has been a challenging year too. Besides going about the “normal”/“new normal”, we have been defending your statutory rights against an onslaught of attacks by management, especially in the form of the unnecessary and unwanted administrative reform that the DG has intentionally initiated (*it was a priority from the beginning of his mandate*).

The DG has stated that the Staff Regulations are skewed 80:20 in favour of the staff. The reality is of course that a contractual agreement is 50:50 by nature. Because management refuses to fully and correctly implement the Staff Regulations, or simply ignores the content or its responsibilities, it is indeed skewed 20:80. But it is skewed against staff.

If you have followed the COVID-19 notifications over the year, you can imagine the quality of the discourse we have been subjected to in the context of the administrative reform. The blatant underestimation of this pandemic continues to surprise us and we will continue to respond accordingly.

We have still not found any justification for the entire “reform” activity besides the fact that it is the imperative of the DG to manage the Agency as he sees fit but that eventually, even he needs to be accountable to the Member States.

In order to “move forward” with the discussions, the DG, at the consultation meeting of 7.12.21, invited the four unions to take part in “plenary discussions (working groups)” between a selection of union representatives (two per union) and a team representing the DG (three directors and H-HRS). These discussions are to take place in January and February.

We have accepted this invitation for two obvious reasons: we are always willing to talk and we may finally find out what the real priorities of the DG are. Looking at the full set of current proposals, we see several proposals which are impractical, discriminatory, even illegal, counterproductive or not fit for the 21st century. Some of them certainly do no justice to the notion of international civil service. That being said, there are times when we agree with some of the DG's comments, for example when he said that we have very weak management. Perhaps he will have such a topic as a priority. Maybe this discussion format will remove the fluff.

We will of course also take the opportunity to present our ideas, in particular in relation to those provisions of the 2016 administrative reform which have not been properly implemented. The main challenge we see is that the DG thinks in terms of "savings" whilst we think in terms of "Agency performance for the Member States".

Some of you have expressed dissatisfaction that the Central Staff Committee has not been invited to participate in these "unorthodox" discussions outside the regular consultation process. We can only reply that it is the DG who determines who is invited and that a possible and preliminary outcome of such an activity will still need to go through a technical meeting, to draw up the correct legal text, and an official third reading in a consultation meeting, before being presented by the DG to the Provisional Council. The Central Staff Committee has observer status at these technical and consultation meetings. This was already the case in 2015 for the second administrative reform: the DG set up a working group with unions and management before continuing the negotiations in the consultation meetings of the social dialogue process.

We hope that you have a somewhat better idea now of where we are at the end of 2021. We have sent you all the information that we have concerning the ongoing consultation process via email and if you have any very specific concerns then you can of course always contact your members of the USB delegation. Of course, we will keep you informed at the beginning of 2022 of the next developments. We intend to arrange appropriate meetings with our members as soon as there is something specific to discuss. Until then, nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.

Keep calm and stay safe.

Enjoy your Christmas and New Year and best wishes to all of you and your loved ones.

Your USB delegation at EUROCONTROL

Georges Tsollos - JM Galais - Bernd Hill - Henk Korteweg - Willem van Leeuwen

