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CHERS COLLÈGUES

En décembre dernier, le Comité de rédaction de *UN Special* m’a proposé d’être, au nom du Conseil de coordination du personnel de l’ONUG, le rédacteur en chef exceptionnel du numéro de février. C’est une offre que je ne pouvais refuser et dont vous avez entre les mains le résultat final, pour lequel j’ai bénéficié du soutien du comité.

Mon objectif était dès le début de centrer le magazine sur le personnel. C’est chose faite. Le contenu est d’abord politique, avec la sollicitation de votre vote par les membres du Conseil administratif de la Ville de Genève, ou encore la présentation des résultats obtenus au cours de l’année passée par le Conseil de coordination du personnel, que je préside. Il est également douloureux, avec le témoignage de notre collègue du HCR Cynthia Brzak sur ce qu’elle a subi après avoir dénoncé une situation de harcèlement sexuel de la part de son supérieur d’alors, Ruud Lubbers. Il suscite des vocations, à travers notre reportage sur la reconversion réussie d’une jeune collègue de la CNUCED en sculpteur accompli. Il s’intéresse à la mode, en suggérant des idées vestimentaires aux fonctionnaires internationaux et en présentant un photoreportage sur les hommes bien habillés du Palais. Il se penche par ailleurs sur les affaires, avec un article détaillant le fonctionnement de SAFI. Il est enfin festif, avec un reportage de Pendo sur les soirées à Genève. Et ce n’est pas tout: des idées de voyages, un entretien avec le nouveau chef de l’administration de l’ONUG, un article sur la récente action revendicative au BIT, une rubrique de courrier du cœur, un article qui explique comment tirer profit du faible cours de l’euro et bien d’autres surprises.

Et en avril, parce que l’article est arrivé après la date limite pour l’édition de février, un entretien avec Ban Ki-moon. J’espère que vous aurez le même plaisir à lire ce magazine que nous avons eu à le réaliser.

DEAR COLLEAGUES

Last December, the *UN Special* Editorial Board asked me whether, over the Christmas holidays and on behalf of the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council, I would guest-edit their February issue. It’s an offer I couldn’t refuse, and with the strong support of the staff. And this is what you get. It’s an offer I couldn’t refuse, and with the strong support of the board, you now have the finished product. From the start my intention was to focus on the staff. And this is what you get. It’s political, with members of Geneva’s City Council canvassing your vote, while the Staff Coordinating Council, which I preside, presents its results from the year just gone. It’s harrowing, as UNHCR colleague Cynthia Brzak tells us what she endured after reporting an incident of sexual harassment by then boss Ruud Lubbers. It’s aspirational, as we discover how a young colleague at UNCTAD became accomplished sculptor. It’s stylish, as we discuss fashion tips for the international civil servants and seek out the UN’s best dressed men. It’s entrepreneurial, as we go behind the scenes at SAFI. It’s social, as Pendo tells us how to enjoy a good night out in Geneva. And there’s more: travel ideas, an interview with our new head of administration, a report on recent industrial action at the ILO, an agony aunt, a guide on how to profit from the rock-bottom Euro and plenty besides. And in April, as it came after the deadline, an interview with Ban Ki-moon.

I hope you enjoy reading this as much as we did producing it.
Genève et la gouvernance mondiale

Jeudi 3 mars | 18h30
**Une capitale pour les droits humains?**

Gouvernance mondiale de la paix, des droits humains et de l’action humanitaire, en pré-ouverture du FIFDH

Avec: Yves Daccord (CICR)
Rashid Khakov (OCHA)
Mona Firisawi (HCDH)
Scott Weber (Interpeace)
Paola Gaeta (UNIGE)

Jeudi 10 mars | 18h30
**Un refuge pour penser la migration?**

Gouvernance mondiale de la migration et du refuge

Avec: Assane Diop (OIT)
Michel Jarraud (OMM)
William Lacy Swing (OIM)
António Guterres (HCR)
Vincent Chetail (UNIGE)

Jeudi 17 mars | 18h30
**Au cœur d’une économie plus durable?**

Gouvernance mondiale du commerce et du développement durable

Avec: Pascal Lamy (OMC)
Céline Molinier (PNUD)
Francis Gurry (OMPI)
Christophe Bouvier (UNEP)
Maya Hertig Randall (UNIGE)

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Modérateur | Jean-Christophe Nothias, rédacteur en chef de «The Global Journal»
INTERVIEW WITH Mr. CLEMENS ADAMS

UNOG Director of Administration Mr. Clemens Adams arrived in Geneva in mid September 2010. Nearly four months into his job, UN Special meets him in his office to see how he is settling in.

IAN RICHARDS, UNCTAD
Mr. Clemens Adams comes across as a very methodical man, from the two computer screens he uses to keep his email separate from the rest of his work, to the way he carefully and meticulously answers the questions put to him. Not surprising for a man with extensive and varied experience across the Organization.

Now overseeing a budget of about $160 million and a staff of 430, Mr. Adams started his career in the Philippines working in a UNHCR run refugee camp. It was there that he got his first taste for development, when he successfully convinced donors to fund a major upgrade to the facilities. Following the Philippines, it was off to Indonesia, to work this time for UNHCR and thus his career with the UN began.

From refugees, Mr. Adams moved to peacekeeping, being in charge of accommodations and planning logistics for Namibia’s first elections. Then to headquarters in New York, contributing to the built-up of the division that would later become the Department of Field Support. More mission planning followed with electoral observation in South Africa’s first multiracial elections that saw Mandela voted to power. In 1998, he was appointed Chief Administrative Officer at the peacekeeping mission in Cyprus and three years later was asked to lead the set up of a peacekeeping mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia, which came to be known as UNMEE.

Then it was back to headquarters, serving as Officer-in-Charge of the Logistics Support Division, DPKO and later as Chief Specialist Support Service, before being appointed as Director of Facilities and Commercial Activities, where he was able to use his engineering skills to the full in supporting the implementation of the Capital Master Plan, the $1.9 billion project to renovate the Secretariat building that has seen New York staff relocated around mid-town Manhattan. While there, he also began work on the Strategic Heritage Plan, which is expected to do the same for the Palais des Nations. This gave him an introduction to UNOG, which, combined with a desire as a German national “to be back in Europe,” led him to apply and be selected for the post of Director of Administration.

Reflecting on his new assignment, Mr. Adams is inspired by now being in a position which enables him to more effectively further the goals of the Organization. Jointly with his management team he hopes to shape the UNOG Administration to enhance the support to client offices and its staff while improving the working conditions, including for those in difficult circumstances and the field. But he remains undaunted by the challenge he sees in usurping entrenched habits. While he acknowledges the need to understand the rationale behind each duty station’s traditions, he stressed “the way one has done it is not necessarily always the best way.”

At this stage, the discussion turns to staff matters. As Director of Administration he is very much exposed to developments in the new system of internal justice. As a result, he is keen to identify recurring issues that come up before the dispute tribunal – he cites the non-communication of selection decisions – so that the Human Resources Management service can meet with the hiring managers to brief them on lessons learnt. He adds that being a long-serving member of the former Joint Appeals Board “sensitized me to the issues where the Administration needs to give more attention to human resource issues.”

As Director of Administration, he is inspired by now being in a position which enables him to more effectively further the goals of the Organization. Jointly with his management team he hopes to shape the UNOG Administration to enhance the support to client offices and its staff while improving the working conditions, including for those in difficult circumstances and the field. But he remains undaunted by the challenge he sees in usurping entrenched habits. While he acknowledges the need to understand the rationale behind each duty station’s traditions, he stressed “the way one has done it is not necessarily always the best way.”

Asked about his opinion of flexible working arrangements, much championed recently by the Deputy Secretary-General, he says he keeps “an open mind.” They are, he said, “a good balance for staff who work long hours” and he supported their implementation in New York. He was particularly

UN Special – Février 2011
keen, for those “who put in the hours,” on compressed working schedules, where staff work nine hours a day and have every second Friday off. However, he did value the importance of being at the office in order “to interface” with staff, though he admitted that telecommuting could be “good for writing reports.”

The burning issue of temporary contracts was also touched on. For memory, the Staff Coordinating Council had ensured this summer that temporary staff with more than a year of service prior to the summer of 2009 would get a transitional fixed-term contract. However, those recruited since still receive reduced entitlements and undergo a three-month break-in-service every year. Mr. Adams was keen to point out that this framework was put in place by member States, despite the best efforts of the Secretary-General, with the aim to link temporary contracts to temporary activities. “If a staff member is needed to perform continuing functions then a position needs to be filled properly. We are working with UNHQ to have this matter addressed”.

Before ending, Mr. Adams was keen to highlight an issue close to his heart, that of greening the UN. He made it clear that staff needed to make more of an effort to conserve energy. “We should conserve what we can,” he said. “Turn your lights and office equipment off when you leave, don’t have your heating on with the window open. The utility bill is one of the most significant variable elements in the UNOG budget. Reducing unnecessary spending in this area allows us to improve the working conditions in the compound.”

Elizabeth James, Evelina Rioukhina and Sergio da Silva participated in this interview on behalf of the Editorial Board.

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**CURRICULUM VITAE**

**NAME**  
Clemens M. Adams

**EDUCATION**  
Mechanical Engineer, TH Darmstadt, Germany

**DEGREE**  
Diplom Ingenieur (Dipl.-Ing.)

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

10 – present  
Director, Division of Administration, United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG), Geneva, Switzerland

08 – 10  
Director, Facilities and Commercial Services Divisions, Office of Central Support Services, Department of Management (DM), UNHQ, New York, USA

07 – 08  
Head, ERP Implementation Planning Group, Office of the Under Secretary-General, Department of Field Support (DFS), UNHQ, New York, USA

07 – 06  
Chief, Specialist Support Service, Office of Mission Support, Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), UNHQ, New York, USA

05 – 03  
Officer-in-Charge, Logistic Support Division, Office of Mission Support, Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), UNHQ, New York, USA

98 – 01  
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), United Nations Force in Cyprus, (UNFICYP), Nicosia, Cyprus

94 – 98  
Chief, Engineering Section, Logistic and Communications Service, Field Administration and Logistics Division, Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), UNHQ, New York, USA

90 – 94  
Chief, Administration and Support Unit, Logistics and Communications Section, Field Operations Division, Department of Management (DM), UNHQ, New York, USA

89 – 90  
Officer-In-Charge, Buildings Management Unit, United Nations Transitional Authority Group (UNTAG), Windhoek, Namibia

87 – 88  
Technical/Logistics Officer, UNHCR Field Office, Galang, Indonesia

85 – 87  
Integrated Expert-CIM/GTZ, National Housing Authority, Manila, Philippines

83 – 85  
Consultant Engineer, UNHCR Refugee Camp, Bataan, Philippines

**INTERESTS**

Jogging, swimming, sailing, diving, aviation, classical music and gardening
In 2004 UNHCR Chief, Ruud Lubbers, hit global headlines following an incident of sexual harassment against staff member Cynthia Brzak. Lubbers resigned but Brzak kept quiet. Following departure on agreed termination, she now tells what actually happened and the retaliation she suffered.

BAYISA WAK-WOYA
AND JOSY-ANNE UMPLEBY, UNHCR

This is a version of one of the parties to the conflict and therefore should not be taken as the complete picture of the event until such time that we may obtain the other side of the story.

Why in early 2004 did you decide to submit to OIOS in NY a sexual harassment complaint against the High Commissioner and the Director of the Division of Human Resources Management (DHRM)?

In 2003 I was called to a meeting in the High Commissioner’s office in my role as Staff Representative and I was also there as a member of the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC). We were called to the meeting to find the fairest way for G staff to access the International Professional Roster (IPR) which had just been created and was being discussed in the JAC where we had some disagreement. A few members of the new Staff Council were called to talk through the issue with Mr. Ruud Lubbers who was the UNHCR High Commissioner at that time. Wrong things happened in and outside the High Commissioner’s office in December 2003. Those wrong things were done by the High Commissioner, and by the then Director of DHRM (Werner Blatter), not once, but three times. The staff had elected me to represent them and as a Staff Representative and JAC member I was sexually harassed and assaulted. In those roles I believed it hadn’t just been done to me and that the lack of respect and the abuse I suffered was actually a troubling reflection on how senior people in the Administration thought about us all. It was a serious matter. We were only about a month into our new term of office as staff reps so I took a stand because I could not continue the work if I did not call for order.

Do you think UNHCR colleagues know or really care what happened to you in December 2003?

We have all watched reports in the media and I learned that when scandals go public outsiders never know the full story.

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Even on the inside we can never know the whole story. We form judgments based on minimal information. It seems human to try and understand the stories we hear around us. I think in 2004 staff were concerned and cared deeply about Mr. Lubbers, UNHCR and themselves. I believe that by 2005 most colleagues wanted it to stop. But I couldn't really know what staff thought and I was very concerned about the picture they were forming. But remember, in the meantime, I was elected and re-elected as a staff representative between 2003 and 2008. Somehow perhaps staff thought that standing up for the right thing was important.

You started working for UNHCR in the Protection Division in February 1980. Were you ever harassed between then and 2003?

What happened to me in 2003 I know happened to others. Sexual harassment has happened to many other women – and men. The answer is yes, it did happen to me before in my individual capacity. As you said, I’ve worked for UNHCR for a long time. I joined when I was only 27 years old, and I quickly observed as a young woman and a newcomer that to survive in the UN I was going to have to acquiesce if I wanted to keep my job. I witnessed a host of disrespectful attitudes and behaviours in the 1980s and after. It was a man’s world and women had very little power or credibility.

What outcome did you expect when you decided to ‘blow the whistle’?

I have watched a lot unfold at UNHCR Headquarters. The outcome I was expecting was first of all, that I would be scrutinized as much, or even more than those I was accusations. I expected I could pass that scrutiny since I had nothing to hide and a long history of speaking the truth and defending principles. Then, I expected better of Mr. Annan – I knew some staff who had worked with him when he was the Personnel Deputy for a brief time in UNHCR in the mid-1980s. I thought that Mr. Annan would uphold the rules. I respected his wife with whom I worked as secretary in the Protection Division and she had shown herself to be a fair and gentle person. I expected to get an apology from Mr. Lubbers and Mr. Blatter so we could all get back to business.

Were you surprised by the ensuing events?

I was often shocked. As a G staff member in Geneva I was in no position to evaluate politics at the highest levels and in NY. I was extremely naïve. I expected a normal procedure. I believed rules would be followed and that is why we have them. I never imagined Mr. Lubbers would be such a ‘loose cannon’ or that he would refuse to submit to UN procedures and go out of his way to stir up the trouble he did against me, the Staff Council, people just doing their jobs, OIOS and the UN.

Mr. Lubbers characterized you to Secretary-General Annan and to the public as a “neurotic attention-seeker”. Is there any truth to that?

No, throughout I tried to keep a low profile, follow the rules, meet, reconcile, back down, move on. But he and senior officials never stopped coming at me trying to cause me harm. He slandered me in the press and on TV and tried to get my medical information and my family’s to use publicly. Here are a few examples:

– In May 2004 the OIOS investigation was going on. I filed the case in April and was waiting for OIOS to conclude their procedures. At that time Mr. Lubbers and I were working on a joint message to staff. In the middle of this he used the contacts to ask me in writing to withdraw the case, threatening me if I did not. What I did was send the letter to OIOS and I closed down communication with Mr. Lubbers.

– In July 2004, Mr. Annan announced that my allegations “could not be sustained”. He never mentioned Mr. Blatter (who has since retired). Then, in October 2004 I received an anonymous copy of the OIOS report Mr. Lubbers had seen but I was denied access to. After seeing that report it gave me strength to act. I asked the Secretary-General for a quick resolution. I wanted an apology and the right of reply, in line with OIOS recommendations. This was denied.

– In January 2005, I intended to start the New Year fresh but Dutch & American journalists began telling us that Mr. Ron Redmond (the then Head of Public Information, now retired) was calling them to recount that I was unstable, as was my son who tried to burn down my house. I have no sons and never had a fire. Then I found out Mr. Lubbers and other UNHCR staff were working on a 33-page paper for the Chef de Cabinet in New York using confidential medical information to attack me and my family. In February 2005, I went on leave for two weeks to a remote spot with no cell phone coverage, unaware Mr. Lubbers was called to New York and pressured to resign. When I got back to a city, messages began pouring in. But more than one year later this was no victory for anyone. Mark Malloch-Brown, Mr. Annan’s Chef de Cabinet, told FOX News that Mr. Lubbers was not pressured to resign because of my case but because he had become a liability for the Secretary-General.

I was very afraid of losing my job. In May 2005, after only 12 days as the new Director of DHRM, Raymond Hall (who has also since retired) informed me that my post had been identified for cutting. I was assigned punitive workloads without discussion. I was harassed about time spent on Staff Council and APPC work and no one would follow up on my 2004-2005 performance evaluations. A pattern of mobbing emerged and I became very ill from stress. I tried three times to talk with Mr. Gutieres and he refused.

Why not give these matters up, turn the page and let things get back to normal?

I figured questions like these were being asked. I knew that UNHCR staff had hesitation about the entire situation. It’s normal for colleagues to ask why I haven’t let it go. I tried to. Am I obsessed? I don’t think so. I was attacked instead of being protected and so I defended myself. Whoever wants misconduct and abuse by UN managers against staff to continue should work for crime syndicates or drug cartels. Because that’s what’s really going on and is endlessly being covered up. I am committed to justice, that’s just who I am. I came to believe that my case was a model for what so often goes wrong and an example of the kind of abuses the UN refuses to deal with honestly.

Reprinted from the December 2010 edition of Dialogue, the newsletter of the UNHCR Staff Council.
UNE VIE EN DEHORS DE L’ONU, ÇA EXISTE?

Karine Martinez, économétriste de formation, anciennement fonctionnaire à la CNUCED et maintenant consultante, est également une artiste dont on ne rencontre pas communément le genre.

Ses créations, des paramasques, sont singulièrement beaux et résultent d’une longue introspection.

**Elias Manuel Abou-Charaf, CNUCED**

C’est un objet universel dont l’origine remonte aux sociétés primitives. Il possède des caractères rituels selon la civilisation, et a toujours été convoyé de connotations paradoxales et mystérieuses de festivités, de coutumes, de divin et même de deuil. Quoiqu’il en soit, le masque a toujours été imprégné de cette allure énigmatique. Selon Oscar Wilde, « Un masque raconte beaucoup plus qu’un visage et l’homme est peu lui-même lorsqu’il parle à la première personne; donnez-lui un masque et il dira la vérité ».

Riche en symboles, ce simulacre facial est utilisé et ré-inventé par Karine non pas pour dissimuler, mais afin de dévoiler tout ce que l’âme d’une personne laisse en elle-même, quelque chose qui est enfoui et inexprimé par les gens, souvent quasi-impossible à extérioriser. A juste titre, ses œuvres sont des paramasques, interfaces entre soi et soi, des objets qui protègent des masques, symboles de tricherie qui font que nous nous trompons par rapport à nous-mêmes.

Depuis son enfance, Karine sent instinctivement le caractère d’une personne à travers son nez : « Je ressens souvent de manière intangible une finesse d’esprit, une sensibilité, et encore même parfois je me méfie de certaines gens en voyant leur nez. Le nez est tellement révélateur… ». C’est donc le nez qui sera l’élément essentiel au centre de ses compositions, quelque chose qui jouera le rôle d’une clé à la découverte d’une personne. Sa passion se déroule concomitamment aux affaires, puisque son prochain rendez-vous sera avec l’ITC de février jusqu’en mai 2011 : « J’en suis ravie, reconnaît-elle, car j’ai le temps de m’adonner à la création artistique ». Sa démarche artistique s’élabora en parole et en sentiment pour la personne dont elle construit le paramasque. Ingrédient incontournable, l’instinct : « Il faut rester instinctif, me confie-t-elle, car les ressentis sont tellement justes. Il faut faire confiance en son intuition. »

Son incroyable histoire aide à mieux comprendre ses créations. Femme d’affaires, son...
travail fait qu’elle entreprend beaucoup de voyages, notamment en Asie. En Septembre 2007, au retour d’un voyage au Japon, une embolie pulmonaire bilatérale la saisit d’assaut et la noie dans un coma pendant une semaine. Le médecin qui se chargera d’elle dira que c’est une miraculée.

Elle ne s’en rend peut-être pas compte, mais en parlant avec elle, je réalise qu’il y a très peu de gens qui savourent la vie à sa manière. Elle s’étonne avec sincérité devant une belle nouvelle, rigole comme une ado-lescente, on dirait qu’elle ne détient aucune forme de sournoiserie adulte mais simplement cette bonté immuable et universelle qui fait qu’elle est tellement créative. D’un positif contagieux, d’un optimisme enviable, c’est une très belle personne. Ce n’est donc point surprenant que nous ayons l’impression que ses œuvres sont venues d’ailleurs: «Je ressens et je matérialise, m’avouez-t-elle. Tout mon travail se déploie naturellement. En même temps que je crée mes modelages en céramique, il y a un lâcher-prise total où je laisse l’entièreté liberté à la terre de s’exprimer. Il faut laisser vivre la terre lorsqu’elle sèche, on permet ainsi à l’objet d’être lui-même.»

C’est ainsi que rentrer au plus profond de la personne, la connaître, faire de son âme une œuvre d’art, un paramasque dont les plages lisses sont emplies d’expression, tel est le but de l’artiste Karine Martinez. Eclectique (puisqu’elle saute en toute aisance de la céramique au fusain à la création de colliers), inventive, créative, en tous les cas peu conventionnelle et d’une originalité époustouflante, c’est avant tout une artiste dont la chaleur et l’accessibilité vous touchent, tout comme ses créations, qui paraissent tellement silencieuses, mais qui, subtilement, sont grandement admirables.

Karine Martinez a déjà exposé à Genève en Décembre 2010. Vous pouvez admirer ses œuvres lors de sa prochaine exposition courant le dernier trimestre de 2011. Il est à noter que ces expositions promeuvent son travail et que les paramasques sont faits sur mesure à la demande de ceux qui en sont intéressés.

Staff

LE NUMÉRO XXI D’EX TEMPORE EST TIRÉ; IL FAUT LE LIRE…

ALFRED DE ZAYAS

Vous pouvez obtenir des exemplaires du nouveau numéro ainsi que des numéros précédents de M. David Winch, Président SENU, dwinch@unog.ch, ou de Mme Carla Edelenbos, Vice-Présidente, SENU, cedelenbos@ohchr.org.

The 2011 edition of Ex Tempore is available for sale at the UN bookshop, Door 40.
A BUSY YEAR FOR THE STAFF COORDINATING COUNCIL

The UNOG Staff Coordinating Council has released its annual report for the 2010 to 2011 mandate. We bring you a summary, so that you can decide how you want to vote in the elections that take place later this month. This summary matches achievements against pledges made back in April of last year.

Pledge  To reorganize the working methods of the Council, improve the financial management, improve communication and relations with other staff unions and with staff representation within UNOG.

Two groups took an active role in running the Council this year, namely Alliance and the Hope Team. The Council elected an Executive Bureau, whose active members have been the following:

• President of the Council: Ian Richards, Hope Team
• Executive Secretary: Ridha Zargouni, Alliance
• Deputy Executive Secretary: Mohamed Chiraz Baly, Hope Team.
• Members: Yves Kenfack, Elizabeth James and Mohssen Touihri, Hope Team; Jean Claude Mporamazina and Cecilia Møller, Alliance.
• Other members of the Council were involved in the decision making and the continuous work of the Council, throughout the year.

With regards to the financial management of the Council assets, the Financial Commission has put in place certain rules and ways to run these, in conformity with the Auditors’ recommendations.

The Council has taken steps to enhance relations with the Secretariat, unions and associations. Through our re-affiliation to CCSIUA, the Secretariat federation, our relationship with other unions and associations has been revitalized. Common positions and more responsibilities were given to our Council through our participation to SMCC.

We were made the focal point for continuing contracts, and are a member of the Working Group on Career Development and Mobility. In addition, we provided full and strong support to the Sectoral assemblies within UNOG, and have improved contacts with members of the joint staff-management bodies.

Next starts
February 28th 2011
May 2nd 2011
On communication, we have made consistent and efficient use of the Broadcast system, with 20 issued, to inform staff accurately and on time on different topics. Monthly reports were also published in the *UN Special* and a consultant has been recruited and is currently working to create a Council website.

**Pledge** To ensure implementation of continuing contracts, protect the rights of staff with temporary appointments, ensure the salary and post adjustment survey was correctly carried out and review mobility and career development

Following the Council’s decision to play an active role in staff-management negotiations, we were able to reach agreement with Management at the Beirut SMCC last June on the implementation of continuing contracts. The General Assembly approved our proposals, with some modifications, and continuing contracts will be implemented as of 1 January 2011. We, of course, will continue to monitor this situation.

On temporary appointments, we rang alarm bells on the new regulations that request temporary staff to observe a three-month break after a year of service. This became one of our major concerns and has to be corrected urgently. At the SMCC in Beirut, an agreement was reached to allow interim measures to be put in place by which long-serving temporary staff were given fixed-term contracts on temporary vacant posts. These measures will continue to govern those staff until the end of 2011.

The Council also played a key role in the process of the Place-to-Place survey to determine the post adjustment of staff in the Professional and above categories. We made a successful Broadcast campaign to encourage colleagues to fill in the corresponding questionnaire, ensuring we met the minimum quorum, and took the lead in financing a staff expert to ensure that the survey results were correctly interpreted.

Our Council has also been elected member of the SMCC Working Group on Career Development and Mobility. A first video conference on this topic took place recently, during which we ensured that mobility would be tied to clear measures to enhance career development. We will not support mobility for its own sake.

**Pledge** To continue providing legal aid and assistance to staff, and support the Staff Solidarity Fund

In February, the Council voted a trial support of CHF 50,000 to the Office of Staff Legal Assistance (OSLA). At the same time, certain other staff cases that were already being handled by external lawyers, received further financing where necessary to help them present their appeals to the newly-established UN Dispute Tribunal. Although some successful results were reached through the external lawyers, first indications are that OSLA provides much better value for money.

CHF 30,000 was budgeted to constitute our yearly participation to the Staff Solidarity Fund. Another CHF 10,000 was added to the Fund for special equipment for disabled staff, administered by our Mutual Insurance.

**Pledge** To regularize the situation of SAFI

The issue of SAFI, which had dragged on for many years, following an OIOS investigation, is definitely settled. Agreement has been reached on a new Statute that ensures SAFI:

- remains in its current premises,
continues its mission on the same level
keeps its current employees, under the local Swiss labor law
maintains its ownership by the staff, as a non-profit association
continues to provide subsidies for the welfare activities of the Council

**Pledge** A modern, healthy and family-friendly working environment

On the issue of the crèche, we ran a staff survey to identify colleagues' needs. This was followed up by meetings with the local authorities to understand the context and conditions for a crèche. We also met with Management to identify how the UN could contribute. We also met childcare providers to examine how they would operate. As a follow up, we are now preparing a feasibility study, which will soon be presented to management. It will provide a roadmap to achieve a crèche within 12-18 months.

On a health and safety policy, we had discussions at SMCC and agreed on how such a policy could be designed and implemented at a global level, as none currently exists.

On flexible working arrangements, we are reviewing the current implementation. New draft guidelines were formulated at UNCTAD, which could function as a useful pilot for UNOG. The Council took part in this exercise.

**Pledge** Reform of the Council’s Constitution

The Joint Inspection Unit is undertaking a review of staff representation across the UN. Its findings will guide our efforts to reform the Council’s Constitution. However, we intend to implement one of the major recommendations of this review, with regard to the term of duty. Our aim is to propose a referendum to the staff at large to extend the Council’s term from one year to two years, which will ensure it is harmonized with the other unions and associations of the Secretariat.
CONSEIL DE COORDINATION

UNE ANNÉE CHARGÉE POUR LE CONSEIL DE COORDINATION DU PERSONNEL

Le Conseil de coordination du Personnel d’UNOG vient de publier son rapport annuel pour le mandat 2010-2011. Ce résumé, que nous vous présentons vous permettra de choisir pour qui voter aux prochaines élections qui auront lieu à la fin du mois.

Ce texte fait l’inventaire des réalisations du Conseil au regard des engagements pris en avril de l’année dernière.

RIDHA ZARGOUNI,
SECRÉTAIRE EXÉCUTIF
CONSEIL DE COORDINATION
DU PERSONNEL, OFFICE DES NATIONS UNIES À GENÈVE

Engagement Réorganiser les méthodes de travail du Conseil, améliorer la gestion financière, améliorer la communication et les relations avec d’autres syndicats de personnel et avec la représentation sectorielle du personnel au sein de l’ONUG

Deux groupes ont joué un rôle actif dans la gestion des affaires du Conseil cette année, à savoir, Alliance et Hope Team. Le Conseil a élu son bureau exécutif, dont les membres actifs ont été les suivants:

- Président du Conseil: Ian Richards, Hope Team
- Secrétaire Exécutif: Ridha Zargouni, Alliance
- Secrétaire exécutif adjoint: Mohamed Chiraz Baly, Hope
- Membres: Yves Kenfack, Elizabeth James et Mohssen Touihri, Hope Team
- Jean-Claude Mporamazina et Cecilia Moller, Alliance.

Les autres membres du Conseil ont été largement impliqués, tout au long de l’année, dans la prise de décision et le travail continu du Conseil.

En matière de gestion financière des avoirs du Conseil, la Commission financière a mis en place certaines règles de manière à gérer les deniers du Conseil conformément aux recommandations des auditeurs.

Le Conseil a pris les mesures nécessaires pour améliorer ses relations avec les syndicats et les associations du Secrétariat. En réintègrant CCSIUA, la fédération du Secrétariat, notre rapport avec les autres syndicats et associations a été revitalisée. Des positions communes et plus de responsabilités ont été données à notre Conseil grâce à notre participation au SMCC. Nous avons été désignés comme point de contact pour les contrats continus, et nommés membres du groupe de travail sur la mobilité et le développement de carrière.

Au sein de l’ONUG, nous avons raffermi nos relations avec les assemblées sectorielles de l’UNOG, et nous avons tissé des contacts privilégiés avec les élus des organes paritaires.

Dans le domaine de la communication, nous avons optimisé l’utilisation du système d’émission «Broadcasts», avec plus de 20 messages pour informer le personnel, à temps et de manière substantielle, sur les différentes questions traitées. Des rapports mensuels ont été également publiés dans UNSpecial et un conseiller a été recruté et travaille actuellement pour améliorer le site Web du Conseil.

Engagement Assurer l’octroi des contrats continus, protéger les droits du personnel temporaire, s’assurer que l’enquête sur l’ajustement de poste soit correctement menée et réexaminer la question de la mobilité et du développement de carrière.

En application de la décision du Conseil de jouer un rôle actif dans la négociation Personnel-Administration, nous avons pu conclure à Beyrouth, en juin dernier, l’accord sur la mise en place des contrats continus. L’Assemblée générale a approuvé nos propositions, avec quelques modifications, et des contrats continus seront mis en application à partir du 1er janvier 2011.

Nous continuerons naturellement à surveiller cette situation. En ce qui concerne les engagements temporaires, nous avons tiré la sonnette d’alarme sur les nouveaux règlements qui exigent que le Personnel temporaire observe une coupure de trois mois après une année de service. Ceci est devenu l’un de nos soucis importants et se devait d’être corrigé rapidement. Au SMCC à Beyrouth, un accord a été conclu pour mettre en place des mesures intérimaires pour que les fonctionnaires temporaires de longue durée bénéficieront de contrats à durée déterminée sur des postes vacants provisoires. Ces mesures continueront à être appliquées jusqu’à la fin 2011.

Le Conseil a également joué un rôle principal dans l’organisation et le déroulement de l’enquête sur l’indemnité d’ajustement de poste pour la catégorie des fonctionnaires professionnels et de grade supérieur. Nous avons réussi à sortir une série de «broadcasts» pour encourager nos collègues à remplir le questionnaire correspondant, ce qui nous a permis d’atteindre le nombre de réponses requises pour la validité de ce questionnaire. Nous avons en outre pris l’initiative de financer un expert, côté personnel, pour superviser le déroulement de l’enquête à Genève, et s’assurer, en se déplaçant à New York, que les données recueillies soient correctement traitées et analysées.
Notre Conseil a été également élu membre du groupe de travail du SMCC sur le développement de carrière et la mobilité. Une première vidéoconférence sur ce sujet a eu lieu récemment, pendant laquelle nous nous sommes assurés que le concept de mobilité serait clairement lié aux mesures prises pour le développement de carrière. Nous ne soutiendrons pas qu’une mobilité soit renforcée, en tant que telle, et en dehors du cadre global de développement de carrière des fonctionnaires.

Engagement

Continuer à fournir l’assistance et l’aide légale au Personnel et soutenir le fonds de solidarité du Personnel

En février le Conseil a voté la somme de CHF 50.000 en faveur du Bureau d’aide légale au Personnel (OSLA). Parallèlement, certains autres cas personnels qui étaient déjà traités par des avocats externes, ont été financés pour permettre à ces collègues de présenter leurs appels au nouveau tribunal d’appel de l’ONU. Bien que quelques résultats satisfaisants aient été obtenus par les avocats externes, les premières indications montrent qu’OSLA fournit le même rendement avec un bien meilleur coût.

CHF 30.000 ont aussi été votés en faveur du fonds de solidarité du personnel comme contribution annuelle. CHF 10.000 ont aussi été alloués au fonds pour l’équipement spécial pour le personnel handicapé, administré par notre assurance mutuelle.

Engagement

Régulariser la situation de SAFI

La question du SAFI, qui avait traîné pendant plusieurs années, suite à un rapport d’enquête des Services d’investigation OIOS, est aujourd’hui définitivement réglée. L’accord a été conclu sur un nouveau statut qui assure que le SAFI (Service d’achat des Fonctionnaires internationaux):

• reste dans ses locaux actuels,
• continue sa mission au même niveau
• conserve la même équipe d’employés, qui seront gérés en vertu de la législation locale du travail en Suisse
• maintient son appartenance au Personnel, en tant qu’association sans but lucratif
• continue à fournir des subventions au Conseil pour ses activités de bien être et d’assistance en faveur de l’ensemble du Personnel.

Engagement

Un environnement de travail moderne, sain et qui tient compte des besoins familiaux des fonctionnaires

Sur la question de la crèche, il est à noter que le Conseil a lancé une enquête pour déterminer les réels besoins des fonctionnaires; qui s’est poursuivie par des réunions avec
les autorités locales pour comprendre et se familiariser avec le contexte et les conditions de création de crèche. Nous avons également rencontré les représentants de l’Administration pour identifier les moyens avec lesquels l’ONUG peut apporter son concours à ce type de projet. De même que pour les professionnels, avec qui nous avons discuté des conditions d’opérabilité des crèches. En conclusion de ces étapes, nous avons entrepris une étude de faisabilité, qui sera bientôt présentée à l’Administration, et constituera une feuille de route pour réaliser une crèche dans les 12-18 mois prochains. En ce qui concerne la politique de santé et de sécurité, nous avons suscité les discussions au sein du SMCC et avons conclu sur comment cette politique doit être envisagée et appliquée au niveau global du Secrétariat, en l’absence d’une telle politique à l’heure actuelle.

Sur les horaires de travail flexibles, nous sommes dans la phase de revue des conditions actuelles et de leur application à l’ONUG. Quelques nouvelles formulations sont actuellement élaborées au sein de la CNUCED, qui pourront servir, une fois mises en place, comme une expérience pilote utile à l’ensemble de l’ONUG. Nul besoin de mentionner que le Conseil est partie prenante à cet exercice.

**Engagement** Réforme de la Constitution du Conseil


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**CEREMONY TO HONOUR THE MEMORY OF THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS**

On Wednesday, 12 January 2011, the United Nations family across the world paid tribute collectively to the colleagues and many others who perished in last year’s earthquake in Haiti.

OLEKSANDR SVIRCHEVSKYY, ELIZABETH JAMES AND EVELINA RIOUKHINA, UNECE

In Geneva, the ceremony took place at 4.45 pm to coincide symbolically with the time when the tragedy struck Haiti. Mr. Sergei A. Ordzhonikidze, Director-General of UNOG, and Mr. Ridha Zargouni, Executive Secretary of the UNOG Coordination Council, made speeches to honour the memory of the colleagues and many other victims who lost their lives in this tragic earthquake one year ago, on 12 January 2010.
LOOKING BACK

Avec une longue carrière aux Nations unies et dans la représentation du personnel, culminant avec son élection comme Secrétaire exécutif, Ridha Zargouni interviewé par UN Special, nous livre son expérience et nous décrit son parcours.

EVELINA RIIOUKHINA, CEE

Parlez-nous de vos premiers pas au Conseil. Comment vous êtes-vous retrouvé comme membre du Conseil?

J’ai rallié Genève à la suite de ma réussite à l’examen de G à P, en qualité de bibliothécaire en 1989 ; à Tunis, au Centre d’information je m’étais déjà lancé dans la représentation du Personnel, en participant au Comité local sur les salaires dans le cadre de la revue périodique des conditions d’emploi et de salaire. C’était là ma première expérience syndicale au sein de l’ONU. Il était donc écrit quelque part que mon bail avec le syndicat de l’ONU allait vite se renouveler, le temps pour moi de m’adapter à la vie onusienne à Genève, à prendre mes marques, et à me retremper dans cette ambiance particulière. Ma première élection le fut avec le Groupe « Les Indépendants » en 1992.

Pendant votre carrière et pendant de longues années, vous vous êtes engagé dans la représentation du personnel. Vous avez été élu en tant que Secrétaire exécutif adjoint et puis en tant que Secrétaire exécutif. Quelle est la différence entre ces deux postes?


Cependant la différence fondamentale entre les 2 positions tient essentiellement dans la relation avec les différents interlocuteurs du Conseil. Le Secrétaire exécutif est en fait le porte-parole du Groupe et de ce fait doit synthétiser les différentes positions et sensibilités exprimées au sein du Conseil et doit alors agir en fédérateur pour coordonner et...
amener le consensus au sein du Groupe. Le SEA assume en partie cette tâche mais doit surtout apporter son aide et avoir suffisamment de recul pour faire en sorte que le premier nommé réussisse dans sa tâche, tout en assumant par ailleurs différentes responsabilités administratives et de gestion des affaires du Conseil. Mais à la fin de la journée ce couple condamné à réussir doit trouver ses marques et agir en symbiose.

Quels étaient vos plus grands défis et quels sont vos plus grands défis en tant que Secrétaire-exécutif ?

Le challenge principal pour tout élu représentant du Personnel réside dans l’adaptation entre ses promesses électorales et ses convictions d’une part et son action pour les mettre en exécution d’autre part. C’est tellement enthousiasmant de se lancer dans une campagne pour l’élection des membres du Conseil avec un programme “alléchant” et se retrouver en tête de liste des élus, et de se réveiller le lendemain pour affronter les dures réalités onusiennes, où pour amender une circulaire ou une instruction administrative, il faut remuer “le cocotier” jusqu’au sommet, à savoir le Secrétaire général. L’ONU est et reste cette formidable machine administrative, difficile à manier et à manœuvrer, pour ne pas dire à changer ou réformer.

Pouvez vous imaginer votre vie et votre carrière sans être représentant du personnel ? Si vous deviez répéter votre parcours à l’ONU, serait-ce le même ? En d’autres mots, regrettez-vous d’avoir consacré tant d’années à la représentation du personnel ?

En tant que francophone, je vais me comparer à l’un des personnages célèbres d’une bande dessinée. Comme lui, je suis tombé dans la soupe de la représentation, ou du syndicalisme depuis mon jeune âge, à la seule différence, c’est que je n’ai pas la corpulence physique d’un Obélix. Mais heureusement pour moi, j’ai acquis très tôt “la carapace” qui m’a permis d’assumer mes convictions jusqu’au bout et de pouvoir encaisser les coups-bas sans flâbler ni baisser les bras et surtout de ne jamais démissionner devant les difficultés. Et quand je jette un regard sur mon passé, je ne regrette rien, tout au plus quelques détails qui, à un moment ou un autre, évités ou différemment négociés, auraient pu nous amener de meilleurs résultats. Sans le syndicalisme, je ne sais pas ce qu’aurait été ma vie, mais certainement pas aussi riche et pleine qu’elle ne l’a été jusqu’à aujourd’hui. Et dans ce parcours, il m’est agréable de souligner le rôle ô combien important qu’a pu jouer ma femme à mes côtés. Ceci a commencé par la décision de venir à Genève, laissant derrière nous pays, famille et amis. Puis avec tout ce que j’ai pu affronter comme tension, stress, angoisse. Thouiba a toujours été là, le refuge, la conseillère, l’appui, bref le roc auquel j’ai pu m’amarre pour ne pas vaguer et au risque de me perdre. Chapeau bas et merci Thouiba.

Quelles étaient vos souvenirs les plus chers, les plus heureux et ceux les plus tristes ?

J’ai tellement de souvenirs qui se bousculent dans ma tête qu’il m’est difficile de les citer. Et puis je me dis que je suis toujours actif à ce niveau, et j’aimerais toujours penser à demain plutôt que remémorer un événement ou un autre. Toutefois, mes meilleurs souvenirs je les dois surtout aux moments où les accords négociés avec l’Administration entrent en application, sur décision du Secrétaire général, des Etats membres ou même d’un directeur de département. Cela va de la résorption d’un cas individuel, à un accord cadre sur le temps de travail partiel ou aménagé, sur les contrats, les droits des fonctionnaires de toutes catégories… Mais je voudrais garder aussi les moments durs pour moi. Je ne suis pas de nature à trop m’apitoyer sur mon sort. Je trouve que j’ai fait malgré tout une belle carrière à l’ONU, dans le sens que je donne personnellement à la carrière à savoir principalement l’épanouissement individuel et le fait d’avoir entrepris et réalisé ce qu’on souhaite et pas seulement ce qu’on vous engage à faire.

Quels conseils avez-vous pour la nouvelle génération de représentants du personnel ?

You are relatively new in the Staff Coordinating Council. Is this your first activity as a staff representative or have you been engaged with the Coordinating Council previously?

I have been following the Council’s activities, from afar, for many years. I was extremely intrigued by the political jockeying, personality cults and ego trips that went on in the Council behind the façade of collective interests, common good and idealistic slogans of this sort and by the “passive criticism” surrounding it. So although, the institution attracted me, given my personal and educational background, I never had an affinity with the groups/parties/unions on the scene. Other colleagues were like me. Some of us were proponents for change so we created Hope Team. We created it to be an alternative to what exists and existed in the Council. We made it to be a group without a hierarchical structure where consorted ideas are our creed. So I became a staff representative about four years ago with Hope (at the time there were four of us elected — now we are 11).

After a year of being Deputy Executive Secretary, what are your impressions? What were the biggest challenges? The biggest achievements?

As I imagined it: a challenging responsibility that necessitates a massive commitment. I have to admit though that my response was not to your question on being Deputy, as I do not consider myself as such — I do not believe in titles, but on being in the Executive team. The Council’s activities are endless. You can take it as far and as wide as you want to, depending on your ambition and hard work. So the biggest challenge for me was to harness my efforts to be efficient. This was not easy to do because there are so many things to do in a very short span of time (the Council effectively works less than eight months on its one-year mandate — Geneva is the only major duty station where the Council has a one-year mandate). As for the biggest achievement, no one in the Council, past and present, can pretend to have achieved something individually — failure could be individual but not accomplishments. So as far as I am concerned the biggest achievement would have to be saving the jobs of about 10% of staff — they were on temporary appointments.

How do you see your contribution to the Organization given that you have been released from your duties at UNCTAD?

I do not see the difference. Both are equally useful. The Organization is made of people (some tend to forget this) working for the welfare of other peoples. As a UN staff member I work for the welfare of other peoples. Now, still as a UN staff member, I am working for the welfare of the people working for the welfare of other peoples.

You are representing a younger generation at the UN. How do you see the role of the Council? Has this first year been at the level of your expectations?

I might represent the young generation, but the Council is for all to all and by all. The Council’s role is to promote the welfare of staff in Geneva, which ranges from defending them to promoting their well-being (the Council is not a uni-purpose enterprise). Furthermore, our welfare is necessarily linked to that of the wider system (Geneva represents less than 10% of UN staff) where priorities and aspirations often diverge. Finally, and it is a reality that I have never envisaged its extent before, we are ultimately the employees of Member States. Our welfare depends also on their priorities and aspirations. So the Council’s role is clear. How it operates is what has to be improved. It has to adopt new ways to efficiently play its role. We have already started but this change has to continue. Now, as to whether my first year meets my expectations, my answer is both Yes and No. Yes, as it was as challenging as I imagined it to be. And No, because it is work in progress, that necessitates effort, commitment, time and means. I was not able to put in place all the goals I set for myself (it could be that I was over ambitious. It could also be that I am not the...
formed League of Nations Tribunal decided international organization. In 1929 the newly—before the first ever internal tribunal of an international organization. In 1929 the newly-formed League of Nations Tribunal decided in Di Palma Castiglione that it could apply ‘general principles of law and equity’ if the positive law (that is to say the Staff Rules, Regulations and similar written instruments) was silent on a particular matter. General principles of law are those which are found in the world legal system as a whole, and include requirements to comply with rules, to act fairly and in good faith, to properly constitute committees involved in taking administrative decisions and to exhaust parallel procedures before applying to the Tribunal. The duty to give reasons for discretionary decisions is an important general principle, and has been held to apply in cases where the decision is the non-renewal of a fixed-term contract. These norms have generally been held to be superior to positive law. In Noyn, the applicant was allowed to succeed in a claim that was time-barred according to the Staff Rules, because of the general principle that a debtor who delays in paying his debt cannot use such delay for arguing that the creditor’s renewed demand for payment is time-barred. In Ferreccia, the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) ruled that a staff member must be given the right to be heard before a disciplinary sanction is imposed, “even where contrary provisions exist”. An exceptional case is Mullan, where the recognized principle of non-discrimination did not override a staff rule that explicitly discriminated against female staff members who could receive travel costs for home leave in respect of their husbands if they were dependents, whereas wives of male staff would receive the benefit irrespective of dependency status. Customary international law is international law accepted by States as binding on them, even if they did not consent to them in a treaty. Examples include the laws of war or the immunity of a visiting Head of State. As Judge Amerasinghe points out in his authoritative work The Law of the International Civil Service, customary international law ‘has little of relevance to the employment relationship in international organizations that is not already reflected in general principles of law’.

**Practice**

In a case named Judgments of the ILO Administrative Tribunal, no less than the International Court of Justice (ICJ) itself pronounced that a “body of practice” can be a relevant factor in the interpretation of contracts of employment between an international organization and its staff. To be a relevant factor, the practice in question must pass two onerous tests: it must form part of a consistent pattern, and must be carried out by the Organization in the conviction

**IN THE COURTS: SOURCES OF LAW**

Our employment relationship with the organization is governed by Staff Rules, Regulations and numerous administrative instructions. But did you know that there are many other relevant sources, including the Charter of the United Nations itself?

**AMAL OUMMIH, OSLA LEGAL OFFICER**

**FILIP BORKOWY, OSLA VOLUNTEER**

**The Charter of the United Nations and other Treaties**

The Charter of the United Nations is a constitutional document and the highest source of internal law of the Organization. Therefore, Staff Rules, Regulations and other instruments are drafted with its provisions in mind. When deciding on a matter, judges must also ensure its respect. A good illustration of this is the recent case of Buendia et al where Judge Goolam Meeran found that the Charter gave the applicants a right to due process since “procedural propriety […] is a central theme pervading […] the Charter.”

Further sources of law are the provisions of other treaties that may be applicable if the United Nations is a party to them. The United Nations is not usually a party to agreements that relate to employment law – such as ILO Conventions – since most of these agreements are only open to States.

**General Principles of Law and Customary International Law**

It is instructive that the question of sources of law was raised in the initial case brought before the first ever internal tribunal of an international organization. In 1929 the newly-formed League of Nations Tribunal decided...
that it reflects a legal obligation. Practice only creates law while it continues and is believed to be in furtherance of an obligation. The practice at issue before the ICJ was one purporting to entitle staff on fixed-term contracts to be considered for continuing employment. If this practice existed in 1956 at the time of the ICJ’s judgment, it does not necessarily do so now. Even if shown to constitute a source of law, the practice of one organization binds only those organizations following the practice and no other.

**National law**

The municipal laws of member States are not normally a source of law governing the employment relationship in the organization. Where judgments refer to the law of various countries, the learned judges are usually giving examples of the existence of a general principle of law (which is a valid source of law, see above) in a legal system with which they are familiar.

An important exception is where parts of national law are incorporated into the law of the organization. The most well-known example of this is ST/SGB/2004/13, the reference to the law of the staff member’s country of nationality in matters of personal status. In this area, the complex and changing laws of all 192 member States apply in a legal system with which they are familiar.

Previous tribunal decisions

Unlike their counterparts in common law legal systems, the UN tribunals are not bound by strict precedent, and therefore previous judgments are not sources of law. Nevertheless, judges will not depart from logic of earlier rulings if they consider them to have been correctly decided. It is not uncommon for parties to cite the names of previous cases as “persuasive authority” before the tribunals, and judges will often refer to past decisions in their judgments.

Decisions of other administrative tribunals of international organizations may also be persuasive, again on the condition that the relevant facts are the same. Judgments of the ILOAT are often cited by the UN tribunals, and vice-versa. Most international entities of a universal character (including all UN system organizations) use either ILOAT or the UN tribunals for judicial settlement of employment disputes, though a few (such as the World Bank) maintain their own tribunals. The new system of justice places greater emphasis on oral hearings, whereby cases at the ILOAT are usually decided “on the papers”. While this is a big procedural difference, decisions are usually arrived at in the same way, using the same sources of law described here.

**Human Rights**

Human Rights as they are understood today come about by treaty. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights defines the numerous references to “fundamental rights” in the Charter, which we have seen is the highest source of internal law of the Organization. In a strongly worded judgment in Sanwidi, judge Nkemdilim Izuako considered the Declaration as “the most basic of the UN’s instruments”, and found it a source of the right to “grant full equality to the parties in a fair and public hearing”. The learned judge made reference to the Declaration as “the most basic of the UN’s instruments”, suggesting that the right derived from the constitutional nature of the Declaration based on its relationship to the Charter, rather than recognition of human rights as a distinct source of law. Nor is the Organization bound by the large number of human rights treaties which are in force for many States. While it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the Organization may in the future bind itself to instruments other than the Universal Declaration, human rights are not currently a distinct source of law at the tribunals.
AUX URNES, GENEVOIS!

Le 13 mars 2011 se tiennent les élections municipales. Ont le droit de vote, tous fonctionnaires de nationalité suisse ainsi que ceux de nationalité étrangère domiciliés dans une commune genevoise et qui résident légalement en Suisse depuis huit ans au moins. Mais devant les affiches, les slogans et les promesses, sauriez-vous pour qui voter?

IAN RICHARDS, UNCTAD
Nous avons demandé aux magistrats de la ville de nous parler, de leur propre manière, de ce qu’ils ont fait et de ce qu’ils veulent faire pour vous. Ils ont tous répondu à l’appel et nous vous les présentons, en ordre alphabétique, ici. À vous de voter.

Pierre Maudet
Vice Président du Conseil administratif, Département de l’environnement urbain et de la sécurité, Parti radical

La présence des organisations internationales font de Genève un pôle d’excellence dans de nombreux domaines, tels que le droit humanitaire, le droit du travail, la santé ou le commerce international, contribuant ainsi à la promotion de la paix et de la démocratie dans le monde.

Principal bénéficiaire des dépenses annuelles engagées par les organisations internationales, Genève se doit d’offrir à ses hôtes le cadre nécessaire à leur épanouissement. C’est pour cette raison que je me suis par exemple fortement engagé lors du vote pour l’extension de l’OMC, en septembre 2009, et lors de chaque occasion permettant aux Genevois-es de confirmer leur attachement à la présence internationale dans leur ville.

Celles et ceux qui travaillent dans les organisations internationales ainsi que leurs familles enrichissent notre ville par la diversité de leurs parcours et de leurs origines. Ceux qui décident de s’installer à Genève obtiennent, après 8 ans de résidence, le droit de vote communal. Voter est un droit, mais c’est aussi une responsabilité. C’est accepter de s’intégrer à la vie local, notamment par l’apprentissage de notre langue, c’est aussi s’intéresser à notre culture, et aux multiples activités proposées par les très nombreuses associations sportives et culturelles de la Ville. A cet égard les autorités locales sont soucieuses de faire de Genève une cité accueillante et sont mobilisées pour que genevois et étrangers vivent en harmonie.

Seul élu de droite (parti libéral-radical – centre-droit) au Gouvernement de la Ville, c’est dans cet esprit que je travaille chaque jour au rétablissement d’un environnement de travail et de loisirs convivial, convaincu que Genève doit investir davantage dans la sécurité, la salubrité et la mobilité si elle veut tenir son rang de cité internationale. Merci d’avance pour votre soutien à la Genève que vous ainez!

PATRICE MUGNY
Conseiller administratif, Département de la culture, Parti : Les Verts

Genève est une ville internationale. Elle est le siège de nombreuses organisations internationales et sans doute aussi la capitale des organisations non gouvernementales; plus de 180 cultures s’y côtoient. Genève est donc une cité multiculturelle, ouverte sur le monde, autant par esprit que par vocation. En tant que responsable de la culture, j’ai souhaité placer mon action sous le signe du « vivre ensemble » au sein d’une diversité culturelle active, engagée dans la vie de la cité, ouverte et stimulante. Car je suis convaincu que le respect de la diversité culturelle et ethnique créé la richesse des rapports humains et façonner le visage d’une ville soucieuse de faire leur place à ses nombreux hôtes résidents ou de passage.

Avec celles et ceux qui luttent pour la justice et les droits humains
En tant que Maire de la Ville de Genève, j’ai choisi de commémorer le 60e anniversaire de la signature des Conventions de Genève

RéMY PAGANI
Conseiller administratif, Département des constructions et de l’aménagement, Parti: A gauche toute!

Garder une bonne qualité de vie pour tous et toutes à Genève
A la tête du département des constructions et de l’aménagement, mon objectif prioritaire est d’offrir aux habitant-e-s de Genève des logements à prix accessibles aussi pour les bas et moyens revenus, ainsi qu’un espace public et des infrastructures de qualité. Soumise à de fortes pressions économiques et même spéculatives, il est très important que Genève garde ses caractéristiques d’ouverture et de mixité. Ce sont des conditions essentielles aussi pour la qualité de l’accueil et du bien-être de la communauté internationale qui vit à Genève.
avec un programme spécial. J’ai décidé d’aller rencontrer dans des pays en conflit celles et ceux qui se battent pied à pied pour faire triompher le droit contre la force.

Je me suis rendu en Bosnie-Herzégovine – à Sarajevo puis à Srebrenica – au Rwanda et en République démocratique du Congo – et plus particulièrement à Goma et à Bukavu – et enfin en Israël et en Palestine. Dans ces pays où beaucoup de femmes et hommes ont risqué et risquent leur vie à tout instant, j’ai rencontré des militantes des droits humains exceptionnels, qu’ils soient syndicalistes, paysans, journalistes, activistes des droits humains ou responsables politiques. Ces personnes engagées m’ont fait part de ce que représentent le droit international et les Conventions de Genève pour leur travail quotidien et la reconstruction de leur société. Me revient en mémoire cette femme à Goma, responsable d’une association qui recueille les femmes victimes de violences sexuelles et qui, assise sur un vieux lit de camp, me disait sa volonté de trouver un terrain et de faire construire un dispensaire en dur pour mieux accueillir ses sœurs, les réconforter et tenter de les réinsérer dans leur famille qui les rejetait. Je suis encore au-delà des familles grâce à des partenariats intellectuels entre le secteur public et le secteur privé.

J’en ai rapporté une volonté encore plus déterminée. Je me suis rendu en Bosnie-Herzégovine – à Sarajevo puis à Srebrenica – à Goma, responsable d’une association qui recueille les femmes victimes de violences sexuelles et qui, assise sur un vieux lit de camp, me disait sa volonté de trouver un terrain et de faire construire un dispensaire en dur pour mieux accueillir ses sœurs, les réconforter et tenter de les réinsérer dans leur famille qui les rejetait. Je suis encore aujourd’hui bouleversé par sa détermination. J’en ai rapporté une volonté encore plus déterminée à soutenir l’esprit de Genève qui a traversé le temps et qui nous fait appartenir à une cité reconnue dans le monde entier. Je ferai tout ce qui est en mon pouvoir pour qu’elle le reste. Il est ainsi primordial que tout le monde ici comprenne mieux le rôle international de Genève. C’est pour cela que nous organisons, avec l’Université de Genève plusieurs débats sur « Genève et la gouvernance mondiale », sous trois de ses différents aspects : « Paix, droits humains et action humanitaire » (jeudi 3 mars), « Migrations et refuge » (jeudi 10 mars), « Commerce et développement durable » (jeudi 17 mars). Plusieurs personnalités de premier plan de la gouvernance mondiale, et les directeurs des principales Organisations internationales viendront discuter sans tabou avec nous.

A cet égard, j’aimerais rappeler ici mon engagement, il y a une dizaine d’années, en faveur des ressortissants du Kosovo qui arrivaient dans notre ville fuyant les conflits des Balkans. Aujourd’hui, nombre d’entre eux sont parfaitement intégrés et actifs dans la communauté locale. Dans la même perspective, il convient de souligner ici ma volonté de proposer un accueil digne aux enfants, aux femmes et aux hommes qui, parfois dans une extrême précarité, viennent chercher dans notre ville un refuge temporaire.

Même assiégée par des mouvements démagogues, Genève ne saurait trahir sa réputation de terre d’accueil. Il est en effet de la responsabilité des élus de tout mettre en œuvre pour éviter que ne se creuse un fossé, une fracture sociale, réelle ou imaginaire, entre les populations locales les plus fragiles et les plus isolées – je pense notamment aux personnes âgées – et celles et ceux qui viennent à Genève à la recherche d’un avenir meilleur pour leurs familles. Contre l’exclusion sociale, contre l’isolement urbain, nous affirmons notre credo : celui d’une Genève responsable et solidaire !

Sandrine Salerno
Maire de Genève,
Département des finances et du logement,
Parti socialiste

Je suis très attachée et attentive au dossier que les Genevoises et Genevois appellent la « Genève internationale ». En collaboration avec le Canton et la Confédération, je m’assure que Genève remplit pleinement sa mission de « Ville hôte » des organisations internationales et multilatérales, et des ONG internationales : développement des infrastructures, relations avec la communauté diplomatique, notamment. C’est donc avec conviction que j’ai défendu l’extension du Centre William Rappard (OMC), qui a été acceptée l’année passée par référendum. C’était pourtant loin d’être gagné, tant les enjeux pour renforcer la place internationale de Genève sont encore mal compris dans la population.


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Symboliquement, ces deux espaces de vie qui accueillent quotidiennement des petits Genevois de souche et des enfants aux origines, aux langues, aux cultures et aux religions diverses sont tout à fait représentatifs de notre réalité de ville multiculturelle, tolérante et dynamique.

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Manuel Tornare
Conseiller administratif,
Département de la cohésion sociale,
de la jeunesse et des sports,
Parti socialiste

Etre en charge de la cohésion sociale dans une ville comme Genève, c’est se préoccuper au premier chef de tisser des liens entre la communauté locale et la Genève internationale.

Dans ce contexte, je me suis efforcé de développer des contacts qui ont permis, notamment, l’ouverture de deux crèches, à travers une collaboration entre la Ville de Genève et MERCK Serono d’une part, la Ville de Genève et le CICR d’autre part. La petite enfance est une mission de service public de première importance : des infrastructures de qualité sont à disposition des familles grâce à des partenariats intelligents entre le secteur public et le secteur privé. Sur ce modèle, d’autres réalisations sont d’ailleurs envisagées dans ce domaine.

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Record snowfalls made last December one to remember, turning the Palais des Nations into a real Winter Palace. Statistics show that such a heavy and early snowfall only happens once a century, so keep these memories until our next rendezvous in 2111.

This photogallery was prepared with the participation of Veronique Magnin, Gerald Muriel and Evelina Rioukhina.
INDUSTRIAL ACTION AT THE ILO

On 10 November 2010, over 500 staff members of the International Labour Organization in headquarters, and hundreds more in field offices around the globe, took an historic industrial action demanding decent working conditions.

BAYISA WAK-WOYA, UNHCR

On that day, headquarters staff disrupted the meeting of the Governing Body of the Organization, forming a human chain outside the meeting room where it was scheduled to meet.

Staff from other UN organizations came to show their support. Huge applause and cheers arose when the Staff Union Committee presented their proposals to an Extraordinary General Meeting. People congregated in front of the Governing Body Room to form a human chain in true expression of solidarity and demands to the Governing Body. The media were impressed by their efforts.

This historic industrial action came about through a number of serious concerns related to precarious employment, opaque recruitment procedures, and violations of freedom of association and collective bargaining rights.

The Staff Union alleges that the ILO has violated freedom of association rights, including censoring the Union’s communications and interfering with its right to hire its own staff. “Under such conditions, true collective bargaining cannot exist.” Land-Kazlauskas insisted. “Under these circumstances the very real problems affecting our workforce globally, from security concerns for our field-based staff, to discrimination and an explosion in precarious employment, cannot be resolved,” he added.

On 17 November, following days of intensive negotiations, and less than 24 hours before the Union would launch a global strike, agreement was reached on a number of the Staff Union’s immediate demands. These related primarily to freedom of association, freedom of expression, and recruitment and selection procedures. In addition, the parties agreed to engage an independent, external third-party as a means of addressing the remaining issues which led to the dispute. Following these agreements, the Union decided to suspend further industrial action.

“This agreement is a positive step forward in returning to good governance and collective bargaining in the ILO,” said Mr. Land-Kazlauskas. “This dispute, as with all industrial disputes, was destined to end back at the bargaining table. We are hopeful that this opening, including the intervention by specialists in the process of mediation, arbitration and conciliation will allow us to make real progress on the issues facing our global workforce, so that we can best serve our constituents.”

Mr. Land-Kazlauskas attributes the positive resolution of the conflict to the outpouring of support received during the staff action. Nearly half of ILO headquarters staff participated in the rally in front of the Governing Body, and almost all ILO field offices participated in actions around the world. “This shows that ILO staff are fully committed to the values of the ILO and are willing to stand together to find solutions” Land-Kazlauskas said.

He notes that many of the issues raised by the ILO Staff Union were common throughout the United Nations system. “Physical security, employment security, transparent recruitment procedures, fairness in job classification and a real investment in career development were all central to the integrity of the international civil service,” Land-Kazlauskas stated. “It is incumbent on all staff representatives to defend the rights, and advance the interests of staff – through negotiation wherever possible, and through mobilization whenever necessary.”

As social dialogue remains at the heart of the ILO, we remain hopeful that in the end, collective bargaining will prevail.
BAMBERG – INSIDE THE SEVEN-HILLED CITY

Nine hours by train or a short flight away, the enchanting city of Bamberg is the perfect weekend getaway; a marvel that’s well off the beaten track but has plenty to offer up.

St. Peter’s and St. George’s Imperial Cathedral is one of the legacies of Emperor Heinrich II. It contains numerous impressive sights. Emperor Heinrich II had the Cathedral constructed in Bamberg as early as 1002 and it was completed in 1012 after a building period of just ten years. However, this was burnt down. The third construction which contains elements of the late romanesque and early Gothic periods has survived to the present day. The highlights include the tomb of the holy imperial couple Kunigunde and Heinrich II, created by Tilman Riemenschneider, the “Bamberg Horseman” who is shrouded in mystery, the altar by Veit Stoß and the papal tomb of Clemens II. Most buildings in the surrounding neighbourhood belonged to the Bishop and there are museums to visit that preserve Bamberg’s history.

An interesting landmark is the former City Council Hall that is adorned by resplendent frescoes in the impressionist style and is situated by the River Regnitz. At this point there is a bridge that connects the old Bamberg with the new Bamberg and the city centre where trendy shops are located.

In the city centre one can discover one of Germany’s most famous breweries, which produces artisanal smoked beer. One can enter and even have a meal to accompany the beer tasting. The brewery also sells bottles that can serve as souvenir gifts. Stroll into one of the breweries and take an opportunity to taste one of the many “BeerSchmecker-Stadt Bamberg” packages, Bamberg’s famous smoked beer, the Sandkerwa summer beer festival, the Franconian Brewery Museum, or simply the many beer cellars dotted around the town.

The concert hall on the River Regnitz is primarily home to the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra – the Bavarian State Philharmonia. This internationally reputed orchestra stages around 50 concerts a year, providing a high-profile choice of cultural experiences. In addition, the concert hall is widely used as a conference and congress centre as well as an exhibition hall.

A striking feature of the city that its inhabitants are proud of is the harmony between its past and the present. A casual stroll through the streets reveals the architectural blend in the various buildings. The continuity was certainly maintained by the escape from the bombings of Second World War. The Island City is always full of life; it is home to the social science faculties of the Otto Friedrich University of Bamberg. Among the most striking sights are the “Old Town Hall” situated by the River Regnitz and the former Fishermen’s settlement known as “Little Venice”.

ELIZABETH JAMES, UNECE
This medieval city is located in the heart of the Bavarian State. It is a very charming destination for all those who seek calm and culture. The top of the city is the seat of the very imposing Dom cathedral with bell towers that are visible from every corner of the city and the Altenburg Castle at the town’s highest vantage point. Unfortunately, all roads leading to the Castle were closed due to heavy snow.

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MIND THE SHOES
GOLDEN RULES FOR DRESSING WELL AT THE OFFICE

The era of dressing down is over. In these straitened times, you need to power dress to impress. Fashion correspondent Evelina Rioukhina tells you how.

EVELINA RIOUKHINA, UNECE

When we hear the phrases “Mind the doors” or “Mind the steps” we are being warned to be careful not to hurt ourselves. If we are fastidious about our looks and do not want to hurt our image, it’s “mind the Shoes” that should be our golden rule.

You may find this shocking but shoes are the most important component of your wardrobe. When you first meet a person, statistics tell us that after looking at the eyes, 70 per cent of us will look down to the footwear. To paraphrase a well-known proverb, “Show me your shoes and I will tell you who you are.” Shoes can reveal information about your education, your culture, your background, your tastes, your health and your upbringing. It is hard to imagine quite how much one can learn about a person simply by looking at their footwear. They are the real secret to being stylish and looking good.

In writing this article I was requested to give my own tips on how to look chic and dress for the UN. It’s a daunting challenge. Is it even possible to talk about dress style within our multicultural environment? It would admittedly be difficult, in view of the vast diversity of our colleagues. If tomorrow we organized a UN fashion show, we would have quite a spectacular and glamorous selection of dress that the world of haute couture could only dream of. But with regards to our everyday dress at the office, should this be unique to the person or more standardized? Should there be a dress code? After all, in some organizations and companies the dress code exists. It is very strict and brings its positive results, being very client- or organization-oriented.

You may not think it, but at the UN, we are, in one way or another, dealing with “clients.” These are our delegates, external participants who attend the meetings, as our main activity in Geneva is to organize, conduct and service meetings and Conferences. So, in some way we here represent the image of our Organization to the outside world. I think we should always be aware of this and should make an effort to present a positive image.

Top management from time to time discusses producing a unified dress code at the UN, but it would be difficult to implement in reality. In spite of this, we, from our side, should all make an effort to enhance the appearance of our Organization by paying attention to the way we dress in the office, especially at meetings and official events.

So where to start? There’s the obvious: suits, blazers, ties, skirts of normal length, trousers (and not leggings and shorts), no piercings (except religious), or visible tattoos – all these form part of a basic dress code. However, having in the past been involved in the fashion design, I can share my own tips – my special rules if you will – which you might find useful or which you might wish to ignore. The next part of the article is my sole responsibility and I will be happy if you find it useful but I won’t be offended if you ignore it.

As I said before, it all starts with the shoes, and that is where I will start too…

Three tips for women on how to look chic

1 Shoes – shoes should be of a classical form, on a heel (medium or high), should be from high quality leather, patent or suede. Patent looks more chic. The best color is black, then comes brown. For winter also try cherry/burgundy; for spring, white/ivory/beige. Never buy cheap shoes, better to buy one pair of expensive ones than three or four cheap ones. Try to buy shoes during the sales from good brand names. In Geneva you can find good shoe brands in all small Italian shoes shops, and in the big commercial shops such as Globus, Bally, Aeschbach (certain brands only). A reasonable cost of good quality shoes can run from 190 to 300 CHF.

2 Bag – bags should be of a high quality, the same leather type as the shoes. If shoes are patent, the bag should be patent. The bag should always be of the same color as the shoes (black with black, brown with brown, etc.). Hard bags look better than the
soft. The classical type of bag will always fit in perfectly with any type of dress and occasion. Good shops for bags are Buzzano and Globus. Bags can be purchased in our SAFI store, but the choice of the brands is unfortunately limited. For something really special, a once-in-a-lifetime treat that a woman can keep a lifetime, go to Louis Vuitton. It’s expensive, but worth it and you will never regret your purchase.

3 Shawl (or scarf) – this is one of the key items of the wardrobe for projecting a chic image. Do not regret spending money for this accessory. It is better to buy at least one luxury shawl which will make you always look well-dressed. A black color combination (black shoes-bag and shawl) is ideal. If you do not like shawls, buy scarves. In SAFI there is a good choice of scarves, with occasional discounts.

If you have these three items in your wardrobe and wear them in perfect order and combination, you will always look professional and chic. If possible, try to have the combinations in black, in brown and in another color. Burgundy is a good color which is especially chic and which combines with many other colors. The rest in the wardrobe is not too important. It can include inexpensive skirts and blouses. It all depends on your budget. Remember that trouser outfits/pant suits make a good business style, an outfit with a skirt provides for business-chic, while a dress is perfect for the evening. Indeed, a short, modest black dress is a must in your wardrobe, which with the above accessories will ensure you always look dressed-up, chic and elegant.

Three tips for men on how to look chic

1 Shoes – What counts for women counts even more for men. Shoes are the most important item in a man’s wardrobe. Men’s shoes should be of high quality, preferably lace-up shoes, on a very fine (max. 3 mm) leather sole. Boss and Gucci have perfectly shaped shoes (a bit expensive, though, but if you happen to buy the Boss shoes on sale, buy immediately, you will be happy with them). Otherwise, Bally, Navyboot and Aeschbach are also good shops. The average price for men’s shoes should be around 250-300 CHF. Never buy cheaper as it will spoil the whole image. Shoes should be black for black, anthracite and grey trousers, and brown for a blue outfit.

2 Tie – this is also a part of your visible “carte de visite”. Ties should be elegant from a good brand. Red and burgundy colors are the best for special occasions. Lorenzo Cana and Armani are specialists in luxury ties. You can also find smart ties from Versace, with a touch of avant-garde elegance. Lanvin is a big classic. You can also find a variety of ties in SAFI at discounted prices. But it is still worth visiting brand name shops to buy at least one classy tie for a special occasion. Remember too that it’s the tie that counts. You can easily get away with wearing cheap pale-coloured shirts, if the tie stands out.

3 And finally, something really important: socks. Socks seem to be the invisible part of your outfit, until you sit. If they are not properly selected, they can easily undo the effort you have put into the rest. Socks should be very thin, of high quality silk and wool, and very high. They should be black in colour, though can vary slightly and should be either of the exact color of the shoes or of the color of the trousers, even slightly darker. Black and anthracite colored socks are best, especially without any design, apart from the trade mark.

The tips I’ve given you above will make the whole difference, and they are easy to remember. And if in doubt, remember the golden rule for both women and men: please mind the shoes! And gentlemen, mind the socks, too!

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7.12 P.M.
Andrey Sergeev looks back on a long day.

7.112 P.M.
Andrey Sergeev looks back on a long day.

8.27 A.M.
Victor Kudryavtsev contemplating the day ahead.
In keeping with this month’s fashion theme, UN Special explores the Palais to find its best-dressed gentlemen. Photographer Dimitri Tatarinov wanted to make the maximum use of winter light and shadow, which he does to great effect in this photo article.
READ AND ASK

Don’t be shy to question any document your organization asks you to sign, warns Maria Dweggah, former WHO Staff Representative and Assistant Editor-in-chief of UNSpecial

MARIA DWEGGAH

Although “retired” since April 2010 from WHO, my interest in staff rights and staff issues has not waned. Through my individual consultations with staff in various agencies and as a resource person for FICSA (Federation of International Civil Service Associations), I have been able to keep up to date on issues which most affect staff. Through articles such as this one, I would like to share some of my knowledge with the readers of UNSpecial, which I hope they will find helpful.

As indicated in the title above, the present article is about reading and asking questions. Simple enough, one would think; but, I am repeatedly surprised by the ignorance (not meant in a pejorative sense) and the na"ivity demonstrated by some UN staff when it comes to their conditions of employment. And it is across the board, support staff as it comes to their conditions of employment. Persons innocently confident of their knowledge of procedures or of the specific staff rules, for that matter. There are those who are new to the system and who may not be aware of policies and practices; there are others who intentionally may try to circumvent the rules and there are those who are demonstrating self-empowerment, for that matter, in how they manage their professional lives.

I am not manager-bashing or implying that your managers would consciously try to mislead you or achieve their self-interest at your expense. I am simply saying that people are people and just as you would read (I hope) a rental contract or a car loan agreement or an itemized phone bill which seems unusually high, you would pay equal attention to what you sign at your workplace, and that you would ask questions beforehand to clarify ambiguity. Don’t assume that the author is himself or herself knowledgeable of procedures or of the specific staff rules, for that matter. There are those who are new to the system and who may not be aware of policies and practices; there are others who intentionally may try to circumvent the rules and there are those who may make an honest mistake.

Feel uncomfortable

You might be surprised to learn that, apart from people’s assumption that what is written is and must be correct, because it comes from those who know more (or should know more) than them about specific terms of employment, some are reluctant to speak up. They are afraid to or feel uncomfortable about asking questions, not wanting to offend anyone or give the impression of mistrust or doubt. Some even believe that asking questions could lead to possible retaliatory actions.

I can well empathize with those persons, having experienced those fears myself. While for some, the unwillingness to ask questions may have roots in their cultural upbringing, i.e. you do not question authority; for others, it is related to a deep lack of self esteem and a feeling of vulnerability. Though organizational fear may also have its role in how people react, in my experience, reluctance to ask such questions has more to do with individual behaviour and individual reaction than organizational fear. So, whatever the reasons that prevent you from asking questions at the workplace, or outside the work environment for that matter, keep in mind that by asking questions, you are demonstrating self-empowerment, and a smart, proactive, take charge approach to your personal and professional life.

One last piece of advice, don’t be pressured or coerced into signing anything on the spot, even though you are told it is a matter of urgency. You have a right to take the document with you, to seek advice from your Staff Association, the Ombudsman, if there is one in your organization, or a legal representative. You have the right to ask questions so as to completely understand what you are signing, especially if it relates to an agreement of some sort which involves a lateral transfer, a temporary loan, a secondment or a separation.

If the foregoing gives the impression that I am a cynic, that was not my intention. The reality is that people don’t read and people don’t ask questions. I hope this article will encourage a few of you out there to be more aware of your rights and responsibilities and less naïve about your employment conditions.
BEHIND THE SCENES AT SAFI

In October 2010, an agreement between staff and management ensured that SAFI’s position as a staff-owned shop was regularized. It remains within the Palais, it keeps its current employees and continues to contribute to staff welfare. Three months on, we sent our reporters to find out how SAFI is doing.

SAFI has thirteen staff members under the supervision of shop-manager Mr. Mieusset, who has been with SAFI since 1972. “Perfumes are clearly the best selling products in our shop, followed by chocolates, watches, textiles and electric appliances and travel equipment”, says Mr. Mieusset while showing us the backdoors of SAFI before opening the doors in ten minutes. “Our products are classic, of good quality and reasonably priced. For example, 90 percent of the male shirts we sell are either white or light blue”, continues Mr. Mieusset.

Patricia is responsible for the watch-department and gives us a description of the average buyer: “Tissot, Longines and Swatch. These are brands people know with a large variety of models and collections. Some buy automatic watches mainly, others prefer quartz. We have something for everyone”, Patricia says while showing a RADO model to a well-dressed lady looking for a birthday present for her boyfriend and future husband.

In the perfume department, Isabelle gives advice on beauty products including creams, soap, make up – and points out the Swiss-made cosmetics from LaPrairie as one of the best products they offer: “Excellent quality for those who are willing to pay a bit more for it”, says Isabelle holding up a face cream or Clarins which is much cheaper but also a very good choice that clients are satisfied with”. When asked about the best selling perfume, the answer comes straight away: “Chanel N°5 for ladies”.

Christophe is managing the clothing & textiles part of SAFI and is busy helping a gentleman find the correct size for a suit. “Classic suits with classic cuts, black belts and blue ties are well received in this shop. Extravagant design and funky colors do not appeal that much to our customers”, says Christophe before showing us a popular “UN pajama”.

Before leaving SAFI, Mr. Mieusset reminds us about the birthday-discount. “On your birthday we give you 13 percent discount. No matter how much you buy”, Mr. Mieusset says with a smile and goes back to his office to check on some delivery.

Education

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S.A.F.I. Manager Mr. Mieusset controlling the delivery

Patricia provides kind assistance if you are looking for a watch

Christophe provides fashion advice in the clothing department

Isabelle might know which perfume suits your character

GIOVANNI GABASSI AND IGNACY JOSEF, UNECE

In the late sixties, SAFI was established under the “Social Service of the United Nations Geneva Coordinating Council”, to offer civil servants easy access to basic products. Some 40 years later, the shop has developed – and today it offers a wide range of merchandise aimed at the average UNOG-employee.

In October 2010, an agreement between staff and management ensured that SAFI’s position as a staff-owned shop was regularized. It remains within the Palais, it keeps its current employees and continues to contribute to staff welfare. Three months on, we sent our reporters to find out how SAFI is doing.
EUR LOSS, MY GAIN
CURRENCY SHIFT FAVOURS UN STAFF SPENDING IN FRANCE

With the Euro at an all-time low against the Swiss Franc, David Winch explains what’s at stake and how to make the most of what will likely be a temporary situation.

If you have francs to spend, the euro zone is an excellent place to spend them in early 2011.

The world financial earthquake of 2008-2009 continues to send out tremors, even today. As investors seek safe havens for their savings, solid currencies such as the Swiss franc have continued to appreciate. This is especially true vis-à-vis the weakening US dollar and the euro.

Between spring 2010 and January 2011, the franc rose sharply in value against the euro, which fell from a traditional rate of roughly 1.50 euros to the franc, down to about 1.25 early this year. This was both a show of weakness for the euro and an astounding rise for the Swiss franc – reaching heights never seen against the European currency.

What to do?
The accelerated rise of the franc is of great concern for Switzerland’s economic decision makers. In one recent January weekend, all three Geneva daily newspapers summoned panels of experts to debate the options that the country could use to soften the blow for Swiss exporters.

Switzerland, a heavily export-oriented economy, sends 50 per cent of these products to the euro-zone, principally Germany and France. Hence the value of the Swiss franc is crucial to export success. If it is too high, Swiss manufacturers – watchmakers, pharmaceutical companies, machine manufacturers, food exporters – as well as the tourism industry, suffer steady drops in demand.

While these Big Picture business issues fill the newspapers, there is another side: consumers earning their income in Swiss francs but spending in euros. At UNOG, WHO and other international organizations, this is a widespread pattern. For these French residents and for Swiss residents just shopping in France, the effect of exchange rates, even temporary, is astounding.

Take the example of UNOG or WHO fonctionnaires who repatriated the bulk of their salary to France and French banks every pay day between 2005 and 2011. The rate of exchange in 2005 was close to the historic franc/euro average of 1.5 francs per euro. However, by the fall of 2007 it had risen sharply, to 1.7 francs to the euro, making it quite expensive to live in France.

Dramatic decline
Since then, however, the decline of the euro has been steady and, since mid-2010, dramatic.

Imagine a civil servant who sends his or her salary home to France in chunks of 6,000 francs per transaction. At its historic average, this transaction has yielded about 4,000 euros. In October 2007, with the euro testing its peak levels, that sum declined to about 3,500 euros. A big drop.

However, since the spring of 2010, that loss has been erased completely; at today’s exchange, those same 6,000 francs buy 4,800 euros – a staggering gain of 1,300 euros a month since late 2007. For most UN civil servants, this is the equivalent of a promotion of two grades: a very large increase in net pay.

As with all good things, the question is: will it last? And, what are the hidden downsides? One way to ensure that this gain lasts and remains stable a year is for people to purchase a Swiss franc contract at a French bank. This guarantees a fixed rate for one year on bank transfers from Geneva.

Over the next year, things could change a great deal. Historic averages tend to reassert themselves, so 2010-11 could prove to be an exchange-rate anomaly that quickly fades. There were similar peaks for the Swiss franc in the 1960s and after the world oil-shock of the 1970s. The Swiss central bank tried every trick in the book to weaken the franc, and the currency markets eventually decided to readjust its value downward.

Throughout 2010 Swiss authorities tried various measures – including massive purchases of euros to strengthen that currency and to weaken the franc. The amounts spent by Switzerland in this effort were staggering; one analyst said it was the equivalent of the Swiss buying 600 new Airbuses to try to boost the European economies.

Other financial measures are now proposed – paying border-area workers in euros, taxing speculative operations, promoting mild inflation, or even pegging the franc closely to the euro without joining it, as Denmark has done.

It seems unlikely, say most finance experts, that these measures, all of which have been tried before, would have much impact. But time plays havoc with many plans in the globalized financial market, so if you are currently enjoying a temporary pay boost, enjoy the ride. It may not last.

DAVID WINCH, UNOG

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THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS AT THE PALAIS

ITALY’S CONTRIBUTION

In March, Italy’s Corpo forestale dello Stato, along with the Permanent Mission and UNECE, organize a photo exhibition in the Hall des Pas Perdus. UN Special finds out what it’s all about.

CRISTINA GIORDANO, UNOG LIBRARY
NICOLÒ GIORDANO, ITALY’S FOREST STATE SERVICE

It is well known that a rich cultural heritage, historical past, artistic beauty and biodiversity are Italy’s claims to fame. What is much less known is that for centuries Italian forests have been the main resource to build cities and works of art, such as the beautiful church of Santa Maria Novella, in Florence. They were also the main source of energy, indispensable to carry on trade, war and support the life of the population. It is not surprising that, over the centuries, the forests of Italy have suffered from overexploitation and impoverishment.

In Italy, the need for the establishment of forest management rules was therefore felt at a very early stage. The various kingdoms that the Congress of Vienna restored in the Peninsula after the Napoleonic wars had their own forest legislation. The most famous example was the Kingdom of Sardinia, where, as early as 1822, King Carlo Felice established a well-structured forest administration, whose inspectors were not only in charge of woods protection, but also supervised logging operations and trade in wood products.

Carlo Felice’s “Regio patenti” of 1822 are still considered the founding act of what is now known as Italy’s Forest State Service, or Corpo forestale dello Stato (CFS). When Italy was unified in 1861, one of the first acts of the new kingdom was to harmonize the forest administrations and legislations of the various pre-Unity states into a coherent and effective structure, an effort that started in 1862 and was completed only in 1877. The Royal Forest Service (Corpo reale delle foreste) was created in 1910. In 1926, Mussolini renamed it Milizia forestale nazionale.

The present denomination, Corpo forestale dello Stato (CFS), goes back to 1948, when the Service was reorganized after WWII. The Year 2011 has a special meaning for CFS, because of the celebration of two events: the International Year of Forests and the 150th anniversary of the Unity of Italy (1861). At first, they may look unrelated, but for CFS the links are very strong. The International Year of Forests, proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 61/193, impacts on CFS’ mandate to preserve, protect and develop forest resources and it appears a logical follow up of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010. The anniversary of the national Unity is an occasion to reflect on Italy’s evolution, to which CFS contributed in its own operative field.

To celebrate these two events, CFS, in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN and the FAO/UNECE Forestry and Timber Section, will organize a photo exhibition, to take place at the Palais des Nations, in the Hall des Pas Perdus, during the month of March. It is not the first time that the Permanent Mission of Italy gives a positive answer to UN call to celebrate international years: it sponsored events on the occasion of the International Year of Mountains in 2002 and of the International Year of Deserts and Desertification in 2006. This year’s intent is to share Italy’s long and varied experience in the field of forest management with UN staff members and Specialized Agencies, to raise awareness of how fragile ecosystems are and to propose policies that take into account the survival and development of woods and the environment.

The photographs, all belonging to CFS historical archive, show different actions in favour of the environment undertaken during over a century in parts of the Italian territory where the forests had been badly damaged. They include: consolidation of mountain slopes to prevent landslides and floods, reforestation to restore and increase wood areas, promotion and development of mountain areas, traditionally the most economically depressed and neglected, and, in more recent times, the fight against forest fires and the creation and management of protected areas such as national parks and natural reserves. Last, but not least, they will highlight CFS contribution to promote forestry education and innovative forestry techniques that respect natural cycles. CFS actively cooperates with UN agencies, in particular FAO, in support of the activities of the International Poplar Commission and of the Silva Mediterranea. It gives its contribution to the establishment of international forest statistics and its staff members regularly attend FAO and UNECE Committees meetings. In the 1970s, Italy’s territorial administration changed with the establishment of the regions, local entities with exclusive competencies on certain topics. Forest and mountain areas management were among the competencies that the central administration transferred to the regions. CFS, therefore, is no longer in charge of them. It has now become Italy’s environmental police, responsible for investigating environmental violations, safeguarding protected animal species, preventing and fighting wildfires, managing 100,000 ha of biogenetic reserves and implementing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Italy. However, its past work is still visible and citizens can still benefit from it: new forests on top of hills and mountains, consolidated dunes on seashores, windbreaks to protect agricultural land, torrent management, roads and infrastructures in mountain areas, wild species protected or reintroduced. It is not the least contribution to all which makes Italy’s landscape and nature beautiful and unique!

CFS Official Website (in Italian)
http://www3.corpoforestale.it/
FÉVRIER 2011

MUSIQUE, CONCERTS, OPÉRA
• 6 février: Orchestre de Chambre de la Suisse Romande – Victoria Hall
• 12 février: Orchestre de Chambre de Zurich – Victoria Hall
• 12 février: X trial- Arena
• 16 février: Snoop Dogg- Arena
• 18-19 février: Michel Sardou- Arena
• 26 février: L’histoire du tango – Salle des fêtes de Thônex

SPECTACLES, THÉÂTRE, DANSE
• 15-16 février: Le roi se meurt (Ionesco) – Théâtre du Léman
• 5-14 février: Crazy Horse – Forever Crazy – Théâtre du Léman
• 17 février: Le cirque Phénix : les plus beaux numéros du monde – Arena

EXPOSITIONS
• Jusqu’au 01.05: Décor, Design et Industrie, les arts appliqués à Genève – Musée d’Art et d’Histoire
• Jusqu’au 13.06: de Renoir à Sam Szafran – Fondation Pierre Gianadda, Martigny
• Jusqu’au 04.09: Henry Dunant, Gustave Moynier: un combat – Musée de la Croix-Rouge

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Geneva Uncovered

Think Geneva’s boring? Then think again. Pendo lifts the veil on what really happens in this city after the sun sets and the kids go to bed.

Pendo Muganda, Who

It’s Friday evening – the weekend is finally here. The hip UN civil servants of Geneva are looking forward to what the city of Calvin has to offer to help them unwind from a stressful week of work. Here’s my guide to what’s hot and what’s not:

First, Unwind

An essential stop on your way home is after work drinks. Where should you go?

Les Halles de l’Ile/bar side

This is the latest laid back spot offering cheaper than average alcoholic beverages, where clients from all walks of life and social rank converge for informal drinks. Go there early if you are looking into having real audible conversations and the opportunity to meet and greet. Roll in after 11pm if you would rather be distracted by electro-house music and people-watching.

Soleil Rouge

Vibrant little bar for Spanish wine lovers. Tapas and nice young professional crowd to distract your palates and other senses. Appreciated by the local trendy expat community.

Miyako

One of the best Japanese restaurants in town. Some might find the place a bit pricey. However watching the chefs prepare your gastronomic meal makes up for the cost. Excellent service.

Next, Give Me Some Grub

We all know how much appearances matter in Geneva. One has to find a balance between extreme casual looks and the Oscar ceremony attire. The way you dress in this town is the way by which you are judged: Jamiroquai was once refused entry to a local nightclub… go figure! Drop the attaché case at home and slip into a trendy yet sophisticated outing attire and then head to the restaurant.

Luigia’s

Latest pizzeria in town. Located in a former garage. Bright and airy setting. Usually packed with a very international crowd who know where to get the best pizza dough and tiramisu in town. A welcome innovation: you pay at the exit, so no need to wait for the check. Only ‘downer’ the restaurant doesn’t take reservations.

Patara

Located in the Hotel Beau Rivage, this restaurant has dedicated service, a romantic setting and most of their ingredients are organic. Menu is pricey but well within the range of Geneva’s hotel restaurants.

L’Awash

Undoubtedly the best Ethiopian restaurant in Geneva. Don’t be fooled by the modest surroundings. The homemade food is succulent, the quality is consistent (over 20 years) and prices are cheap. Live traditional entertainment on weekends.

FINALLY, PUMP UP THE VOLUME

You’re dressed up and ready to party. No Friday night should end before five so here’s where to go next.

Java

Located in the Grand Hotel Kempinski, this club is frequented by the younger elite crowd. If you don’t mind brushing shoulders with the future ‘who’s who’ in a trendy setting, this spot is for you. Make sure you dress the part.

Silencio

The newest and most talked about new club in town – it opened last month. Silencio is for lovers: music lovers, dance floor lovers, festivity lovers. Watch this space.

Monthly Red Zone parties – Hôtel Richemond

The doors of the Rocco Forte Richemond Hotel open up once a month for their infamous ‘Red Zone’ parties. One of the finest house parties in the area, located in elegant surroundings. Strict dress code: no effort, no entry.
NEW PRODUCTS OFFER HIGHER QUALITY AT A REDUCED COST, MORE EFFICIENT FORMS OF ORGANIZING PRODUCTION PROCESSES, INNOVATIVE BUSINESS MODELS THAT PROVIDE NEW WAYS TO SATISFY CONSUMER DEMAND, TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES.
process of realization of the Review itself made a contribution to the strengthening of these networks.

Beyond the dry language of legal documents, the technical specifications of prototypes or the rigor of financial allocations, we had the privilege of being witness to the passion of many individuals for the work they do and to learn about fascinating stories of ingenuity and perseverance. Belarus has a dynamic IT sector. A number of export-oriented companies have met international success. Some of the applications you are running on your smartphone may have been developed with the help of one of the residents of the Hi-Tech Park Belarus, where we had the opportunity to meet representatives of different companies. Next time you go through a scanning device in an airport or somewhere else – check it out, it may be the result of the entrepreneurial adventure of a bunch of Belarusian academics.

Once back to their own countries, the members of the team assessed the information gathered and used this analysis to propose a number of draft recommendations and suggestions, touching many different aspects of the innovation process. These included, among many others, the formulation and design of policies and instruments, the relations between research institutions and the business sector, the different mechanisms of financial support and the role of international cooperation.

The recommended policy actions and measures were discussed in a joint meeting between the independent reviewers, the team, the national authorities and other experts and stakeholders with a view to reaching a common understanding on these recommendations.

A final version of the Review is being prepared that will reflect the comments and inputs received. The Innovation Performance Review of Belarus will be released as a UN-ECE publication and will be widely disseminated. The Review will contribute to the existing body of national policies analysis, thus facilitating the identification of good practices. The assessments and recommendations presented in the Review will serve to identify areas in which capacity-building activities can yield greater benefit, thus providing a solid basis for future work.

The relevance and usefulness of Innovation Performance Reviews was recognized by the representatives of member States participating in the Fifth Session of the CECI. During that meeting, official requests for the realization of further Reviews were made by the delegations of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Ukraine. These demands and the satisfaction expressed by our Belarusian partners are a good endorsement of this pilot Review and the continuation of this activity for the benefit of our member States.
nue par des poutres apparentes et ses deux étages en madriers. La frise sous les fenêtres du premier étage attire le regard, ainsi que les trois bas-reliefs datant de 1582. Ce fut l’une des premières constructions en bois dans cette région. Lors du gouvernement uranais, cette cité se partageait le siège du podestat1 avec Giornico.

Le téléphérique de Rodi-Fiesso dépose son lot de randonneurs au lac Tremorgio, à 1475 m, passage obligé de l’itinéraire des chemins d’altitude nous menant à travers paturages, bois touffus et sapinières. L’ancolie des Alpes et les renoncules enflissent notre balade. Le silence n’est troublé que par les cloches de deux génisses. Deux ânes broutent, indifférents à leurs reflets dans les eaux d’un vert profond. Près d’un gros rocher, deux marmottes pointent le bout de leur nez et partent en quête de nourriture. À flanc de montagne, un troupeau de chèvres s’attaque à un bouquet de petits arbustes. Il semble que l’heure du repas soit proche, et nous suivons l’exemple de petits arbustes. Il semble que l’heure du repas soit proche, et nous suivons l’exemple de la vieille femme de chèvres qui nous fait oublier le stress, on ne peut imaginer l’angoisse des mères voyant par-

tir leurs jeunes fils, parfois âgés de six ans seulement, comme ramoneurs. Les conditions d’extrême pauvreté des paysans ou montagnards de ces régions avoisinant le Val Verzasca ou les Centovalli du Tessin occasionnèrent cette «location» des enfants, entre la fin du XIXe et le début du XXe siècle. Des recruteurs d’Italie, d’Allemagne, de France ou même de Hollande venaient chercher de la main-d’œuvre enfantine dans les vallées alpines. Les familles nombreuses se voyaient ainsi allégées de quelques bouches à nourrir durant l’hiver. Grâce à leur petite taille, que leurs patrons entretenaient souvent par des privations et des jeunes forçés, ces mômes pouvaient glisser dans les conduits, travaillant plus de quatorze heures par jour et subissant couramment de mauvais traitements; souvent, ils mendiaient un bol de soupe ou des croûtes de fromage. Ils passaient la période de septembre à avril loin de leur famille, dans la fumée et le froid, exploités par les maitres-ramoneurs qui prélèvaient tout leur salaire, et les plus forts, qui avaient résisté au manque de soins médicaux, aux chutes ou à la faim, ne rame-naient à la maison que la somme modeste convenue avec les parents. Cette pratique perdura jusqu’aux années 1920.

À l’entrée du val, les pentes abruptes se mirent dans le Lago di Vogorno. Le Barrage de Verzasca fut rendu célèbre par James Bond dans Golden Eyes, où l’agent 007 se jette dans le vide simplement retenu par un élastique. Le «007 bungee jump» perpétue ce saut, 220 mètres en 7,5 secondes, pour le plus grand bonheur des amateurs d’émotions fortes. Les maisons aux toits de lourdes dalles de granit – de Sonogno, dérivées alpines. Les familles nombreuses se recrute dans leur main-d’œuvre enfantine dans les val-1 Personnalité étrangère à la cité pour garantir l’impartialité dans l’application des lois, gouvernant les communes médiévales dès la fin du XIIe siècle.
Pont qui a accumulé le fabuleux trésor qui remplit une bonne partie du château de Savigny, ainsi que les dépendances et le parc environnant.

Pilote automobile amateur dans les années 70 (vice-champion de France des circuits et dixième du championnat de France de la montagne), ce passionné de mécanique courait au volant d’une Abarth 2000 et aujourd’hui, il possède une des plus belles et plus rares collections de prototypes Abarth au monde.


Bienvenue dans un monde de découvertes

Equidistant du Club Abarth, le château de Savigny-les-Beaune regroupe 35 modèles différents d’Abarth, dont certains uniques, avec lesquels Michel Pont a participé pendant sept années à des courses internationales. Mais les voitures rouges à l’emblème du scorpion ne sont pas les seules à composer le fameux trésor du château !

Avant tout vigneron, le maître des lieux a également créé les musées du matériel vinair et viticole (qui proposent tous les outils utilisés dans le passé pour la culture
de la vigne et l’élaboration du vin) et le musée du tracteur enjambeur, unique en Bourgogne, qui expose une trentaine de prototypes construits entre 1946 et 1956.

Toujours rouges (mais sans l’emblème du scorpion!), une vingtaine de véhicules de pompier ont pris place dans une annexe construite près du château, château qui accueille aussi deux autres musées dont celui dédié à la moto, un des plus importants de France. Plus de 250 engins, de toutes nationalités, datant des années 1902 à 1960, sont alignés dans de grandes salles. Du type ecclésiastique à courroie, à la moto de course, toutes les marques prestigieuses sont représentées: Norton, Vincent, Gilera, Velocette, MV, Rudge, AJS, Terrot, Honda, Blériot, Peugeot, BSA, NSU, Horex, Sarolea. De la moto de Jean Mermoz à celle de Georges Monneret (pilote aux 500 victoires et 183 records du monde), en passant par celle du Chanoine Kir, concepteur du fameux «blanc-cassis».

Tout près de là, réparties dans plusieurs pièces, sont exposées 2400 maquettes d’avions, de tous genres, de tous types, de tous les pays, allant de l’avion des frères Orville et Wilbur Wright (pionniers de l’aviation qui effectuèrent leur premier vol en 1903) au derniers Airbus A 380.

Mais la partie la plus spectaculaire du trésor du château de Savigny se trouve dans le parc, en lisière de forêt. Là, ce ne sont plus des maquettes d’avions qui sont exposées, mais carrément de vrais avions dégottés dans le monde entier. On croit rêver tellement c’est impressionnant! 80 avions de chasse et quelques hélicoptères sont là. Beaucoup sont restaurés, d’autres sont dans leur jus d’origine, d’autres sont en pièces. Plusieurs ont été offerts à Michel Pont par des États étrangers ou par des constructeurs aéronautiques. Sur ce «tarmac» exceptionnel sont réunis, entre autres, 11 Migs, 17 avions Dassault, 6 de la Marine et 13 proviennent des États-Unis. Côte à côte, on découvre des Mirage de tous types, mais aussi des Vampire, Météor, Mystère, Jaguar, Vautour, Etendard, Alizé, Fouga Magister auxquels s’ajoutent 4 avions de la Patrouille de France. On ne peut que rester «scotchê» devant un tel déploiement de matériel.

Ce sont donc huit musées différents et exceptionnels qui font le trésor du château de Savigny-les-Beaune. Son propriétaire Michel Pont se fera un plaisir de vous accueillir pour vous présenter le fruit de ses passions qu’il a accumulé pendant toutes ces années.

Accès par l’autoroute A6, sortie 24 – Beaune St-Nicolas.
Tél. 03 80 21 55 03
www.chateau-savigny.com
contact@chateau-savigny.com

DEAR BARBARA
YOUR PROBLEMS SOLVED

Like many colleagues, I greatly enjoyed the staff party last December. Especially, because I was able to dance with a beautiful intern working in Human Rights. Since then, I’ve made a number of trips to the Palais Wilson to find her but despite many lunches spent in the cafeteria there, my efforts have so far been unsuccessful. How can I find her?

A.P., UNOG

Your situation is a very common one at this time of the year. However, you need to think this through. Even if you find this intern, and that’s assuming she really is working at Human Rights, will she want to have anything to do with you? Indeed, will she even remember you? There isn’t much crueler than an office party and you should know the rule with these things, which is that what happens there stays there. In short A.P., you’re better off finding someone your age.

I’m due to retire in June but have no idea how I will survive. I’ve always fancied myself as a bit of a Latin speaker, but that’s about it. What should I do?

Name and address withheld.

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POURQUOI NE PAS LE FAIRE?

LE GRAMMOMONT

Je vous propose des petites balades à des degrés de difficulté différents, pour vous changer les idées, vous oxygéner et vous déstresser. N’oubliez pas: ne rien faire nuit à votre santé.

Je vous souhaitez des journées de marche et de détente agréables et ensoleillées.

TEXTE ET PHOTOS: ANDRÉ ROTACH

Prendre l’autoroute direction Lausanne, Vevey, Montreux et la sortie N° 16 Villeneuve. Suivre Aigle et à un rond-point prendre à droite la direction Rennaz puis Chessel. Arrivé à un carrefour prendre à gauche route de Scex puis traverser le Rhône et prendre à gauche Vouvy. Au milieu du village prendre à droite la Grand Rue puis à gauche Miex. Arrivé au Flon, parking et point de départ. (Voir l’itinéraire routier Via Michelin.fr)

Suivre Col de Taney par le chemin raide des chevriers. Passage au col puis au Lac de Tanex 1415 mètres. Suivre la direction le Grammont avec en point de mire la Grande Jumelle que nous allons contourner sur la droite pour monter au Grammont. Le dernier tronçon se fait sur un chemin étroit. Arrivé au sommet en trois heures trente. Superbe vue à 360° sur le Lac Léman, le Jura, la vallée du Rhône, les Alpes suisses et françaises et le Mont Blanc.

Retour par le même chemin en deux heures soit au total cinq heures trente pour 14 kilomètres et un dénivelé positif de 1123 mètres.

Pour plus de détails lire: Guide des randonnées, Lac Léman, édition Rother.

Indispensable: deux cartes officielles de la Fédération suisse de tourisme pédestre (Office fédéral de topographie) 1264 Montreux et 1284 Monthey.

Ne pas oublier de vous équiper de bonnes chaussures de marche et de vêtements adaptés à l’altitude et à la saison.

BON CRAPAHUTAGE.
ET (S)PORTEZ-VOUS BIEN! ☑
I am proposing a few small hikes of varying degrees of difficulty, to let you see new things, get some fresh air and relax a bit. Don’t forget: doing nothing is bad for your health. Here’s hoping you have fun hiking in pleasant and sunny weather.

ANDRE ROTACH
(English translation by David Winch)

Take the autoroute in the direction of Lausanne, Vevey, Montreux then exit 16 Ville-neuve. Follow the signs toward Aigle and at a roundabout head right toward Rennaz then Chessel. At the crossroads, head left on the Route de Scex, then cross the Rhone and take a left to Vouvry. In the village take the Grand Rue then on the left Miex. You arrive at Flon, whose parking lot is the starting-point. (See the guide Via Michelin.fr)

Follow along the Col de Taney by a steep goat path. You will pass by the ridge and lake of Tanex at 1,415 metres. Head toward Grammont aiming for Grande Jumelle, then head away on the road to go up Grammont. The last part follows a narrow path. You arrive at the summit in three hours thirty minutes. There is a superb 360-degree view of Lake Geneva, the Jura, the Rhone Valley, the French and Swiss Alps and Mont Blanc.

You can return by the same route in two hours, for a total hike of five hours thirty minutes and 14 kilometres and a change in altitude of 1,123 metres.

For more details, see Guide des randonnées, Lac Léman, édition Rother.

Indispensable: two official maps from the Fédération suisse de tourisme pédestre (Office fédéral de topographie) 1264 Montreux and 1284 Monthey.

Don’t forget to wear good hiking boots and weather-suitable clothing.

HAPPY TREKKING!
OBITUARY

SERGUEI VINOGRADOV

On 16 December 2010, Serguei Vinogradov, Russian translator at UNOG, passed away. His colleagues take this opportunity to remember him.

WRITTEN BY SERGUEI’S COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS

On 16 December, Serguei’s vibrant life was cut short by an insidious and harrowing disease that he fought against until the bitter end. Quite simply, he did not know the meaning of the words “to give up”. He was always a winner, always able to find a way out of the most hopeless predicaments, even though, more than once, life led him into what seemed to be a dead-end.

His long and impeccable service with the United Nations was by no means always cloudless and trouble-free. A translator and a journalist, guided by his heart and dictated by his sense of duty, he found himself many a time in critical situations where he had to exert all his unbending will and use all the enormous skill and expertise acquired during his service to take extremely tough decisions. In this regard, his mission to Kosovo, where he worked for several years as a UN information officer, was probably one of the most stressful times in his career. His impressions of that time are well portrayed in his novel covering that tough period of his life. For Serguei was not just a highly qualified translator and journalist, but a talented writer as well. For him, Chekhov was a paragon without equal, and his own writing, which was, like Chekhov’s, easy to understand, appealing and insightful, transformed his vast life experience into book form. Serguei wrote two novels and several short stories. He also contributed to UN Chronicle and to Ex-Tempore. Even while sick, he was working on stories and essays on an almost daily basis. He was also a talented musician and a great connoisseur of music: when Mother Nature endows somebody with talent, more often than not, she endows them with more than their fair share of talent. That was certainly true of Serguei. He composed and played his own songs, some of which – with a little help from his friends – were due to be released soon. And we are sure this will still happen. Serguei, our friend, may your memory be cherished! We love you, we are proud of you and all that you accomplished! We shall keep you in our memory forever! ■
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