



Bureau de la Directrice, Division de l'administration - Office of the Director, Division of Administration  
Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Genève 10, Tel. (022) 917 22 50

Geneva, 5 March 2024

Dear Ms. Johnson,

Thank you for your letter and for sharing the concerns that have been raised by some staff members regarding the rumors of a potential extended closure of the Palais. I understand the unease and uncertainty such rumors can cause. On behalf of the Director-General, I want to take this opportunity to provide clarity and reassurance on this matter.

First, let me reassure you that the Director-General has no intention to fully close the Palais for an extended period. We are committed to delivering our mandates, with the provision of conferencing services being a critical part of our operations. We share your concerns regarding the impact of a prolonged closure on the welfare of our staff and the cohesion of our teams. Decisions will be made with the intention of safeguarding our operational capacity and the mental and emotional well-being of all members of our staff. Consequently, we have already decided against any measures that would require staff to work from home for prolonged periods.

However, the liquidity crisis facing the UN secretariat has necessitated a review of our operational modalities here in Geneva, which is expected to lead to temporary adjustments in our working arrangements. We want to assure you that we are in the process of careful deliberation, in coordination with our colleagues in New York and other duty stations, to ensure that any measures taken are both necessary and proportionate. As part of preparing detailed options, we have already started discussions with stakeholders to be ready for speedy implementation, once the decision is taken, to maximize the savings involved. We recognize the complexity of the situation and welcome suggestions that support continuing our mandates within the constraints of the liquidity crisis.

We share the concerns regarding the message an extended closure could send to Member States and the resulting implications it could have for our continued presence and operations in Geneva. Be assured that our discussions and any decisions will be made with a keen awareness of these perceptions and the importance of maintaining the continuity of our work and presence. We are ensuring that in all communication on this issue we are underlining that UNOG is, was, and will be fully operational, delivering on our mandate.

Ms. Laura Johnson,  
Executive Secretary, UNOG Staff Union

Cc: Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General  
of the United Nations Office at Geneva

Regarding the feedback on the end-of-year closure, we acknowledge the dissatisfaction expressed over the insufficient notice provided. We are committed to improving our communication so staff are informed in advance of any changes to their working arrangements. This commitment includes engaging in formal consultations with staff representatives before any final decision is made regarding further measures. To facilitate this, the Office of the Director-General will contact you to organize a meeting on 14 March at 2.00 p.m. in her office (H-400) to discuss the situation further.

As we navigate these challenging times, the well-being and financial security of our staff remain a top priority, and we are dedicated to ensuring that all team members can continue to fulfill their roles without undue financial stress.

In conclusion, while we explore all options to address the liquidity crisis, please rest assured that any measures affecting the Palais will be designed to ensure its operational continuity and the well-being of our staff. Your feedback and that of all staff is important to us, and I am committed to ensuring it is heard and considered as we move forward.

With best regards,



Kira Kruglikova  
Director

Division of Administration