

Agenda Item 15: APPU / UPU Reform Working Group

Sub-item 15 – Report of the APPU / UPU Reform Working Group Meeting

Presentation by New Zealand

1. Subject	References/paragraphs
Informing EC members on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the discussions, comment and outcomes in the APPU/UPU Reform Working Group meeting of 3 September 	§§ 1.1 – 3.7
2. Decisions expected The EC is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - note the update on the work of the CA AHGUR working group on UPU Reform, presented by China § 2 - note the activities dealt with in the Working Group that do not require EC attention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitoring of budget and work progress § 3.1 - action taken by the WG on five Initiatives assigned to it by the Tehran Congress § 3.2 - the status of actions arising from the 2018 membership survey, including nine Initiatives dealt with by the WG in its 3 September meeting § 3.3 - an update on development of template documentation, review of Rules of Procedure, and enhancement of the APPU website § 3.4 - the identification by the Secretary General of an additional work item i.e., review and initial scoping of archiving of key historical documents § 3.4 (ii) - note, consider, confirm and approve, as appropriate, the position reached by the WG on each of the 17 “Decisions Expected” for the relocation of the RTCAP from Singapore to Bangkok § 3.5 (and PowerPoint presentation for each “Decision Expected”) - note that the review undertaken by an external lawyer on the question of liability between the Bureau and the APP Cooperative concluded to the effect that there was no liability, meaning that this matter is now closed § 3.6 - note that a residual matter arising from the external review of the liability question (between the Bureau and the APP Cooperative) has been referred to the Cooperative for actioning, as decided, by that body § 3.7 	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The APPU / UPU Reform Working Group met on Tuesday, 3 September 2019.
- 1.2 Its agenda covered the following matters.
 1. An update on the work on UPU Reform, in the form of the outcomes of the 2018 Addis Ababa Extraordinary Congress, led by China (Doc 15 Add 1).
 2. APPU Reform, led by the Chair and the APPU Reform Consultant, dealing with:
 - a. Monitoring of work currently under way (Doc 15.1 and Annex 1)
 - b. Nine Initiatives assigned for completion by the Tehran Congress (Doc 15.2)
 - c. WS 3 – Update on 2018 membership survey (Doc 15.3.1 and Annexes 1-2)
 - d. WS 3 - Work items deferred to 2019 by Da Nang EC meeting (Doc 15.3.2)
 - e. WS 4 – Items of an organisational / structural / resource nature
 - i. RTCAP relocation (Doc 15.4.1 and Annexes 1-4)
 - ii. Relationship between APPU Bureau and APP Cooperative (Doc 15.4.2)

2. Discussions and Decisions – UPU Reform

- 2.1 The meeting received an excellent and comprehensive update on the work on UPU Reform, in the form of the outcomes of the 2018 Addis Ababa Extraordinary Congress, presented by China

- (i) The meeting heard two specific update:
 - a. Outcomes on UPU Reform, decided at the 2nd Extraordinary Congress, these being:
 - i. Maintaining the intergovernmental nature of the UPU; a UN specialised agency
 - ii. The structure of the Union includes functional, but not legal separation between the Governmental (CA) and Operational (POC) pillars.
 - iii. The governmental pillar, its election mechanisms and composition remain unchanged, whilst the operational pillar will increase by eight seats and will increase the number of vice-chairs to five. In situations where cross-cutting decisions are required, the governmental pillar has enhanced authority in such matters.
 - iv. The current coordinating body will be retained in its current form.

and

- b. An update on the progress of the Study on the regularising the Mid-Term Congress:
 - i. The CA task force on the mid-term Congress was established at CA S4 session and chaired by Cote d'Ivoire, the members include Japan, China, Spain, Tunisia, South Africa, Turkey, Poland, PAPU, amongst others.
 - ii. The Questionnaire on the 2018 Extraordinary Congress was circulated to all the member countries at the end of June to address the evaluation of the 2018 Extraordinary Congress based on concrete information from member countries, and to give consideration to other aspects important for the establishment of a mid-term Congress on a permanent basis.
 - iii. The TF is tasked with providing its recommendations based on the feedbacks by the October 2019 CA session.

3. Discussions and Decisions – APPU Reform

3.1 WS 1 - Monitoring of work currently under way (Doc 15.1 and Annex 1)

- (i) The meeting noted the budget and activities position as at 31 July 2019 including the fact that unscheduled activity arising from the Da Nang EC session had resulted in some tasks being deferred. Notwithstanding, confidence was expressed regarding completion of all currently assigned activities by the end of 2020 and for this work to be within approved budgets.

3.2 WS 2 - Nine Initiatives assigned for completion by the Tehran Congress (Doc 15.2)

The meeting proceeded as follows.

- (i) Noting that two Initiatives (8.3 and 8.4) had been dealt with at the 2018 EC.
- (ii) Noting that two Initiatives (11.4 and 11.5) were scheduled for action in 2021.
- (iii) Taking action on the remaining five Initiatives as set out in (a) to (e) below:
 - (a) Initiative 11.6 - Presentation by non-postal organisations should be made separately or may opt for one day sharing session: the meeting agreed that the circumstances originally leading to the tabling of this Initiative had changed, and that action was not required at this time.
 - (b) Initiative 11.7: Guidelines drawn for non-postal organisations to attend and make presentations at APPU Plenary sessions: the meeting agreed that the circumstances originally leading to the tabling of this Initiative had changed, and that action was not required at this time.

- (c) Initiative 13.3: Develop positioning statement for the region: there was no comment on the draft positioning statement presented to the meeting. Comment can be sent to the Reform WG Chair up to 31 October following which the document will then be placed on the website.
- (d) Initiative 8.5: Update Duty Statement for the Secretary General: the meeting was informed of the importance of this work to ensure that future appointees are selected against criteria that reflect the needs of the Union as well as the realities of the tasks that need to be done. A small sub-group will be established to undertake drafting and review work on the Duty Statement. Members interested in the sub-group should contact the WG Chair. Work is scheduled for completion by 31 March 2019.
- (e) Initiative 8.6: Process for EC Chair to set objectives for the Secretary General and Bureau and assess whether they have been met: it was agreed that this was closely related to Initiative 8.5 (reference sub-paragraph (d) above) and should be included in the work undertaken by the sub-group.

3.3 WS 3 – Update on 2018 membership survey (Doc 15.3.1 and Annexes 1-2)

The meeting proceeded as follows.

- (i) Noting that action on all 37 items identified in the survey process had been either initiated or completed;
- (ii) Taking action on nine items at the WG meeting as set out in (a) to (e) below.
 - (a) The survey contained four separate references (A.3.8, B.1.1.1, B.1.1.2, B.1.1.3) to the need for improved documentation for Union meetings (Congress, EC) e.g., accuracy, timeliness, completeness (particularly financial documents). The meeting agreed that there had been a distinct improvement for the 2019 EC meeting and that these four items could be regarded as actioned.
 - (b) The suggestion (reference B.1.1.3) to enhance the APPU website with details of senior officials in member countries was assessed as duplicating the UPU resource. The proposed Bureau website review could pick this suggestion up as a “click-through” option.
 - (c) Further information was requested on B.1.1.2 which proposed the APPU have a collaborative drafting document system similar to the UPU; the “further information” is clarification of the intent of the proposal and whether this is a reasonable requirement for consideration in the Bureau IT review.

- (d) Two references (A.4.2, A.4.3) called for enhancing coordination, streamlining processes, greater synergy, better use of resources between organs of the Union. The meeting heard that this has been a consistent message that the Bureau constantly has under review. The proposed relocation of RTCAP is a good example of putting “words into action”. The Consultant requested assistance from members to identify opportunities where the Union could achieve greater efficiency through changed working. The meeting accepted that the message in these two references should be an ongoing feature of business management for the organs of the Union.
- (e) Reference A.1.2 identified “membership of a regional grouping for consultation on key global matters, advice and support of key UPU issues” as the main value of APPU to members. The question was put to the meeting of whether the Union could be doing more to brief members on global matters. There was no comment and this item is considered as actioned.

3.4 WS 3 - Work items deferred to 2019 by Da Nang EC meeting (Doc 15.3.2)

The meeting was updated as set out below.

- (i) Template documentation

The original plan for the development of template documentation altered significantly due to the change of key personnel in the Bureau. However, there was focus on other areas where template documentation was needed and where assistance of a general nature leading into the 2019 EC meeting was of benefit.

- (ii) Review Rules of Procedure, Regulations etc

This work had not yet commenced. It is scheduled for early 2020.

An additional requirement has been identified by the Secretary General in the form of a review of archiving processes and systems in the Bureau. This will be added to the Reform WG work programme.

- (iii) APPU website enhancement

The meeting agreed that work in this area should be assigned to the Bureau IT review as part of the needs analysis.

3.5 WS 4 – Items of an organisational / structural / resource nature: RTCAP relocation (Doc 15.4.1 and Annexes 1-4)

The meeting dealt with the RTCAP relocation proposal by working through each of the “Decisions Expected”. These are set out below with brief comment as appropriate.

- (i) **Note** the background to the establishment of the RSCAP / RTCAP, its location in Singapore, and agreement in principle (Da Nang, 2018) to relocate the RTCAP to Bangkok

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (ii) **Note** the opportunities and benefits available by relocating from Singapore to Bangkok with particular attention drawn to the increased value to be gained from RTCAP exposure to the high number of visitors and participants each year at the Bureau

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (iii) **Note** the ability that relocation provides in terms of reviewing the purpose and continuity aspects of the role (i.e., role continuation, role definition, succession planning, successor recruitment)

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (iv) **Note** that parties involved in the process or affected by it have been consulted and generally support the relocation

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (v) **Note** that, apart from any financial impact, there is no formal approval requirement for a change of location of the RTCAP

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (vi) **Note** and **confirm** the organisational change whereby the RTCAP will continue its functions in a Consultancy Section at the Bureau, this structure enabling continuation and broadening of current and additional activities

WG position: there was a question whether the Bureau could create a new Section in the Bureau given that the General Regulations did not appear to cover such a possibility. The Consultant replied that the Secretary General could, subject to the confirmation of the EC, recruit staff to assist in the direction of the Bureau on the basis that such staff are in addition to the training and administrative staff. Given that relocation from Singapore to Bangkok is possible, given that adding a person to the Bureau staff is possible, the creation of a Consultancy Section for the relocated, additional person seemed an unusual obstacle to now find. The matter was left on the basis of a single question and answer.

- (vii) **Note** that relocation to Bangkok will result in the Manager, RTCAP becoming an APPU employee

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (viii) **Note** that the intention is to obtain international staff status for the relocated position

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (ix) **Note** that, subject to the outcome of discussion and decisions at the 2019 Tokyo APPU EC meeting on this matter, the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be approached, with a request for international status for the RTCAP position

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (x) **Approve** that due, to the transitional nature of the relocation process from a recruitment point of view, the standard step of calling for applications is not being followed

WG position: agreed at a Working Group level (noting that “approval” is a decision for the EC to make).

- (xi) **Approve** one-off additional expenditure (incurred in 2020) up to US\$4,000 for personal expenses incurred by Mr Tan in relocating from Singapore to Bangkok

WG position: agreed at a Working Group level (noting that “approval” is a decision for the EC to make). The question was asked whether the one-off expenditure (as well as the recurrent expenditure in (xii) below) could be met from the SAF given that the latter is the source for all other RTCAP costs. The reason for meeting additional costs from the Administrative budget was explained.

Although the 2020 draft budget for the Administrative Section had included costs for RTCAP relocation of US\$7,150, the possibility remained open to consider SAF as the funding source.

The Chair suggested that the WG report to the EC on 5 September with two options for funding the 2020 relocation costs i.e.,

- from the Administrative budget; or
- from the SAF.

As a courtesy, subsequent to the WG meeting, the Chair and the Consultant approached the main contributor to the SAF (Japan) to confirm that they would be happy for the additional funds to come from the SAF, if that was the option taken by the EC. Japan indicated that they would be very happy if this was the outcome (i.e., the relocation costs in 2020 and 2021 being funded from the SAF), particularly as it would reduce expenditure from the Administrative budget by US\$11,350 in those two years and thus have a favourable impact on members’ contributions to expenses.

- (xii) **Approve** additional expenditure in the 2020 Union budget for accommodation (utilities and maintenance) of US\$3,150

WG position: refer to comment in item (xi) above.

- (xiii) **Note** the desirability of the additional relocation costs in 2020 and 2021 not resulting in the 2019 contribution unit level of US\$2,650 being exceeded

WG position: noted, with positive acknowledgement from the WG.

- (xiv) **Note** that the increased expenditure for the relocation of the RTCAP should be more than offset by a reduction in external consulting costs from 2022

WG position: noted, with clarification provided on the basis for this statement.

- (xv) **Further note** that subject to the associated expenditure approval, the RTCAP will relocate to Bangkok no later than 1 April 2020

WG position: noted in principle. There was discussion regarding the convenience of 1 April vis-à-vis domestic activities in Bangkok at that time. There is a possibility that the actual date of relocation may vary – if so, such variation would be reported at the 2020 EC meeting.

- (xvi) **Consider** the establishment of a small, ad hoc team comprising the Manager RTCAP, the Secretary General, and 2-3 members with specific interest in RTCAP / relocation, to maintain close review of the benefits outlined in the proposal actually being achieved, and reporting on this annually to the EC

WG position: noted, without comment.

- (xvii) **Further consider** that the small ad hoc group mentioned in paragraph 4.5.1 could also report on costs saved as a result of relocation.

WG position: noted, without comment.

3.6 WS 4 – Items of an organisational / structural / resource nature: Relationship between APPU Bureau and APP Cooperative (Doc 15.4.2)

- (i) The meeting noted that the review by an external lawyer regarding the possibility of liability on the part of the APPU Bureau for financial or other issues in the APP Cooperative, had produced a conclusion that there was no such liability.
- (ii) The WG noted the outcome and the fact that the matter was now closed to the satisfaction of both parties.

3.7 WS 4 – Items of an organisational / structural / resource nature: Residual matter arising during the review of the relationship between APPU Bureau and APP Cooperative (Doc 15.4.2)

- (i) While the situation under Thai law has been clarified in terms of the liability position for the Bureau re the APP Cooperative, the external lawyer advised that “the APPU should seek to understand the law of Singapore on the question of whether the APP is required to register in any form to comply with Singapore law. This is to ensure that the APP’s operations are in line with the organization’s (i.e., the APPU) intentions (i.e., properly established and compliant with all external agencies and regulations), as well as being set up in a manner that will avoid potential legal issues in the future”.
- (ii) This matter is of no interest to the Bureau, nor is it in scope for the Reform WG. The APP Cooperative will review this matter in terms of action it decides to take and will report separately to the EC.