



ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS NEW YORK

Presentation by AFICS/NY President Deborah Landey to the AFICS/NY Annual Assembly - Tuesday, 21 May 2024

I am honored to provide my provide my Annual Report which will divided into three parts. I will provide an overview followed by Jay Karia who will provide more details on health insurance issues and Jay Pozenel on pension issues.

I would like to thank all past Presidents including those here with us today or virtually, George Saddler, Richard Nottidge, Andres Castellanos, Ed Omotoso, Linda Saputelli and John Dietz. Thank you for your service, commitment, and dedication. A special shout out to Warren Sach for his many years of service to AFICS/NY.

As you know the work of our organization is conducted by hard-working Committees. Let me thank all of the Committee and Working Group Chairs/Co-Chairs, all Committee members, office staff and the Bureau members including the first-rate Vice-Presidents.

This past year we continued our meetings with senior UN officials on a range of issues of concern to retirees. We had a number of meetings with USG Pollard and her team, as well as USG Atul Khare and his team. We have met with the RSG and CEPA of the Pension Fund. We have also met with senior officials of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF.

Through the AFICS-NY Pension Committee, we have continued to focus on raising your issues with top management in the Pension Fund. Those issues involve concerns regarding the administration of pensions as well as regarding investment strategies and policies. We have partnered with the Fund to run help sessions for retirees wishing to use the Digital Certificate of Entitlement, 15 sessions helping over 125 individuals to enroll. We also raised issues and provided input on pension issues to the Annual Council of the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) which represents the interests of retirees on the Pension Board. Jay Pozenel, who along with Suzanne Bishopric Co-Chairs the AFICS-NY Pension Committee, will provide more detail.

On health insurance, our representatives on the UN Health and Life Insurance Committee (HLIC) participate in all its meetings, analyze the data on plan use provided by Third Party Administrators, and advocate for the broadest possible benefits for the lowest possible premiums and improvements in client service in the Health Insurance Section. They play both an analytical and advocacy role often providing solutions to problems that have been identified. Our efforts continued with senior managers to change the governance structure of the Health and Life Insurance Committee in order to have AFICS/NY 'observers' become full-fledged members with voting rights. We will continue to advocate for this. We also provide input to the deliberations of FAFICS on health and life insurance issues. Jay Karia, Co-Chair of the Health Insurance Committee, will provide more detail.



ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS NEW YORK

On the issue of visa retrogression for retiring colleagues, you have heard from USG Pollard. As soon as the issue was raised with us, we set up an AFICS/NY Working Group, under the chairmanship of Darshak Shah, to focus on this key issue for currently retiring staff and future retirees. We are continuing to raise this issue with top management and have met with them several times. We have written to the Secretary-General. We have also consulted legal specialists on possible interim and long-term solutions.

On the By-Laws, the Governing Board established a Working Group to review and propose needed changes to the AFICS/NY By-Laws of the Association. Even though the By-Laws had been amended several times since AFICS/NY's founding in 1970, no revisions had been considered since May 2002, even with multiple changes to New York State law since 2002. As a not-for-profit corporation organized under NY law, AFICS-NY must be compliant with New York State Law and take a look at other provisions including the Governing Board election process. The Working Group, co-chaired by John Dietz and Jay Pozenel, has worked through the past year to develop a set of proposed amendments to the AFICS/NY By-Laws reflecting all the necessary changes required to cover NY State Law and other changes to enable biennial rather than annual elections to the Governing Board. The proposed amendments were sent to all members by either e-mail or snail mail for you to vote on them. We look forward to announcing the results of your votes later in this meeting.

On membership. I am delighted to say that in the first quarter of this year we had a surge in membership. Twice as many joined AFICS/NY compared to the same period last year. We participate actively in pre-retirement seminars organized by the UN Staff Union and have established a partnership with USG Atul Khare and his team to conduct additional pre-retirement seminars which will also include staff from the programmes and Funds. The membership Committee, chaired by Sudershan Narula has worked hard.

On elections to the AFICS/NY Governing Board, we issued the Call for Candidates on 2 February. The Nominating Committee, chaired by Sudershan Narula and Jay Karia, also reached out to many retirees to see if they might be interested in serving. As in prior years, the voting has been managed by an external company to ensure the integrity of the process. There were a total of 10 candidates for six positions. Sudershan Narula will present the results of the election later on in the Agenda.

On finance, IT and administration your Treasurer, Mac Chiulli, office staff Velimir Kovacevic and Veronique Whalen, and Librarian Dawne Gautier have done an enormous amount of work. First, we once again had an unqualified audit and our Financial Statements have been prepared. Second, our retiree data base was fully updated. Third, we are now putting a major emphasis on collecting dues owed to the organization. Fourth, we have made some changes to the website pending a more extensive overhaul. Fifth, we continue to maintain a small Library mostly of books written by our UN family colleagues.

On communication, the AFICS/NY Communication Committee, chaired by Gail Bindley-Taylor, has drafted a Communications Strategy. Under this umbrella, we plan to resume the much-missed AFICS/NY Bulletin, give the website a much-needed face-lift, consider the possibility of



ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS NEW YORK

using social media and make more use of 'iseek' to reach out to those about to retire. We would be happy to invite anyone of you with communications, media, or social media skills to join this Committee.

This past year the Charities Foundation, under the Presidency of Anthony Fouracre, awarded two grants totalling \$4,500 to qualified former staff. Please note that assistance in the form of grants can be provided to AFICS/NY members and their dependents and survivors who face critical, unusual, or emergency personal hardships of a temporary nature which cannot be met from other available resources.

If you are facing hardship or are aware of a former colleague who is facing hardship and is in need of a grant, please submit an application to the Foundation through the AFICS/NY office.

On social events and getting us all together, I am delighted that over 80 of you attended the 2024 Spring luncheon. And many of you have signed up for the reception after this Assembly. Special thanks to Barbara Linardo, Chair, Social and other Events Committee, for all the work she does on organizing these events.

This year AFICS-NY has continued its partnership with UNFCU by meeting often with our UNFCU colleagues and sharing with them the concerns of retirees. This in turn helps UNFCU enhance its services for retirees and create useful and informative webinars for the benefit of retirees.

I am also pleased to report to you that UNFCU has once again made a generous contribution to the work of AFICS/NY. You will be hearing from UNFCU's CEO, Mr. John Lewis, later in our session, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank him and express appreciation for UNFCU's continued support of AFICS/NY.

On a personal note, I would just like to say that my tenure as President of AFICS/NY ends in June. It has been a privilege to serve for 8 years as Vice- President and 2 as President of AFICS/NY. The Governing Board will elect a new President at its meeting in June. I would like to thank the entire team with whom I have worked and all of you the embers we serve.

Finally, if you have feedback for us on how we can do the business on your behalf better do not hesitate to provide it.

I would now like to hand over to Jay Karia, Co-Chair AFICS/NY Health Insurance Committee.

— — —