



## ► Committee on Accountability

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### Annual report 2021

In 2021, the Committee on Accountability completed its review of six (6) cases that had been referred to it by the Treasurer and Financial Comptroller (TR/CF) pursuant to Article 13.30 of the Financial Rules, including five (5) cases referred in 2020 and one (1) case referred in 2021.

**Case No. 1:** The Committee examined a case comprised of four allegations of misconduct and corruption against an ILO official stationed in a field office. The allegations involved: a) taking a cash gift from a supplier; b) using ILO assets (laptops and network) and user identities of former staff/consultants to access sexually explicit content, including illegal pornography; c) without authorization, sharing a Wi-Fi password with non-ILO staff thus compromising the ILO IT 'Business Continuity Point'; and d) engaging in a remunerated outside activity using ILO assets and the user identities of former staff/consultant(s). The Committee considered a detailed investigation report prepared by the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight (IAO) and examined its supporting documentation, including forensic examinations made by internal and external cyber security experts. It reviewed each of the four allegations in detail as well as the arguments put forth by the official. The Committee found that all four allegations were substantiated and that the actions of the official were deliberate, fraudulent and violated the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service. Consequently, the Committee recommended that the matter be referred for consideration of the highest levels of disciplinary sanction. The Committee further recommended that the potentially illegal nature of accessing certain types of pornography also be referred for consideration of referral to national authorities. As a United Nations specialized agency, the Committee also recommended that the official's name be flagged in IRIS and reported in any common screening database used by United Nations system organizations, to prevent any future reemployment and/or engagement, whether through external collaboration or other contracts by the ILO or other organizations.

**Case No. 2:** The Committee examined a case of alleged fraud and attempted fraud against the Staff Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) by an ILO official stationed in a field office, who resigned prior to the completion of the investigation of the case. The allegations concerned the submission of fraudulent claims to the SHIF and the receipt of reimbursements amounting to approximately USD 27,600, as well as providing fraudulent medical documents to justify a period of sick leave. The Committee considered a detailed investigation report prepared by

IAO and examined its supporting documentation, including forensic evidence indicating that the fraudulent claims were created on an assigned ILO laptop by fabricating stamps of the hospital and bank statements as proof of payment. The former official did not respond to the Committee's request for comments. It examined the former official's admission of wrongdoing that was made during the course of the investigation. The Committee found the allegations of fraudulent claims and reimbursements to be clear and unequivocal and that the actions of the official were deliberate, fraudulent and violated the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service. Consequently, the Committee considered that the matter would have merited being referred for the highest level of disciplinary sanction if the official had not already resigned from the Office. The Committee recommended that the matter be referred for consideration towards all reasonable efforts being made by the Office to recover the defrauded amounts, including the pursuit of action at the national level if necessary. As a United Nations specialized agency, the Committee further recommended that the former official's name be flagged in IRIS and reported in any common screening database used by United Nations system organizations, to prevent any future reemployment and/or engagement whether through external collaboration or other contracts by the ILO or other organizations.

**Case No. 3:** The Committee examined a case of alleged fraud and attempted fraud against the SHIF by an ILO official stationed in a field office, who resigned after the completion of investigation but before the Committee's review of the case. The allegations concerned the submission of fraudulent claims to SHIF and the receipt of reimbursement from SHIF against the fraudulent claims. The Committee considered a detailed investigation report prepared by IAO and examined its supporting documentation. The former official, in response to the Committee's request for comments, requested if she could resign depending on the Committee's conclusions. The Committee examined the former official's admission of wrongdoing that was made during the course of the investigation. It found the allegations of fraudulent submission of claims (i.e., USD 2,900) to be substantiated and that actual losses (i.e., USD 170) had been minimized due to detection during SHIF's claims review process. It considered that the actions of the former official were deliberate, fraudulent and violated the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service. Consequently, the Committee considered that the matter would have merited being referred for the highest level of disciplinary sanction if the official had not already resigned from the Office. In view that the actual loss was de minimis, the Committee recommended that the Treasurer and Financial Comptroller consider writing it off. As a United Nations specialized agency, the Committee recommended that the former official's name be flagged in IRIS and reported in any common screening database used by United Nations system organizations, to prevent any future reemployment and/or engagement whether through external collaboration or other contracts by the ILO or other organizations.

**Case No. 4:** The Committee examined a case of alleged fraud and attempted fraud against the SHIF by an ILO official stationed in a field office. The allegations concerned the submission of altered claims to SHIF through the misuse of an ILO asset (i.e. an ILO "PAID" stamp) on the

receipts to expedite reimbursement. The Committee considered a detailed investigation report prepared by IAO and examined its supporting documentation. The official, in response to the Committee's request for comments, conceded to having added the ILO "PAID" stamp onto actual and verifiable invoices following an initial exchange with SHIF. The Committee found that while the official had altered the invoices, no fraud had been committed nor intended as the altered invoices were for actual services for a verifiable course of treatment. The Committee found the misuse of ILO "PAID" stamp represented misconduct and it recommended that the matter be referred for consideration of an appropriate disciplinary action, including a possible reassignment of the subject official and counselling.

**Case No. 5:** The Committee examined a case comprised of three allegations of fraud and misconduct by an ILO official stationed in a field office. The allegations concerned a) the submission of fraudulent documentation in support of travel claims; b) fraud in recruitment process by using external resources during a written test; and c) undisclosed and unauthorized outside activities. The Committee considered a detailed investigation report prepared by IAO and examined its supporting documentation. The official, in response to the Committee's request for comments, limited his reply to the first allegation and acknowledged having submitted travel claims that did not reflect actual circumstances. The Committee found that the first two allegations were substantiated while the third allegation was unsubstantiated and that the actions of the official were deliberate, fraudulent and violated the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service. Consequently, the Committee recommended that the matter be referred for consideration of the highest level of disciplinary sanctions. The Committee recommended that the matter be referred for consideration towards all reasonable efforts being made by the Office to recover the defrauded amounts. As a United Nations specialized agency, the Committee recommended that the official's name be flagged in IRIS and reported in any common screening database used by United Nations system organizations, to prevent any future reemployment and/or engagement whether through external collaboration or other contracts by the ILO or other organizations. Lastly, the Committee recommended specific steps so as to avoid a re-occurrence.

**Case No. 6:** The Committee examined a case comprised of four allegations of misconduct by an official at ILO headquarters in Geneva. The allegations concerned a) the registration and recognition of dependents, b) the removal of dependents as recognized dependents, c) the preparation of two Office issued attestations, and d) related proof. The Committee considered a detailed investigation report prepared by IAO and examined its supporting documentation. The official, in response to the Committee's request, submitted comments. The Committee found that three out of four allegations were unsubstantiated. With regard to the remaining allegation concerning the preparation of two attestations, the Committee found that the official had been involved in, or influenced, their preparation, but that neither was factually incorrect at the time it was emitted. Consequently, the Committee found that the official had lacked judgement by not taking due care to avoid a situation of perceived conflict of interest.

It recommended that the matter be referred for consideration of an appropriate disciplinary action. Lastly, the Committee recommended specific steps so as to avoid a re-occurrence.

It should be noted that the composition of the Committee was updated as of 1 December 2020. The members of the Committee for 2021 were Mr Perrin (Chairperson), Ms Susic (FINANCE), Ms Beaulieu (JUR) and Ms O'Neill (HRD). Ms Zhang (TR/CF) served as Secretary.

Date: June 2022



Christophe Perrin  
Chairperson  
Committee on Accountability

*\*Disciplinary sanctions are subject to separate procedures – the outcomes of disciplinary cases are published in an IGDS Information Note each biennium.*