

Former FAO and Other UN Staff Association

Associazione dei Pensionati della FAO e di altre Organizzazioni delle Nazioni Unite



Newsbrief 98
March 2016

FFOA membership elects new Executive Committee - officers designated

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With an all-time high of more than 5 960 votes cast, the FFOA membership has chosen a new 11-person Executive Committee to replace the outgoing group whose three-year mandate expired in December 2015.

Committee is composed of:

Alan Prien, President
Georgia Shaver, Vice-President
Giuliano Pucci, Vice-President
Gianni Monciotti, Treasurer
Marco Breschi, General Secretary
Annibale Fusco-Femiano, Assistant Treasurer
Maria Augusta Di Giacomo, Assistant General Secretary
Bruno Pisani, Member
Ed Seidler, Member
Joan Smidt, Member
Alex Van Arkadie, Member

In addition, the Committee co-opted the following additional members:

Marius De Gaay Fortman
Roberta Fenix
Mohamed Saleheen
Sabatino Salvi
Jamie Wickens

Specific responsibilities for the elected and co-opted members will be defined subsequently, particularly in regard to the EC sub-committees.

The new Executive Committee again exhibits a balanced membership from among the Rome-based agencies, ensuring that in addition to a unified front on common issues, issues specific to retirees of only a single organization can be duly considered.

A Word from the President on Behalf of Your Executive Committee

On behalf of your new Executive Committee, I would like to extend best wishes to all members for a happy and healthy 2016.

Healthy, because that is the most important factor at this time of our lives, and partly because it has taken some time for the new medical insurance claims processor, Allianz Worldwide Care (AWC), to get their act in order after having won the most recent tender for our medical insurance contracts. That meant a lot of work for us, and some frustrations for you, our members, but AWC seem to have hired more staff now and hopefully 2016 will see a reduction in processing time, and a more flexible and supportive approach. We depend on you to keep us informed of issues that require attention, as well as good experiences, when they occur.

But just as things on the operational side seemed to be moving in the right direction, FAO unilaterally imposed a new methodology for calculation of premium payments by staff and retirees. For most retirees, premiums will be relatively unchanged, but for a few, big increases may be expected. See the article on page 4 for further details. This change affects only retirees from FAO – WFP and IFAD will retain the previous methodology. This may result

in pensioners from one agency paying higher premiums than those from another, for the same benefits.

Your FFOA representatives in the JAC/MC (Joint Advisory Committee on Medical Coverage) strongly opposed this change, driven by FAO management's desire to push onto the staff and retirees a US\$1.3 million savings proposed the use of a small portion of the very large FAO reserve funds but management did not accept this.

Let us hope we have no further New Year's surprises.

May I express my appreciation to all of you who participated in the last elections, which had the largest participation in FFOA history (not least due to a highly efficient electronic voting process). Thank you for the confidence you have shown to those you have voted into office. We shall try our best to live up to your expectations.

I would like to thank our former Vice-presidents Annemarie Waeschle and Pino Pace, our former General Secretary Giorgio Eberle, and Iolanda Novelli for their many years of service on the Executive Committee

Alan Prien
President

Newsbrief 98 March 2016

Newsbrief, the FFOA official quarterly newsletter, is produced in English and Italian and is distributed free to all members, electronically to those who have internet access, and in print to those who do not. Newsbrief (current and back issues) is also available on the FFOA website: www.ffoa-web.org. Suggestions or contributions from members are welcome.

Editor: G. Aelion, P. Nelson, S. Dembner
Designer: O. Bolbol

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Pension matters

(Responsible: M. Breschi, A. Prien,
A. Fusco Femiano)

Delays in processing pension benefits for new retirees

Instead of a warm welcome after a career of dedicated service, new retirees are receiving a cold shower from the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund, with delays of six months and longer in the processing of new pensions. The FAO Secretariat confirmed that hundreds of new retirees from the Rome Based Agencies (RBA) who retired in the summer of 2015 are still waiting for their initial pension payments. Similar delays are occurring throughout the UN system with agencies in Geneva and New York facing serious problems for new retirees.

There are no current issues with processing/ payment of pensions already in the system, but transfers of pensions from a deceased pensioner to a surviving spouse are also affected.

The root of the problem lies squarely with the Fund's new computer system (IPAS), which, as all too often in the UN system, was introduced in haste without adequate testing or introduction. Notwithstanding a lack of personnel in social security offices in the RBA, the organizations continue to process retiree records on a timely basis and cannot be blamed for these delays.

FFOA Representatives raised the issue at the FAO/WFP Staff Pension Committee (SPC) as well as with FAO management. In the SPC, the voices of the Secretary, of the Rome based agencies, the Member Nations and Staff Organizations representatives were united, strongly requesting that Fund Management address the wide and spreading concerns, and to respond to general and specific cases of disservice. The FAO Social Security office facilitated a video conference with high-level Fund representatives in Geneva and New York, including the Mr Sergio Arvizu, the Chief Executive Officer.

FAO offered to help the Fund with a temporary transfer of human resources to their

Geneva office, and to provide assistance in analysis of the problem and identification of a solution. FAO presented the Fund with a list of some 600 cases needing urgent attention in the RBA area alone (cases arising from August 2015 to January 2016). An agreement was reached for full collaboration with SPC members, including FAO Social Security and FFOA, in identifying, reporting and offering solutions beginning with the most demanding cases. This collaboration is now in effect with a number of cases being addressed and resolved.

In February 2016, the Fund published and distributed via email to participants, and also posted on its web site, a document addressing the issue. Unfortunately, the message minimizes the problem, characterizes the new system as fully and successfully implemented and working "efficiently and effectively", and suggests (wrongly) that the issue lies with processing delays on the agency side. The message calls the current issue "teething problems" and suggests that processing time will quickly be reduced to two months and then gradually be reduced further to one month.

Recent sessions of the SPC have deliberated raising the issue to the highest authorities of the UN Pension system, i.e., the Chairperson of the Pension Board as well as the UN Secretary General. The FAO Director-General and the WFP Executive Director were informed in writing by the SPC. All parties concerned will remain vigilant in following the efforts to improve the situation. FFOA will continue to contribute actively and will keep members informed of significant developments.

Pension Fund remains in good financial health

Notwithstanding the issues with processing new pensions, the Fund continues to enjoy excellent financial health. The value of the Fund's assets as at 31 December 2015 stood at approximately US\$ 52.08 billion, substantially stable when compared with the level at the end of the previous year, US\$ 52.77 billion, particularly in view of the short-term ups and downs experienced in the global financial markets throughout the year.

Cost of living increase

Based on the published level of the cost of living index in Italy, there will be no increase in benefits to pensioners in Italy this year as the index was less than 2 percent compared to the past two years (any increase will be applied when the threshold of 2 per cent is exceeded on a cumulative base, i.e. by including unapplied increases of less than 2 percent accrued from previous years). With regard to the benefits defined under the US Dollar track, we have no indication of increases applied by the UNJSPF at the time we go to press. We will inform members on a timely basis as information becomes available.

Certificates of Entitlement and Statement of Benefits

Members will recall an ad hoc communication by the Fund regarding the delayed issuance of Certificates of Entitlements which will be distributed in May this year instead of November last year. FFOA believes that this delay is a further indication of the problems arising from the implementation of the new administrative system. We will monitor the timing of this process and follow up with the Fund any reported case of delays. Statements of Benefits covering the year 2015 were issued in this quarter. Members not in receipt of their statement are encouraged to contact the Fund directly. FFOA is also available to assist.

Medical Insurance

(Responsible: E. Seidler, G. Eberle, A. Prien, M. Breschi)

FAO has introduced a new premium paying structure for the Basic Medical Insurance Plan (BMIP) for FAO staff and retirees, with effect from 1 January 2016. The premiums to be paid by retirees will be based on a percentage of their full net pension benefit (which assumes that no lump sum was taken and is based on a service of 25 years). The percentage (and therefore the total cost) increases with family size so a family with two members enrolled in BMIP will pay 3 percent of their pension and a family with three

in the plan will pay 3.78 percent. There will be no change in premiums for IFAD and WFP retirees who will continue to pay fixed premiums (with no increase over 2015). MMBP premiums for all retirees will remain the same in 2016 as in 2015.

FAO has made the change as a cost saving measure to reduce staff costs and thereby generate savings. FFOA suggested some alternative approaches in the JAC/MC but these failed to win support and were rejected by FAO management.

Pensioners in FAO should have received emails or letters informing them of the change in premium methodology and cost. Although the new methodology took effect as of 1 January 2016, system adjustments are still to be made. Therefore, pensioners will see the same deductions as in 2015 from their pensions for at least January and February. Once the system is updated, adjustments will be made to adjust for shortfalls in payments. This may lead to particularly high payments/ pension deductions in the month when the correction is made.

News from the UN Organizations

WFP

WFP's Executive Board has met twice since our last report. At the November 2015 meeting, WFP's Executive Director, Ertharin Cousin, told the Board that: "While we work to achieve a Zero Hunger world, the challenges, crises and emergencies [WFP] support[s] have never been greater Preventing further deterioration, by provided uninterrupted life-saving assistance ... requires ... your financial ... [and] continued political support." Syria, Yemen, Iraq, South Sudan, and El Nino's impact on southern Africa and the Horn of Africa remain dominant. WFP requires US\$ 2.6 billion for humanitarian operations in the first 6 months of 2016.

WFP's 2016 workplan includes a new Strategic Plan (2017-2021), Management Plan (2017-2019) and a Climate Change Policy.

In February, WFP's Executive Board discussed a mid-term review of the current Strategic Plan, and recommended to:

- Tighten WFP's conceptual framework, linked to transitioning towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the next Strategic Plan;
- Consolidate the transition from food aid to food assistance, with an improved articulation of WFP's comparative advantage in development assistance;
- Communicate better to the public the full scope of WFP's role.

In January, Executive Director Cousin testified before the United Nations Security Council, expressing frustration about ongoing blockades in Syria. Several weeks later WFP trucks rolled into 5 besieged areas to deliver humanitarian relief.

Colleagues can catch up with WFP news by joining the WFP People Facebook page.

IFAD

IFAD held its Governing Council in Rome on 17-18 February, with participation, inter alia of the following main speakers:

- Sergio Mattarella, President of the Italian Republic,
- Mohamed Ibrahim, Founder and Chair, Mo Ibrahim Foundation,
- Ismahane Elouafi, Director General, International Center for Biosaline Agriculture,
- Sunny Verghese, Chief Executive Officer, Olam International.

The main goal of the Council was to bring together international personalities, business leaders and heads of state to discuss investments in rural areas of developing countries as the cornerstone to achieving the Global Goals.

The Council itself was followed by the annual gathering of all IFAD staff from around the world.

FAO

At the 68th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, 2016 was formally declared to be the "International Year of Pulses" (IYP). FAO has been nominated to implement the IYP

2016 in collaboration with governments, relevant organizations, non-governmental organizations and all other relevant stakeholders.

Pulses are a type of leguminous crop that are harvested solely for the dry seed. Dried beans, lentils and peas are the most commonly known and consumed types of pulses.

Eating pulses regularly can help improve human health and nutrition because of their high protein and mineral content. Including pulses in intercropping farming systems and/or cultivating them as cover crops enhances soil fertility and reduce dependency on chemical fertilizers by fixing nitrogen and freeing phosphorous. There is insufficient data and information on the real contribution of pulses to household food security and nutrition. Documenting this important issue is an important objective of the International Year of Pulses.

News from the Staff Associations

(Responsible: A. Van Arkadie)

FICSA (December 2015) welcomed Resolution A/C.5/70/L.14 adopted by the UNGA on the Common System that focused on the 2015 Report of the ICSC on the compensation package for staff in the professional and higher categories. The revised compensation package was the result of a three year review by the ICSC which collaborated closely with representatives of the organizations and staff. The new package aims to simplify and streamline the current complex system and ensures a harmonized approach across the common system. The Resolution also, finally and officially, raises the mandatory age of separation for staff recruited before January 2014 in organizations of the United Nations common system to 65 years at the latest by **1 January 2018**, taking into account the acquired rights of staff. FICSA is now preparing for the ICSC review of the compensation package for General Service and national staff. A summary of the implications of the Resolution, plus the Resolution itself, may be consulted on the FICSA website.

In an February update entitled ‘Processing new pensions and 2015 Statements of Benefits’ FICSA expressed concerns to the UNJSPF regarding the Pension Fund backlog for processing of new pensions and the 2015 Statement of Benefits letters. “We will continue to monitor progress over the next weeks and months in an effort to ensure that the momentum achieved is maintained,” said a FICSA spokesperson.

AP-in-FAO warned FAO staff – and retirees - of potential steep increases in medical insurance premiums.

WFP-PSA looks forward to the establishment of the implementation date for the new mandatory age of separation. The Association is focusing on implications of salary calculation adjustments, noting the positive impact on single staff, and the changes regarding staff with working spouses and children. PSA also notes the changes with regard to the implications of language proficiency.

UGSS (and FICSA in parallel) has adopted a resolution on the alarming status of Staff/Management Relations at FAO. “Both resolutions have been forwarded to the FAO Director-General, declaring the availability of UGSS to discuss on the reasons of this unprecedented crisis in Staff Management Relations and possible remedial actions,” said UGSS. UGSS commented on the increase in Mandatory Age of Separation saying, “...This is a major achievement for staff contributing to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF).”

Social and recreational activities

(Responsible: J. Smidt, G. Monciotti, A. Van Arkadie, A. Fusco Femiano)

Previous activities:

Since our last Newsbrief 97, the following activities were enjoyed by some of our members:

October 2015 Sorrento, Capri, Positano e Ravello
Parco Velino Sirente, Grotte di Stiffe,

Monastero di Sant’Angelo
Due passi nel mistero, nei luoghi cari
a Pasolini,
Fosso Castello e Torre Chia

November 2015 Reggia di Caserta ed Antiche Seterie di
San Leucio
Scavi di Pompei
Castel Porziano
Napoli, Shopping e Presepi
Cerveteri
Salerno: il centro storico e le
fantasmagoriche luminarie

Dec 2015/
Jan 2016 Innsbruck, Vienna, Salisburgo, Padova
Arezzo: Fiera antiquaria e Mercatini
di Natale
Maratea
Greccio
Assisi e la Spiritualità del Natale
Capodanno nelle Marche
Capodanno in Romagna: Rimini,
Cesenatico, San Marino
Capodanno a Montalcino

January 2016 Massa Martana (Presepe di ghiaccio),
Todi
Transiberiana d’Italia
Minturnae e Sperlonga

February 2016 Putignano, Alberobello e Bari:
Carnevale e non solo
Carnevale di Viareggio e Pisa
Transiberiana d’Italia: Roma,
Sulmona, Roccaraso
Carnevale a Nizza e Festa delle Viole
Montefalco e Bevagna
Napoli, Cristo Velato e Museo
Archeologico Nazionale

March 2016 Monte Abetone, tre giorni sulla neve
Pompei in un giorno
Chianti e Valdarno
Ville del Brenta, Trieste, Venezia:
Pasqua Parco Nazionale del Cilento e
Vallo Di Diano: Pasqua

March/April 2016 Pitigliano, Sovana, Sorano, Saturnia

April 2016 Ercolano, Villa Campolieto ed il
Miglio d'Ororo
Vitorchiano (Vt), Giardino delle Peonie
(Centro Botanico Moutan)
Tour Sicilia Occidentale (Palermo,
Segesta,, San Vito Lo Capo/Erice,
Favignana/Levanzo, Mothia/Marsala/
Trapani, Selinunte/Agrigento, Cefalù)

Upcoming activities:

September 2015 Matera (3 days)

NEW/ NOVITÀ (Music and dance)

Enrico Camerini – Per Piano Solo
Sala Baldini, Piazza Campitelli, 9
Season 2016: 13/02, 12/3, 16/4, 14/5
at 17:00 hrs

News from the Executive Committee

FFOA annual General Assembly 25 May

The 46th Session of the General Assembly will be held this year at FAO on 25 May, presided by Ms Catherine Bertini, former WFP Executive Director. The meeting starts in the Green Room at 9:45 with presentations by the Executive Heads of the three Rome-based agencies. Other important presentations include those by staff associations, and by representatives of the Pension Fund (the CEO Mr Sergio Arvizu) and Social Security.

After a subscription buffet lunch (don't forget to book beforehand), in the afternoon Ms Bertini will make a presentation on the World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in Istanbul, 23-25 May 2016.

All members are cordially invited. Please don't forget to bring your FFOA membership card and your pensioner's building pass for easy entrance. The General Assembly will also be available live over the Internet, so you can follow the discussion from your computer, wherever you may be. Instructions how to access the link will be provided by email shortly before the meeting.

The documents for the General Assembly are transmitted with this Newsbrief. Please bring

them with you, as well as the Provisional Report dispatched with Newsbrief 96 of September 2015.

Take care!

It has been brought to the attention of the members of the Executive Committee that over the past year, a number of FAO pensioners, members of the FFOA, have been taken advantage of financially and deceived by persons close to them, who should be interested in their well-being. Many of our members are lucky to have very competent and professional individuals assisting them in their daily chores, but this is not always the case.

The purpose of this article is to advise our members to carefully select the persons who assist you with your day-to-day chores, i.e. cleaning, shopping on your behalf and more importantly the person that you allow to operate on your bank account and to whom you may delegate to do so.

Should you suspect that something unusual is happening to one of our members you may report this to FFAO. Obviously this matter will be treated as a strictly confidential and personal matter. FFOA may be able to help or advise on actions that may be taken in such circumstances.

We are all constantly being warned by the Italian television, in particular RAI 1, about being careful to whom we open our door. Recently many tricks have been invented to enter into pensioners and elderly people's homes with the scope of robbing money and valuables.

FFOA stands ready to assist any of its members, should the need arise.

News from the electronic world

Google and FAO partner on remote sensing

According to FAO, Google Maps and FAO have agreed to work together to make geospatial tracking and mapping products more accessible, providing a high-technology assist to countries tackling climate change and much greater capacity to experts developing forest and land-use policies.

Digital technology tapping into satellite imagery is revolutionizing the way countries can assess, monitor and plan the use of their natural resources, including monitoring deforestation and desertification.

The three-year partnership between Google Maps and FAO is designed to foster innovation and expertise and sharply broaden access to easy-to-use digital tools combining FAO's global effort to combat climate change with Google's commitment to help on the climate data science and awareness fronts.

Newsbrief is looking for a volunteer to provide a short article, one every three months, on some item of interest to retirees related to developments in the world of the Internet. Please contact FFOA if you are willing to pitch in.

Your good health

(FFOA publishes health suggestions for pensioners but does not guarantee their accuracy or efficacy.)

About the third and fourth ages

Third Age: The Age of Fulfilment. In our Third Age (roughly 50-75), with our roles in our family changing, and through a shifting career or work focus, we can look more deeply within ourselves to find what gives us a sense of meaning, purpose and passion.

This is a time when from the vantage point of long and varied experience we can take particular note of what is really important to us and how we want to "spend" the time remaining to us.

During this period we can revisit/reclaim some of what we neglected along the way, clear out unwanted baggage, heal old wounds and see where we want to grow to become more balanced and whole-both as individuals and as integral parts of the immense web of life.

As we do this work, involving mind, heart, body and spirit, we are able to make more intentional choices about how we want to contribute in order to make a difference as we mature into the fullness of our potential.

Fourth Age: The Age of Completion

This last stage of earthly life allows us to review and revel in the fullness of our lives with "no regrets" and to prepare for whatever we believe comes next.

This time of ever more heightened awareness and growing acceptance of our mortality can lead us to the peace and joy of surrender. All of our life is in one sense a preparation and prelude for this stage.

Therefore growing to our full potential and living fully in Third Age allows us to enter even more completely and wholly into this stage of completion

Extracted from Midlife Unlimited, arranged by Sabatino Salvi.

News from the membership

The lighter side

Choosing a restaurant

To celebrate a 40th birthday, a group of girlfriends decide to lunch together, and they select the restaurant Lo Scoglio – because the waiters are good looking.

For her 50th birthday, they get together again, and they pick Lo Scoglio – because the food is good and there is a great wine list.

For her 60th birthday, they pick Lo Scoglio again – because it is a quite place with a nice view of the sea.

For her 70th birthday, they again chose Lo Scoglio – because it has a ramp and an elevator to facilitate access.

For her 80th birthday, they pick Lo Scoglio – because it is a place they have never been to before and they can't wait to try it.

New members

Ahamed, Ms Miriam
 Alung, Mr Ashok Kumar
 Banti, Ms Letizia
 Bertini, Mr Alessandro
 Besate, Ms Mariella
 Bevilacqua, Mr Luciano
 Bonacci, Ms Mirella
 Bordet, Mr Dominique

Burberry, Ms Janice Elaine
Cartoni-Vero, Ms Cecilia
Carvelli, Mr Francesco Antonio
Chiodi, Ms Daniela
Colella, Ms Luciana
Corazza, Mr Leone
Cosgrove, Mr John
Cruz, Ms Cynthia
Cullinan, Ms Mary Catherine
De Sanctis, Ms Linda Margaret
De Warlincourt, Ms Nicole
Di Tanna, Ms Sandra
Doleac, Ms Catherine
Dramis, Mr Roberto
Essayem-Benaissi, Ms Leila
Farallo Casano, Ms Laura
Fernandez, Ms Ana
Genovesi, Mr Gianfranco
Gribling, Mr Armand
Harrand, Ms Odile
Hoskins, Ms Alexis June
Kadry, Ms Zenab Sayed Gamal el Din
Laclare Ms Monique
Leidi-Falletta, Ms Elisabet
Leigh Valdez, Ms Juana Dalila
Lezzi, Ms Patricia Ana
Marconi, Ms Ana
Marin, Ms Maria Pilar
Morgante, Mr Massimo
Muammar, Ms Amira
Neat, Ms Jennifer
Nunan, Ms Jane
Palmisano, Mr Maurizio
Papitto, Ms Florence
Pereira de Mello, Mr Claudio
Petrucci, Ms Rosemarie
Petruccelli, Ms Tina
Piredda, Ms Marie José
Pugnaletto, Mr Ugo
Ripandelli, Mr Decio
Rodriguez Varela, Mr Ricardo
Schininà, Ms Agata
Segura, s Graciela
Senez, Ms Martine
Somai, Mr Rachid
Sperati, Mr Alessandro
Starita, Ms Bruna
Stigliano, Mr José

Tesfamariam, Mr Fessehaie
Thomas, Ms Jeanne Marie
Tisot, Ms Alessandra
Tracy, Ms Sandra
Trupia, Mr Giovanni
Tudini, Mr Luciano
Turtura, Ms Emanuela
Ugolini, Ms Maria Cristina
Vanni, Mr Gregory
Vantomme, Mr Paul
Ventura, Mr Policarpo
Von Roehl, Ms Claudia
Wong, Ms Ianice
Yanez Alvarez, Ms Flor

All retirees ought to join the Association to support its work representing the pensioners, and for their own interest, and should encourage their ex-colleagues to join!

IN MEMORIAM

Nardone, Ms Adriana

12 June 2015

Molle, Mr André

13 October 2015

Fagetti, Ms Elda

14 November 2015

Dubbini, Mr Mario

20 November 2015

Braid, Mr Andrew F.

2 December 2015

Sanders, Mr David William

22 December 2015

Barreveld, Mr Willem H.

10 January 2016

Rosenberg, Ms Hilde

17 January 2016

Graziano-Laudisi, Ms Roberta

08 February 2016

Mancuso-Richardson, Ms Ann

18 February 2016

Bibolini Kilby, Ms Antoinette

21 February 2016

On behalf of all the members of FFOA, we express heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of the above-mentioned members.

André Lucien Molle

13 October 2015.

I wish to share these brief observations on André, who passed away 13 October 2015. André joined FAO in 1960 as an agronomist and by 1973 led the development of the Office for Sahel Relief Operations (OSRO) a programme supported by the former Director-General, A. H. Boerma. He was subsequently promoted to Director of the Administrative Services Division. I had the privilege of working in the same Division and collaborating closely with him on modernizing the FAO Archives. Upon retirement, he joined FFOA and became its President from 1996 to 2000 and later was

designated Honorary President. At a meeting of FAFICS (Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants) in Vienna, I learned more about his commitments to helping those around him and his willingness to share his time generously with friends, as well as the elegant and graceful way that he lived his life. After the FAFICS meeting, we became lifelong friends.

I am sure we will always remember André as a pillar of our organization and one of its most committed supporters, as well as one of our best friends.

Adieu André “sit tibi terra levis”
Sabatino Salvi (FFOA)

Taieb Essayem

19 July 2015

We regret to inform our members of the passing of Taieb Essayem in Tunis, Tunisia on 19 July 2015.

Taieb joined WFP in 1972 as an Assistant Project Officer in Egypt and served the Programme for 25 years in Yemen, Syria, Sudan and India. He also served as Chief of Bilateral Services in WFP's Resources Division in Rome, and WFP Representative and Country Director in Lebanon and Pakistan. His last post before retiring in 1997 was Deputy of Human Resources at WFP Headquarters. He then consulted for WFP for another seven years.

Colleagues described Taieb as a gentleman and a kind-hearted leader with a positive outlook even during difficult times. His son paid tribute by noting that Taieb "... dedicated his entire life to being a social activist and ambassador for the poor and needy."

Taieb is survived by his wife, Leila, and three children.

Tor Myrvang

17 August 2015

Our members will be sad to learn of our friend's passing in Rome. Born in Cardiff, but Norwegian to the core, Tor was a true UN staff member. Multilingual and cosmopolitan, many found it hard to believe that Tor studied Theology, since he later became an accountant. Tor started his career in Norway and subsequently took a position with IFAD first as an internal auditor and completed his career as the Treasurer of IFAD.

Tor was able to use his dry sense of humour to positively confront the daily challenges of life. He was both amused and amusing, which made it fun to be with him. Yet his serious side was real but unobtrusive.

He married Adelina, a colleague from

IFAD, who subsequently transferred to WFP; their son, Lars, boarded at St Edward's School in Oxford, and has recently been working in the Middle East.

On retirement, he acquired a 12-hectare Sabine Farm outside Rome. He never missed an IFAD alumni event until the very end. He was Vice-Chairman of the World Pantheist Movement, where he was more Vergilian than Horatian in keeping with that tradition both religious and spiritual.

After battling cancer for many months, Tor passed away in Salvatore Mundi, aged 67. We shall all miss a dear friend.

With thanks to Clive Jenkins, Adelina and Lars Myrvang

About FFOA

Since 1971, FFOA works to advance the interests of pensioners from UN organisations based in Italy, regardless of where they spend their retirement. With a growing global membership of more than 2,300 pensioners from FAO, IFAD, WFP, ICROM, etc., from all staff categories, FFOA is based at FAO Headquarters in Rome.

Representation

FFOA officially represents retiree interests in formal relations with management of FAO, IFAD and WFP. We have a place at the table in all retiree-relevant discussions. FFOA is also active in the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants, which joins 53 associations like ours to represent pensioners at the UN system level.

Support

FFOA works to improve retirement benefits – particularly pensions and medical insurance – and to protect the interests of the membership as a whole. We also respond to individual requests from members for assistance, guidance or referral on issues associated with retirement and ageing in general (all services are provided by members on a volunteer basis). Members are informed on developments in areas of concern by our quarterly Newsbrief, a website and direct contact via mail (including e-mail).

Camaraderie

FFOA promotes contact and social and intellectual exchange among its members, through a web-based discussion forum, and a wide range of cultural and social activities. Colleagues and friends in the Rome area gather at FAO on the first Wednesday of each month for “Coffee Morning”- drop in if you’re in the neighborhood!

Helping those in need

Being a pensioner can be difficult and lonely. Volunteers from FFOA are available to support

members in distress over the phone, or to organize home visits. FFOA also offers small no-interest loans (maximum €1500) to meet short-term emergency requirements.

Service

Even after a career of service, UN pensioners remain interested in and committed to development issues, and continue to support the objectives of their former employers. FFOA attends key meetings and events at Rome headquarters, shares updates with members on key activities and achievements in the UN system, and provides direct support as well.

Keep up with FFOA and retiree colleagues

Stay informed on the latest developments on important issues for retirees via the FFOA website: www.ffoa-web.org. Register on the website to ensure you always receive the latest information, and stay in touch with distant friends and former colleagues.

Join FFOA!

Adding your voice helps make the association stronger and more impactful. Annual FFOA membership is €25, and a life membership is €375. There is a one-time registration fee of €10. Follow the link to download a membership application: www.ffoa-web.org/eligibility-for-membership, write to ffao@fao.org, or phone the FFOA offices or phone the FFOA offices at (+39) 06-5705 5623/5705 6016.