



7 December 2020
su20039cl – 0.3.1

OPEN LETTER

Mr António Campinos
President of the EPO
ISAR– Room 1081

Notification of a strike “Enough is Enough”

Dear Mr Campinos,

SUEPO’s “Call for Strike” of 8 November 2019 ([su19043cl](#)) resulted in a strike ballot organised by the Office on 28 November 2019. The ballot was organised without any Strike Conciliation meeting ahead to discuss and try to overcome the underlying grounds for strike. The outcome is a clear message passed by staff to management: **83%** of the participants support the call for strike.

Grounds for having to resort to the strike

The call for strike of 8 November 2019 pinpointed that none of the root causes of the many issues that trouble our organisation have been addressed satisfactorily and that genuine social dialogue is simply non-existing. There are many reasons for discontent. Therefore, the following claims were put forward:

1. Fair settlement for all SUEPO Officials/Staff representatives abusively sanctioned by the Battistelli administration;
2. Review by independent experts of the financial situation of the Office; no unnecessary measures based on the heavily biased Financial Study (also criticised by the EPO Pensioners Association), its ensuing phase II (CA/83/19) and management's comments (CA/84/19);
3. Using the “seventeen measures for staff and the EPO” published by SUEPO on 2 October 2019 ([su19040cp](#)) as guidance to solve the issues listed above and below;
4. Fair career progression for everyone, no managerial arbitrariness;
5. Respect for staff; decrease of work pressure and production demands;
6. Fair reporting, no artificial underrating of colleagues and threats of incompetence procedures;
7. People-oriented management, instead of management by fear.

As the Financial Measures and the underlying Financial Study were then still under discussion SUEPO refrained from calling immediate actions. However, SUEPO closely monitored and monitors the developments and will decide on any next steps with respect to industrial actions.

Towards March this year little to no progress for the above claims could be noted. In contrary in the discussions on the Financial Measures and the linked Salary Adjustment Procedure (SAP) it became more and more clear that the Office wants to cut Salaries and Pensions no matter of whatever economic development underlying the Financial Study would materialise. SUEPO prepared than an "Action Plan" ([su20009cp](#)), however, decided to postpone the plan due to the special circumstances with respect to the then upcoming corona pandemic.

On the positive side we noted in April this year the settlement of a former SUEPO official and Staff Representative, Mr Laurent Prunier, who had been abusively dismissed by the former Battistelli administration ([su20021cp](#)). However, this leaves still to settle the two disciplinary cases of former Staff's Appointees to the Appeals Committee of Aurélien Pétiaud and Michael Lund.

A next meeting President/SUEPO on 26 June 2020 ([su20040cp](#)), scheduled as late as 1 working day ahead of the June Council created a strong perception of an Alibi meeting to be able to inform the Council the social dialogue is working. On the main issue of the Financial Bundle and the linked Erosion of Salaries and Pensions the E&Y Analysis of the Financial Study was not considered and the claims of thousands of staff members for a fair review of the financial situation with the Call for Strike in November and the petition of early June on "to enter into genuine social dialogue on the salary adjustment procedure" ([su20029](#)) were bluntly disregarded.

The implementation of the new SAP provoked an industrial accident which materializes immediately. Indeed, the results for 2020 are such that instead of adjustment of about 3.8% in July 2020, EPO staff and pensioners get 0.5% in January 2021 (in NL and DE) and 0.36% instead of 2.7% (in AT). This is equivalent to a pay cut of about one step. The savings are well beyond all expectations and the EPO scores again far below all standards in International Organizations (the adjustment will be +4.2% in the Coordinates Organisations).

In the last meeting President/SUEPO of 18 November 2020 ([su20037cp](#)) again no progress could be observed. The SAP is kept as is and further proposals to alleviate this salary and pension erosion by the Staff Representation are not considered. The results demonstrate that all the promises made in the presidential Communiqué of 09-04-2020 are now broken: a reform "with the lowest intensity" and that there was "no desire to cut staff purchasing power or impose unnecessary savings". This will deepen further the lack of trust in EPO management and destroy the engagement of staff in his Strategic Plan SP2023.

Also on all other claims little to no tangible progress can be reported. EPO staff remains treated second class compared with other International or EU organisations in particular with the career and the salary adjustment. Even in litigation: appeals with a unanimous opinion in favour of SUEPO or staff are not straight forward implemented or applied to all staff which one would consider being a fair implementation.

Therefore, SUEPO decided to return to actions to underline the unrest amongst EPO staff. As a first action a warning strike of 1 day is called.

Calendar and EPO sites concerned

The Strike “Enough is Enough” – in particular dedicated to the claim of the need to reinstate a proper SAP - shall take place on 15 December 2020 at all sites of employment: Munich, The Hague, Berlin, Vienna.

Please be assured that SUEPO has always been prepared to enter a fair social dialogue and continues to be so. If social dialogue in the time before the strike day leads to a substantial progress on the grounds for strike, we are willing to recommend to Staff to terminate the strike action.

Genuine social dialogue should be our shared goal: working together we can arrive at agreements that foster social peace and prevent further litigation.

Yours sincerely,



Joachim Michels
Chairman of SUEPO Central

Copy: Mr Josef Kratochvíl; Chairman of the Administrative Council
Heads of Delegation of the Administrative Council