



United Nations

CONTINUING APPOINTMENTS

**FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS
STAGE I – ELIGIBILITY
REVIEW**

2021

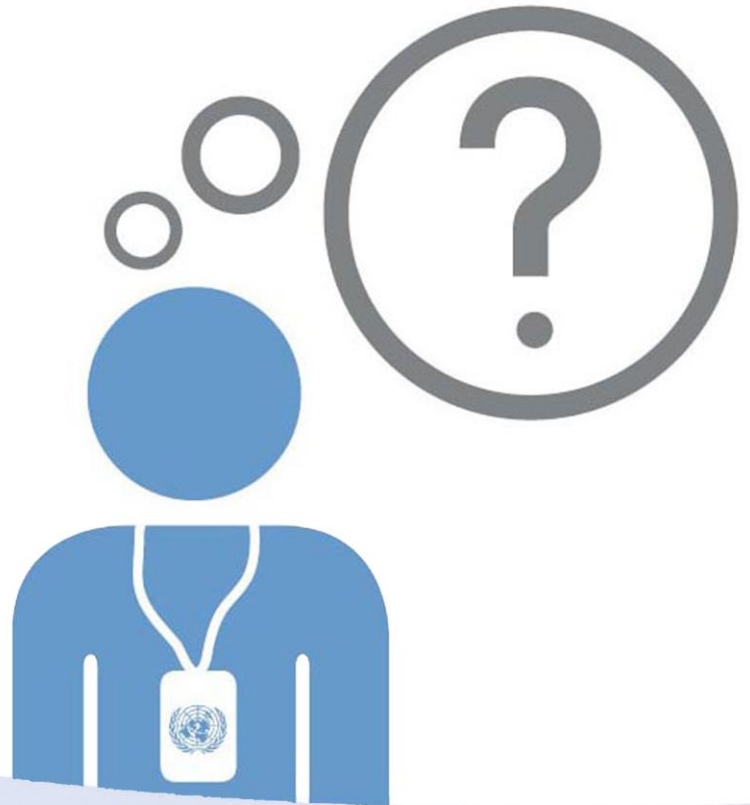


Table of contents

- A. Continuing Appointments - General**
- B. Inspira access and technical issues**
- C. Review process**
- D. Eligibility issues**
- E. Breaks-in-service in relation to eligibility**
- F. Performance rating in relation to eligibility**
- G. Secondment issues in relation to eligibility**
- H. Special Leave Without Pay**
- I. Disciplinary measures in relation to eligibility**

A. Continuing Appointments – General

1- What is a continuing appointment?

The contractual arrangements of the United Nations comprise three types of appointments: temporary, fixed-term and continuing. A continuing appointment is an open-ended appointment granted through established procedures in accordance with the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

Continuing appointments may be granted to eligible staff members on the basis of the continuing needs of the Organization and in accordance with the provisions of section VI of General Assembly resolution 65/247.

2- Who is eligible for a continuing appointment?

All staff in the Professional and higher categories, the Field Service category and the General Service and other related categories who meet the criteria below are eligible to be considered for a continuing appointment, except a) staff in any category currently serving in the ICTY and ICTR and b) locally recruited staff members in the General Service or related categories (including National Professional Officers) currently serving in peacekeeping and special political missions.

In order to be eligible for consideration for a continuing appointment, you must have met the following criteria, as at the eligibility date of a particular exercise:

- Appointed through a competitive process, including review by a UN Secretariat central review body;
- Completed five years of continuous service under a fixed-term appointment in the UN Secretariat and/ or in another organization of the UN common system governed by the UN Staff Regulations and Rules;
- A performance rating of “meets expectations” or equivalent in the four most recent performance appraisal reports;
- No disciplinary measures in the last five years;
- At least seven years of service remaining before reaching the mandatory age of retirement.

3- Is my appointment automatically converted when I complete all of the eligibility requirements?

No. There is no automatic right to a continuing appointment.

4- Will I be granted a continuing appointment if I meet all the criteria and I am found to be eligible?

The review of eligibility is Phase I of the process. If the number of continuing appointments to be awarded under a given post envelope is larger than the number of eligible staff members then those staff members recommended to be granted

continuing appointments will be assessed by OHR to ensure that they continue to meet the following criteria during the entire review period:

- (a) have performance rating of at least “Meets expectations” or equivalent;
- (b) are not international or locally recruited staff serving in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda or the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia;
- (c) are not subject to any disciplinary measure;
- (d) are not seconded or separated from the Organization. The final determination of granting the continuing appointment will be made by the ASG for Human Resources.

In the event the number of continuing appointments to be awarded under a given post envelope is smaller than the number of eligible staff members, then Phase II, the Point Allocation, will commence. Staff members and departments/offices will be advised of the calendar of this process in due course. As with Phase I, staff will be given the opportunity to provide comments and additional information through inspira on the calculation of their points. The departments/offices will proceed with the review.

You can find a detailed overview of the process of both Phase I and Phase II under [Review Process](#) on the [Continuing Appointment page in the HR Portal](#).

5- How many continuing appointments will be awarded during each exercise?

The maximum number of continuing appointments to be granted in each exercise is calculated prior to the launch of each exercise. The number of continuing appointments is determined based on the continuing needs of the Organization as proscribed by the General Assembly in GA Resolution 65/247 on Human Resources Management. The continuing needs of the Organization is calculated on the basis of established and temporary posts of a duration of more than five years as well as general temporary assistance in special political missions (except for national staff recruited for field missions or international or locally recruited staff recruited for service in the ICTR or ICTY). The level of the post envelopes shall be reviewed regularly by the General Assembly.

6- How will the review be conducted?



The review will be conducted through inspira. It is vital that staff member have a staff inspira account (with UN index number as the username).

Your Executive Officer or local Human Resources office will conduct the review of staff member information for purposes of eligibility to be considered for a continuing appointment and subsequent ranking of staff members if there are a limited number of continuing appointments available for a particular exercise [See calculation of the post envelope in the previous question].

7- What is the difference between a permanent appointment and continuing appointment?

Permanent appointments were linked to the concept of a career service, and thus subject to satisfactory performance. A staff member granted a permanent appointment had a reasonable expectation of continued employment until his/her mandatory age of separation.

Continuing appointments are open-ended appointments. However, unlike the permanent appointment, the Secretary-General may terminate the appointment without the consent of the staff member if, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, such action would be in the interest of the good administration of the Organization.

8- How long will the continuing appointment be?

A continuing appointment is an open-ended appointment. Staff members remain, subject to satisfactory performance, for continued employment.

A continuing appointment can be terminated for unsatisfactory performance as well as for other reasons including abolition of a post, reduction in force, health reasons, disciplinary reasons, and in the interest of the organization.

9- Will there be a certain number of seats available for each Department or Mission?

As this is a global exercise, individual departments, office, missions, etc., will not be allotted a given number of seats. The number of continuing appointments granted each year, if any, will depend on the level of the relevant post envelope. There will be two global post envelopes; one for the Professional and higher categories and Field

Service category; and one for the General Service and related categories, including but not limited to Trades and Crafts, Language Teachers and Security Service category.

Staff members who are eligible for consideration for the granting of a continuing appointment shall be allocated points and ranked, according to the number of points accumulated. The ranking is done on a Secretariat-wide basis (not by individual Office, Department or Mission) and undertaken only when the cumulative number of staff members with a permanent or continuing appointment is not equal to or exceeding the established level of the relevant post envelope. Staff members who are awarded the same number of points shall be ranked on the basis of length of continuous service. Continuing appointments shall be granted to the top-ranking staff members subject to the availability of appointments within the relevant post envelope.

B. Inspira access and technical issues

10- I have no access to the menus on continuing appointments in inspira. Who can help me?

To find the continuing appointment menu, **log on to inspira using your staff ID, navigate to Main Menu, select Self Service> Continuing appointments> Continuing appointment dashboard**. Here you will be able to review and provide comments on your data.

You will not be able to access the continuing appointments menu if you do not have a staff account (i.e. you do not log in with your UN index number). If, after logging in as a staff member you are still having technical problems, send an e-mail through the **'Contact us'** link on inspira.un.org outlining the issue.

11- I can log into inspira using a staff account but when I go to the menu for continuing appointments, it tells me that only some staff have been given access. Can I still request access to review my record even if I am not eligible?

No. Only staff pre-identified as potentially eligible have been given access to the continuing appointment menu in Inspira.

Staff members who believe they are eligible and have not received email notification of their eligibility for consideration should review the eligibility criteria and complete the self-checklist in Inspira. To complete the checklist, please **log into inspira using your staff ID and select Self Service > Continuing Appointments > the Continuing Appointment dashboard**

The checklist in Inspira must be completed prior to the deadline date listed in the advertised timeline of the exercise under **Current Exercise** on the Continuing Appointment page in the HR Portal.

12- I received an e-mail saying that I can start the continuing appointment eligibility review but I am lost as soon as I log into inspira. Where do I need to go?

It will be helpful to begin by understanding the continuing appointment process. The review stages are outlined under [Review Process](#) on the Continuing Appointment page in the HR Portal.

Next, refer to the [inspira Quick Guide](#) to help you navigate the different screens in inspira. You will also find a green information button on each screen that will guide you on what you need to do.

13- I did not get an email saying that I am potentially eligible and as a result, I cannot access the continuing appointments menus in inspira to conduct the review. However I meet the requirements to be considered. How can I request access?

If you believe you are eligible for consideration, please log in to Inspira using your staff account and complete the **self-checklist**. To access the checklist please **log into inspira with your staff ID and navigate to Main Menu > Self Service > Continuing Appointments > the Continuing Appointment dashboard**

Please note that the deadline for completion of the self-checklist and a request to be included in the list of potentially eligible staff members is close of business on the deadline date announced under [Current Exercise](#) on the Continuing Appointment page in the HR Portal. No requests can be considered beyond that date.

C. Review process

14- What is the timeline for the continuing appointment review?

The timeline and any updates can be found on the HR Portal Continuing Appointments page under [Current Exercise](#) on the Continuing Appointment page in the HR Portal.

15- Which Department will conduct my continuing appointment review?

You will be reviewed by the Department you are serving with at the time of the review. If you are on assignment at the date of the review, the parent Department will conduct the review in consultation with the new department.

16- If I need copies of my performance documents or any additional information/ clarification to complete my review in inspira, can I contact OHR?

As the review for continuing appointment will be conducted by the Executive Offices/ local HR offices, please contact the focal point from your respective executive office/ local HR office.

17- I was given access to inspira, so if I am eligible, why do I need to provide comments and information?

Only *potentially* eligible staff (i.e. who meet some, but not necessarily all, eligibility criteria) were given access to the continuing appointments menus in inspira. However, existing data has to be checked for accuracy and any additional data related to eligibility may not be automated and will require assessment by your executive office or local HR office. As review by staff is not mandatory, non-review on your part will not disqualify you for review by departments/offices. However, any comments/additional information you can provide on the data by the deadline date announced in the HR Portal, will enable your Department to have as much information as possible available to make a recommendation. See the timeline for the exercise under [Current Exercise](#) on the Continuing Appointment page in the HR Portal.

18- Will I have access to check in inspira the on-going status of my continuing appointment case after the staff member review deadline?

Once you submit your comments on your eligibility status, your status in inspira will change from INITIAL to SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW. This indicates that your Executive Office or local HR office will initiate the review of your eligibility. However, as this is a global competitive process, all staff members will be notified on the same date about the outcome of the eligibility review. Your status will continue to show as SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW until that date and no feedback will be provided while the review is under way. You can find the timeline for the exercise under [Current Exercise](#) on the Continuing Appointment page in the HR Portal.

19- Some of my personal information is incorrect. How can it be changed?

The data you see has been uploaded to inspira from different databases (IMIS, Nucleus, Umoja, etc). You will be able to comment, within the prescribed timeframe, on the data that is critical for eligibility or point allocation determination, and your Department/Office will take your comments into account in the review.

However, please note that any correction of wrong information will have to be done at the source (i.e. the system from which the data was uploaded). Contact your Executive or local HR office to request a correction. No new uploads of data into inspira will be done in the course of the review for continuing appointments.

D. Eligibility issues

20- One of the eligibility requirements for continuing contracts is “appointment through a competitive process”. What does that mean?

Appointment through a competitive process means that you have been selected for a position via established procedures including review by a central review body that was established by the Secretary-General or through a competitive examination (such as NCRE or G to P). Field central review bodies were established for peacekeeping operations and special political missions in 2009.

21- What are the Secretariat review bodies?

The Secretariat review bodies are: the Senior Review Group (under ST/SGB/2011/8), and the Central Review Boards, the Field Central Review Boards, the Central Review Committees, the Field Central Review Committees, the Central Review Panels and the Field Central Review Panels established under the framework of ST/SGB/2011/7.

22- Will service with Agencies, Funds and Programmes count towards eligibility and the points for continuing appointments?

In order to be eligible for consideration for the granting of a continuing appointment, staff members must have five years of continuous service on fixed-term appointment(s) under the United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations. Thus, periods of service on fixed-term appointments in another entity governed by the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules prior to joining the United Nations Secretariat shall be counted towards the qualifying service provided the service has been continuous.

Service in organizations not governed by the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules will not count towards the eligibility criteria.

Once considered eligible for the granting of a continuing appointment, points will be allocated based on established criteria regardless of whether the staff member's previous service was with the UN Secretariat or with Agencies, Funds and Programmes, provided the service has been continuous.

For example, a staff member employed by UNICEF for 3 years in Khartoum, by FAO for 3 years in Kabul, and by the UN Secretariat for 6 years in New York would be considered eligible for a continuing appointment based on the 6 years of continuous service with the UN Secretariat. FAO is not governed by the United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations, nonetheless points will be allocated for the staff member's service in Khartoum and Kabul provided such service was continuous.

23- In terms of eligibility for a continuing appointment, is there any difference between a national staff working for a field mission and a

national staff working for an Agency, Fund or Programme in the same duty station?

Agencies, Funds and Programmes must decide on their own modalities for the granting of continuing appointments and for those that are not governed by the UN Staff Rules and Regulations there may be differences in terms of eligibility.

Regarding national staff in field missions not being eligible for continuing appointments, the General Assembly decided this based on Member States' view that individual field missions are temporary and have finite mandates. Their view was that granting of continuing appointments to this group of staff would be inconsistent with the purpose of this contractual arrangement.

24- Why are the staff in the tribunals and national staff (National Professional Officers and staff in the General Service and related categories) in field missions not eligible for continuing appointment?

Given the fact that the tribunals are downsizing and completing their mandates and that Member States view individual field missions as temporary and with finite mandates, Member States concluded that the staff in the tribunals and national staff (National Professional Officers and staff in the General Service and related categories) in field missions are consequently employed only for a fixed period of time. Based on this, Member States were of the view that granting of continuing appointments to this group of staff would be inconsistent with the purpose of this contractual arrangement.

25- What is the rationale for having an age limitation for eligibility towards the continuing appointment?

The condition of seven years of service remaining is a requirement imposed by the General Assembly.

In resolution 65/247 of 24 December 2010, the General Assembly specifically decided that in order to be eligible for consideration for the granting of a continuing appointment, staff members must "have at least 7 years of service remaining before reaching the mandatory age of separation".

The General Assembly based this decision on one of the eligibility criteria which was in place for consideration for a permanent appointment, namely to be under the age of 53 on the date when the staff member has completed or completes the five years of qualifying service. In order to ensure equality in treatment for all the staff members irrespective of their individual mandatory age of separation which varies depending on their date of entry in the Organization, the General Assembly decided to formulate this criterion differently and refer to the number of years of service remaining rather than the age of the staff members.

26- Will I be eligible for the continuing appointment now that I will have 7 years remaining from the eligibility date until I turn 65?

Yes. The new mandatory age of separation was effective 1 January 2018, thus, the new mandatory age of separation of 65 will apply to all staff members being considered for a continuing appointment when determining whether or not a staff member is within seven years of retirement.

27- Does time spent working on a temporary assignment count towards the five years of continuous service required to be eligible for a continuing appointment?

The required five years of continuous service must have been completed without any break in service.

Time spent working under a temporary appointment does not count towards the five years of continuous service given that temporary appointments cannot be converted to fixed-term appointments and staff members separate from the organization upon expiration of the temporary appointment.

Assignment of a staff member who holds a fixed-term appointment to a temporary job does not affect his/her continuity of service. Service is considered continuous until the expiration of their fixed-term appointment. If a staff member is separated following the expiration of their fixed-term appointment and then is reemployed on a temporary appointment, the service shall not be considered as continuous between the prior and new appointment.

It must be noted that the period of the temporary assignment for any staff member must not exceed the expiry date of their fixed-term appointment.

E. Breaks-in-service in relation to eligibility

28- I was “regularized” prior to the continuing appointment eligibility date after having been selected for a position following review by a Secretariat review body. Prior to being regularized, I served for many years on 11-month fixed-term appointments and was required to take a 3-day break in service in between appointments. Is my service under the 11-month fixed-term appointments counted towards the five years of qualifying service needed to be eligible for consideration of a continuing appointment?

Generally, continuity of service shall be considered broken when the staff member has been separated and paid on account of termination indemnity, repatriation grant or commutation of accrued annual leave.

Exceptionally, in order to implement General Assembly resolution 65/247 and to take into account the transition to the new contractual arrangements, for staff formerly appointed under the 100 series of staff rules, service will be considered as continuous in cases where a separation from service occurred before 1 July 2009 and involved an interruption in employment with the United Nations Secretariat for a period of 30 calendar days or less that was imposed by the Organization for administrative purposes only, regardless of whether or not the staff member was paid on account accrued annual leave balance or other separation entitlements. Such service would count towards the five years of service needed to qualify for a continuing appointment, unless the separation and reappointment occurred at their own initiative through their resignation or application to a position or duty station involving a separation on resignation or expiry of appointment and reappointment to another position.

29- I was serving on an 11-month fixed-term appointment as of 30 June 2009. Under the interim guidelines for the implementation of the contractual reform¹, I was given a one-year fixed-term appointment under the new staff rules with no break in service, which was renewed for another year. After serving two years, I was separated and required to take a break in service, following which I was subsequently reappointed under a fixed-term appointment after having been selected for a position subject to review by a Secretariat central review body. Does my prior service under fixed-term appointments count for the purpose of consideration for a continuing appointment?

Generally, continuity of service shall be considered broken when the staff member has been separated and paid on account of termination indemnity, repatriation grant or commutation of accrued annual leave. Exceptionally, however, bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 65/247 and the transition to the new contractual arrangements, the service of staff who were transitioned to a one-year fixed-term appointment under the new staff rules in accordance with the interim guidelines will be considered as continuous for the purpose of consideration of a continuing appointment in cases where a separation from service occurred after 1 July 2009 and involved an interruption in employment with the United Nations of three working days or less that was imposed by the Organization *for administrative purposes*, regardless of whether the staff member was paid on account accrued annual leave or other separation benefits. Such service will be counted towards the five years of continuous service needed to be eligible for consideration of a continuing appointment unless the separation and reappointment occurred at their own initiative through their resignation or application to a position or duty station involving a separation on resignation or expiry of appointment and reappointment to another position.

¹ See "Interim Guidelines for the Implementation of Transitional Measures for the United Nations Contractual Reform for Currently Serving Staff Members, other than those serving in United Nations Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions, effective 1 July 2009.

30- What if I have a temporary appointment in between two fixed-term appointments, would the period on temporary appointment be treated as continuous?

The period of service on a temporary appointment would constitute a break in the continuity of service under a fixed-term appointment, therefore your overall period of service would not be considered continuous. The period of service under a temporary appointment would not count towards the five-years of qualifying service. The count of qualifying years of service would start from the date of your second fixed-term appointment, after the period on temporary appointment.

F. Performance ratings in relation to eligibility

31- One of the conditions for eligibility for continuing appointments is that staff members must have a performance rating of at least “Meets expectations” or equivalent in the four most recent and completed performance appraisal reports of one year or more...” (2.1(b) of ST/SGB/2011/9 and 2.21 of ST/AI/2012/3). What is understood by the “four most recent and completed performance reports of one year of more”?

As an exception to sections 2.1 (b) of ST/SGB/2011/9 and 2.21 of ST/AI/2012/3, staff members who have had a performance rating of at least “meets expectations” or its equivalent in all performance reports, *including those of a duration of less than one year*, but covering the past four years, can be eligible for consideration for a continuing appointment. However, no points would be allocated for any performance appraisal report covering a period of less than one year.

Inspira will display the performance reports on file for 10 years from date of eligibility but staff members can always provide reports that the system does not display for consideration.

32- Can a missing performance appraisal be substituted by a note from the supervisor indicating that performance has been satisfactory for the continuing appointments review?

Performance appraisals cannot be substituted by a note written by a supervisor. A duly completed performance evaluation is required.

33- One of my performance appraisals completed prior to the eligibility date is currently under rebuttal. Will this appraisal be used in the review for a continuing appointment?

In case a completed performance appraisal is under rebuttal, and should the rebuttal process result in a change in the rating of an appraisal after the eligibility date but prior

to the completion of the ongoing annual review process, the revised rating shall be the one taken into account in the current review exercise.

34- If a staff member has stayed in one duty station for 2 years or more and had two e-PAS cycles, will he/ she be given points for two entries?

Yes, a staff member may receive points for each e-PAS cycle of at least 1 year period when the performance rating received is either "Exceeds expectations" (which refers to the highest rating under the new Performance Management and Development system) or "Consistently exceeds expectations" (the highest rating under the previous Performance Management system) or "Frequently exceeds expectations" (the second highest rating under the previous Performance Management system).

G. Secondment issues in relation to eligibility

35- I just returned from secondment. Although at the eligibility date I was on secondment, I returned to the Secretariat during the period of consideration. Would I be considered for the continuing appointment?

In accordance with section 2.7 of ST/AI/2012/3, a staff member who is, at the eligibility date or at any point during the period of consideration, seconded from the Secretariat to another United Nations entity will be considered at the next review following his or her return to active service in the Secretariat. The "period of consideration" refers to the period of time between the eligibility date and the date of granting of the continuing appointment. Accordingly, a staff member on secondment to another organization at the eligibility date and who returned to the Secretariat during the period of consideration would be considered in the next review, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria.

36- I am a staff member on a fixed-term appointment who meets all the eligibility requirements. I have always been on secondment from my government. Am I eligible for consideration for a continuing appointment?

Provided all other eligibility criteria are met, including appointment following a review by a Secretariat central review body, staff members on secondment from their national government are eligible for consideration of a continuing appointment. It will normally be granted only once the secondment status ceases.

37- I have been serving in the UN Common System continuously since January 2000. I joined the Secretariat on secondment from UNICEF in September 2013 and subsequently transferred to the Secretariat in September 2015. Considering that I have been serving with the UN

Secretariat since September 2013, would I be eligible for consideration for the granting of the continuing appointment?

As of the eligibility date i.e. 1 July 2015, your parent Organization was UNICEF as you were on secondment status with the Secretariat. Although during the seconded period you were subject to the Staff Regulations and Rules of the UN Secretariat, you retained your rights of employment with UNICEF. It was only upon your transfer in September 2015 that you became a UN Secretariat staff member and ceased to have any contractual relationship with UNICEF. Accordingly, you are not eligible to the 2015 review, but may be eligible for consideration in a future review, provided all other criteria are met.

H. Special Leave Without Pay

38- I am currently on special leave without pay and I meet all the eligibility criteria as of the eligibility cut-off date. Can I get a continuing appointment?

Staff members who avail of special leave without pay during the review process will not be disqualified on the basis of the SLWOP if they meet all the eligibility criteria and are deemed eligible by their executive office or local HR office. However, during the final review, if the staff member continues to meet the criteria listed under section 2.1 (b), (e) and (f) of ST/SGB/2011/9 and a decision is made to grant a continuing appointment to a staff member who is on SLWOP, the continuing appointment will be granted only upon return to active service.

I. Disciplinary measures in relation to eligibility

39- Regarding the base criteria for eligibility for a continuing appointment, what is considered a disciplinary measure?

Disciplinary measures can take one or more of the following forms:

- (a) Written censure;
- (b) Loss of one or more steps in grade;
- (c) Deferment, for a specified period, of eligibility for salary increment;
- (d) Suspension without pay for a specified period;
- (e) Fine;
- (f) Deferment, for a specified period, of eligibility for consideration for promotion;
- (g) Demotion, with deferment, for a specified period, of eligibility for consideration for promotion;
- (h) Separation from service, with notice or compensation in lieu of notice,

- and with or without termination indemnity;
(i) Dismissal.

Any one of these constitute a disciplinary measure and means that the staff member does not meet the base eligibility criteria for continuing appointments.

40- Is a “Letter of Reprimand” from a supervisor considered as a disciplinary measure?

No. This is an administrative measure and such measures, as listed in staff rule 10.2 (b), are not equivalent to the disciplinary measures which render staff members ineligible.

41- As of the eligibility date, I had a disciplinary measure imposed on me, but I am appealing the decision through the UN Dispute Tribunal. Will I be eligible for consideration of a continuing appointment?

In accordance with section 2.1 (f) of ST/SGB/2011/9, a staff member must not have been subject to any disciplinary measure during the five years preceding the eligibility date. Therefore, if a staff member had a disciplinary measure imposed in the five years preceding the eligibility date, the staff member would not be eligible for consideration at that review, even if an appeal is in progress as of the eligibility date. Should the disciplinary measure be rescinded after the eligibility date, the staff member may be considered in the next review, provided all other criteria are met.