



Zentraler Vorstand . Central Executive Committee . Bureau Central

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Report on the trilateral meeting with the President and the Administrative Council

Dear colleagues,

In a [joint statement](#)¹ issued soon after the March Council meeting, Mr Battistelli and Mr Kongstad called for a renewed social dialogue and invited Union officials to a "kick-off meeting" on 22 April 2015.

Participants to the meeting were, other than Mr Battistelli and Mr Kongstad: Mr Bendzsel (HU, Vice-Chair of the Council) and Mr Ernst (DE, Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee). Mr Topic (VP4), Mr Lutz (VP5), Mr Bergot (PD4.3) and Ms Wieland (PD5.3) were also present. The meeting was chaired by Mr Kongstad. On SUEPO's side, the central and four local SUEPO Chairpersons were present.

The atmosphere was such that some frank exchanges about the situation in the Office could take place. The AC representatives seemed to understand the Staff perspective on the larger nature of the problem, and acknowledged in substance the need to "re-launch social dialog to overcome disputes that have arisen over the inner reform agenda of the EPO". Nevertheless it was disappointing that the **only** initiative to "restoring social peace" envisioned by the Council at this point is the formal recognition of the Unions. It remained unclear what Union recognition "*within the EPO's legal framework*" could actually mean.

We took the opportunity to remind the participants that union recognition means little if it is not accompanied by meaningful involvement in practical matters that affect staff, like the recent reforms on the Career & Performance, Sick leave & Incapacity, and the reforms that still remain to be designed in the framework of the HR roadmap.

What puzzles us is this: The Office declared that it would not implement the [judgment](#)² of the Dutch Court of Appeal; it then filed a request for Cassation with the Supreme Court. Now it wants to recognize the unions. Would it not have been easier simply to implement the judgment?

Be that as it may, SUEPO recognises that restoring a social dialogue is a necessary first step to addressing any other issues. We therefore agreed that we would participate in a working group that will look into the matter. A further meeting in a similar setting is foreseen for the end of May.

SUEPO Central

¹ <http://www.epo.org/news-issues/news/2015/20150326.html>

² <http://www.suepo.org/public/su15088cpe.pdf>