

**16th GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UN MUSIC CLUB
PALAIS DES NATIONS ROOM VII
27 SEPTEMBER 2023
6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

Minutes and report on activities

1. **Opening of the meeting** by the President of the UN Music Club, quorum analysis and adoption of the agenda:

Opening: The President, Mr. Michael Wiener, opened and chaired the 16th general assembly of the UN Music Club.

Quorum: With 20 members present (see the scanned attendance record sheet), the required quorum was met, that is 1/3 of the total membership of 51 members.

Adoption of the Agenda: The draft Agenda, that had been circulated to members on 13 September 2023, was adopted without changes.

2. **Designation of the Chairperson and Secretary of the meeting:**

Mr. Michael Wiener assumed the Chair of the meeting and Ms. Stefania Ghittino acted as Secretary of the meeting.

3. **Adoption of the Minutes** of the previous (15th) General Assembly:

The assembly accepted the proposed draft minutes of the 15th General Assembly without changes. A member noted that the minutes could not be found on the new website of the UN Music Club, however, it was clarified that they are available online at <https://unmusicclub.org/un/about-the-club/general-assembly/>

4. **Report on activities** of the Committee and activities of the sections/groups (President, Section Coordinators):

The Committee noted that the General Assembly had been postponed for three years, also in view of restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, but it was good to be back on track with the present assembly. The President reported about the latest contacts with the Staff Union about the future replacement of the present rehearsal room in E-51. The UNOG team on the Strategic Heritage Plan had proposed a new space in the mezzanine underneath the Visitor's Service, Hall 39, in building E. UNOG Administration informed the Staff Union that this space was not appropriate since it is an open space and the mezzanine would need some works to be entirely closed which would entail an important cost. Another place for the UN Music Club has to be found by UNOG Administration and the Staff Union. The Committee has tried to actively find a solution in the Palais des Nations, but was also looking for opportunities outside

the Palais des Nations. A good option near Place des Nations might be Villa Rigot, which is owned by the City of Geneva. There would be a rehearsal room in the basement, and a performing area in the entrance hall. No badge would be needed and it would be easy to access. However, a serious concern would be the security of the villa, if somebody breaks into the basement.

The Choir Section stressed that they would still like a rehearsal room in the Palais des Nations and welcomed any proposals. The Choir Section referred to its rehearsals in the main WHO building, where a temporary badge is given to their members, but only for three months. In this case for people just coming for a few days to try, the badge issue was therefore complicated.

The President of the UN Music Club noted that he had a video call on 12 September 2023 with the Executive Secretary of UNOG Staff Union, in which he explained the requirements of the UN Music Club in terms of space for rehearsing and storing our instruments in Palais des Nations. The Staff Union replied that it was in contact with UNOG Administration and they were trying to find a room for the UN Music Club in Palais des Nations.

The Section Coordinators subsequently reported on the activities of their respective sections, as indicated in the annex: UN Choir and Camerata UNa (Ms. Nadiya Dzyubynska), Rock band (Ms. Karin Kaminker), Jazz group (Mr. Patrice Piguet), and Classical Music (Mr. Michael Wiener).

5. Adoption of the financial report of the Treasurer:

- *Auditors of the financial report (Article 4.1.e of Statute);*
- *Increasing the number of music club members and supporting the UN Staff Union in order for the UN Music Club to become eligible for a subsidy from the UN Staff Union.*

The Treasurer, Mr. Massimiliano La Marca, presented his financial report, including on the cash flows for the period from 1 January 2019 to 31 July 2023.

The Auditors, Ms. Savina Bojic and Mr. Igor Paunovic, recommended the approval of the 2019-2020-2021-2022 accounts. The General Assembly then approved the reports of the Committee, Treasurer and Auditors without any reservations.

As auditors for 2024, the General Assembly appointed Mr. Igor Paunovic and Ms. Anastasia Leskova.

The Committee again suggested to increase the number of UN Music Club members who are paying dues to UNOG Staff Union, as once the threshold of 15 members in both categories is reached, the UN Music Club becomes eligible for requesting a subsidy from the UNOG Staff Union. Therefore, it was decided to continue waiving Club fees from those who are already paying dues to the UNOG Staff Union (see also minutes of the 13th and 14th General Assembly). Furthermore, the issue of the fees of UN Choir members, which are currently not reflected in the financial report of the UN Music Club account, will be discussed at the Committee level to find a technical solution.

6. **Elections of the members of the Committee: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Section Coordinators (Classical, Choir, Jazz, Rock):**

The General Assembly discharged the members of the previous Committee (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Section Coordinators) and unanimously re-elected them for two years, as following:

<u>President:</u>	Mr. Michael Wiener.
<u>Vice-President:</u>	Ms. Simonetta Zarrilli.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Mr. Massimiliano La Marca.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Ms. Stefania Ghittino.
<u>Section leaders:</u>	Classical Group: Mr. Michael Wiener; UN Choir: Ms. Nadiya Dzyubynska; Jazz group: Mr. Patrice Piguet; UN Rock Band: Ms. Karin Kaminker.

Each member of the new Committee accepted the re-election and expressed their gratitude.

7. **Report on equipment (inventory, losses, donations of instruments, damaged equipment, needs for replacement and new items):**

In the absence of Mr. Nathaniel Mamangun, the report on inventory was presented by Mr. Patrice Piguet and it will be posted on the website (password protected). A call for volunteers was launched in this context. Mr. Piguet reported that some damaged equipment needed replacement, including two speakers. The electronic piano bought 20 years ago had already been replaced by a new Yamaha electric piano, which is light and has a good digital sound.

It was suggested that the Committee should look into buying new equipment, which was lighter, battery powered, simple to install/setup, and monitored both by Bluetooth connection and cables. All equipment should be duly labeled.

The Rock group lacks a base amplifier, which should be bought and is not expensive (approx. 200 CHF). All replacement and new items should be bought in 2023 Q4 or in the beginning of 2024.

8. **Future activities** (events, equipment):

On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the UN Music Club, the idea was launched again to have a year-end party/concert. A brainstorming and steering group for the 20th Anniversary celebrations was created, composed of Mr. Sunil Chacko, Mr. Paolo Rosa, Ms. Nadiya Dzyubynska, Mr. Igor Paunovic, Ms. Mimi Ameti, Ms. Stefania Ghittino and Mr. Michael Wiener.

9. **Update on Strategic Heritage Plan (SHP):**

The future move of Building E (including vacating the current rehearsal in room E-51), is presently scheduled for the year 2024, most likely in July 2024. Please also see above Point 4 of the present Minutes.

10. Any other business:

The Committee introduced a suggested modification to article 2, paragraph 1, of the Statutes of the UN Music Club, to which the following sentence would be added: "Exceptionally, any person who has made a significant musical contribution as a sympathizing member, and who shares the Organization's ideals, may be accepted as an active member."

Thus the text of article 2, paragraph 1, would read in the French version as follows (addition highlighted in red):

« Article 2 : Membres et ressources

1. Peut devenir membre du Club de musique des Nations Unies, à Genève, tout fonctionnaire ou ancien fonctionnaire des Nations Unies et tout membre des missions permanentes, à Genève, ainsi que les membres de leur famille. A titre exceptionnel, toute personne ayant fait preuve d'un apport musical important en tant que membre sympathisant et qui partage les idéaux de l'Organisation peut être acceptée comme membre actif. »

The General Assembly discussed and accepted the suggested addition to article 2, paragraph 1 of the Statutes.

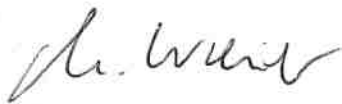
Any potential increase of the members' fee would be discussed at the Committee level and then decided during the next General Assembly, in line with Article 4, paragraph 1 (g) of the Statutes.

With regard to the website, a person in charge should be nominated to keep it updated, include announcements for future events and technical maintenance. The General Assembly thanks Mr. Patrice Piguët for his excellent work and his taking care of the change from .com to .org. Mr. Cornelissen Thijs volunteered to take over the website task, with many thanks from the General Assembly.

A suggestion was made to organize an Open Day, outside the Palais des Nations, for example during the spring 2024 opening of the UN beach Club. A list should be established with a contact person in each permanent mission or organization.

11. Signed by:

President
Mr. Michael Wiener



Vice-President
Ms. Simonetta Zarrilli



Secretary
Ms. Stefania Ghittino



Treasurer
Mr. Massimiliano La Marca



Annex: Activities of the Sections of the UN Music Club

UN Choir in Geneva

Performances:

- Saturday 9 November 2019: Remembrance choir concert to commemorate 75th anniversary of D-day landing in Normandie (Rolle, Rosey concert hall)
- Wednesday 11 December 2019: Christmas concert, Palais des Nations
- Thursday 19 December 2019: Christmas concert, Villa Dutoit
- Wednesday 15 January 2020: Haïti - commemoration of 10th anniversary of earthquake, Palais des Nations
- Sunday 27 January 2020: Dare with Andrea, concert in St. Paul Church, Versonnex
- Wednesday 23 December 2020: Online Christmas concert
- Wednesday 15 December 2021: Christmas concert in Coppet with GAOS
- 4th June 2022: performance at the UN Beach
- Thursday 16 June 2022: Villa Dutoit
- Friday 23 September 2022: La Nuit est belle! At Sauverny
- Sunday 2 October 2022: Dare with Andrea
- Thursday 27 October 2022: Centre international de conferences – performance at the closing ceremony of the Global Meeting with Human Rights Representatives.
- 15 November 2022: Dare with Andrea to support an orphanage in Cameroon, Chene-Bourg. Salle paroisse at St. Francois church.
- 27 November 2022 – Advent performance in Auditoire Calvin
- Wednesday 7 December 2022: Christmas concert lunchtime Palais des Nations
- Wednesday 14 December 2022: Christmas concert at World Council of Churches
- Saturday 1 April 2023: concert in Coppet with Chœur du Léman
- Wednesday 5 April 2023: Villa Dutoit
- Wednesday 31 May 2023: Peacekeepers
- Friday 18 August: Memorial concert - 20th anniversary of Iraqi bombing, when several UN staff members were killed.

Future projects:

- Sing for 50 years of Germany in the UN – Tuesday, 3 October, Château de Corsier
- Sing for Italian victims of WW2 -> Sunday 5 November, Petit Lancy
- Christmas concert – December

Report of the Vocal Studio (Camerata UNa)

June 2021 – online project

June 2023 – performance at Fête de la musique

30 September 2023 – performance at Veyrier, EMS Résidence Les Châtaigniers

UN Rock Band

The UN Rock Band is composed of two active bands: The “International Incidents” and the quintet “Age of Denial”.

The “International Incidents” group has played at the Fête de la Musique in Ferney-Voltaire. The “Age of Denial” group has played at the Pickwick Pub.

Both groups have played at the Plage de l'ONU.

The UN Rock Band suggests organizing a songwriter / composer / showcase in the future, together with other sections of the UN Music Club.

Classical Music group activities

The limitations to social contacts due to the coronavirus pandemic also restricted opportunities of playing music together. However, this did not prevent creativity, compositions and remote recordings with the help of information technology. In April 2020, the Classical Music group remotely recorded the COVID-19-inspired piece “Seasons in the Time of Corona”, composed by Michael Wiener and performed with soprano, flute, violin and piano.

In October 2021, they also performed a piece on “International Cooperation and Solidarity” during the UN Social Forum as well as showed a music video about the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. Another composition, entitled “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion”, was premièred in November 2021 in Geneva and also played during the webinar #Music4Faith4Rights to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination and Intolerance based on Religion or Belief.

In March 2022, the piece entitled “Violins, not violence!” was composed and performed in downtown Geneva by members of the Classical Music group. In September 2022, they also provided a live performance in Palais des Nations on the theme of “The contribution of development to the enjoyment of all human rights” at the regional seminar pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 47/11. In December 2022, they

also performed during the regional seminar at the University for Peace in Costa Rica as well as at a Human Rights Day event in Collonges-sous-Salève in France.

In August 2023, on World Humanitarian Day, the classical group played several pieces, including "In memoriam collegarum", at the official ceremonies of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Palais Wilson and of the United Nations Office at Geneva in Palais des Nations, the latter together with the UN Choir.

Jazz group activities

In 2019, 2020 and 2021 very little activity was conducted. During the time where access to the Palais des Nations was unavailable, no rehearsals took place. However, the outdoor concerts at UN place continued (average about 12 per year).

In 2022-2023 (June to June):

The group had 15 members by the time of the General Assembly. Potentially two members qualify as paying their contribution to UNOG Staff Union.

Jazz groups ran about 20 rehearsals and played about 20 events, notably at:

- the UN Bazar
- Director General's Christmas reception
- Garden Party for the Working Group on Addressing *Racism at the Workplace* organized by Ms. Prisca Chaoui of the Staff Union in cooperation with the Department
- Regular Summer evenings apéritifs at the UN Port (UN Beach) during summer
- Some members played in cooperation with the Geneva based AGMJ – it is planned to develop these exchanges/contacts even further.

The level of activity is recuperating very slowly from the COVID period and the many changes further to moving away of several key players in the groups, so hopefully the number of performances especially in cooperation with Geneva-based entities will be recuperated eventually.

The main thrust will be put on finding new members for the following instruments: Bass, Drums, Piano, to make it possible to dedicate one rhythm section as main cooperation with a singer. Presently there are four singers registered.

