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To: Members of the Committee on Executive
Board Administrative Matters

From: The Committee Secretary

Subject: Grading of Secretarial and Clerical Assistants -
Staff Employment Rights

The attached paper on employment rights for Secretarial and Clerical Assistants has been prepared in light of the discussion at the meeting of the Committee on Executive Board Administrative Matters held on June 24, 1986 and is being circulated at the request of the Chairman. It will be added to the agenda for the meeting of the Committee scheduled for Tuesday, July 1, 1986 at 10:00 a.m. in the Committee Room (Room 12-120).

Att: (1)

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Members of the Executive Board



Staff Employment Rights for Secretarial
and Clerical Assistants

Prepared by the Administration Department

June 30, 1986

The topic of employment rights for Secretarial and Clerical Assistants, following their appointment in Executive Directors' offices, was discussed at some length during the meeting of the Executive Board Committee on Administrative Matters on June 24, 1986. The Committee had before it proposals contained in EB/CAM/86/29, June 10, 1986, pages 8-11. The staff was asked to prepare an additional paper outlining alternative arrangements for employment of Secretarial and Clerical Assistants following terms in Executive Directors' offices. Of primary interest, was the concern expressed by a number of Executive Directors that any new conditions developed should in no way inhibit the movement of Fund secretarial staff to serve as Secretarial Assistants to Executive Directors. This paper first summarizes the current policy as contained in the Handbook on Executive Board Administrative Matters, Part III-B. A description of alternative arrangements then follows, specifically: (1) the proposal introduced by Mr. Masse; (2) the staff proposal which combines features of Mr. Masse's suggestions with the basic features of the original staff proposal. Finally, a brief description of improved mechanisms to find appropriately graded positions on the staff is provided in connection with the staff proposal.

1. Current Situation

The current provisions for promotion and subsequent employment of Secretarial and Clerical Assistants on the Fund staff are specified in Part III-B of the Handbook on Executive Board Administrative Matters. The conditions outlined apply to Secretarial and Clerical Assistants with six years or more of continuous service in an Executive Director's office. Those recruited from outside the Fund and who have less than six years of Fund service have no guarantee of staff employment. Those recruited from the staff with less than six years of service in an Executive Director's office have the guarantee of re-employment but at their original salary grade. Following six years of continuous service in an Executive Director's office, a "first" Secretarial Assistant is guaranteed employment on the Fund staff at Range E (whether at Range E or Range F upon transfer from the Executive Director's office). The "second" Secretarial Assistant is guaranteed employment at Range D (whether Range D or Range E in the Executive Director's office). In neither case is the actual salary achieved in an Executive

Director's office grandfathered. That is, a Secretarial Assistant employed on the staff under existing provisions would experience a reduction in salary upon transfer to the staff if her current salary in the Executive Director's office was higher than the new range ceiling to which assigned. It should be noted that the potential of immediate reduction in salary upon being "downgraded," which is incorporated in the current policy, is harsher treatment than that provided for downgraded staff in connection with the job grading exercise. 1/

2. Mr. Masse's Proposal

The formula put forward by Mr. Masse and discussed by Executive Directors at the meeting of the Executive Board Committee on Administrative Matters on June 24, 1986 contained two elements. First, it would provide the same grandfathering arrangements as apply to staff in connection with the implementation of the new job grading system to all current and future Secretarial and Clerical Assistants with six or more years of continuous service. This would mean that, following termination of appointment in an Executive Director's office, Secretarial and Clerical Assistants with a minimum of six years of of continuous service in an Executive Director's office would retain their current grade for two years before reverting to the new grade associated with the staff position. In addition, in those cases where a former Secretarial Assistant was downgraded after the two-year grandfathering period, there would be no reduction in salary because it would remain frozen at the time of downgrading. Finally, the proposal introduced by Mr. Masse would allow Secretarial Assistants, who transfer and remain in the Support Group Secretarial Staff (SGSS) at the end of the two-year grandfathering period, to be classified in Grade A7 if their grade in an Executive Director's office had been at level A7 or higher.

1/ The "grandfathering" policy approved in connection with implementation of the job grading exercise allows downgraded staff members to remain at their current grade and salary for two years during which time they are eligible for normal general and merit salary increases. At the end of the two-year period, they are graded at their new, lower grade. If their salary is above the maximum salary of the new grade to which they are assigned, their salary will be frozen but they will be eligible for merit increases within the guidelines governing the merit exercise, but not to exceed the amount of general salary increase.

3. Recommendations of the Staff

The current system governing staff employment rights for Secretarial and Clerical Assistants has three major drawbacks. First, the grandfathering provisions are less favorable than those provided to downgraded staff at the time of the implementation of the job grading exercise. Second, neither the current system nor Mr. Masse's proposal provides any incentive for former Secretarial Assistants at Grades A7-A10 who transfer to the SGSS to move to responsible positions on the staff appropriately graded at level A7. Third, the current system and Mr. Masse's proposal would give more favorable terms of grandfathering to former Secretarial Assistants than to other secretarial staff transferring to the SGSS. The following proposal attempts to meet these drawbacks while ensuring that the terms and conditions of "re-employment" are sufficient to avoid any potential recruitment problems for Executive Directors in the future. It also preserves the integrity of the job grading results which, on the basis of job content, clearly point to Grades A5 and A6 as the highest appropriate grades for the SGSS, and maintains equity of salary treatment among staff assigned to the SGSS.

Accordingly, it is proposed that Secretarial Assistants at Grade A7 or higher who have six years or more of continuous service in Executive Directors' offices be guaranteed employment on the staff with a two-year grandfathering provision equal to that provided staff who have been downgraded through the job grading exercise. Following two years of grandfathering on the staff, and having passed the Fund's proficiency tests in shorthand and typing, those individuals who have not been reassigned in appropriately graded positions, or who have refused such an assignment, would revert to Grade A5 in the SGSS. However, those individuals whose grade had been A6 or higher for a period of five years or more prior to transfer to the staff from an Executive Director's office, would be placed at Grade A6. Unlike current provisions where former Secretarial and Clerical Assistants' salaries may be reduced if they exceed the new grade maximum, this policy provides that in no case would the salary of a Secretarial or Clerical Assistant with six years or more of continuous service in an Executive Director's office be reduced when transferred to the staff. If their salaries were in excess of the new grade ceiling after the two-year grandfathering period, their salaries would be frozen, although they would continue to be eligible for merit increments within the applicable guidelines, and subject to a maximum not in excess of the general salary increase.

It is further proposed that current "first" Secretarial Assistants retain access to Grade A7 upon transfer to the staff following six years of continuous service in an Executive Director's office, as provided in their contracts, and the improved grandfathering arrangements be applied to all current Secretarial and Clerical Assistants. An alternative might be to provide current Secretarial and Clerical Assistants the choice of holding to the full terms and conditions of the current contract or opting for the new provisions; that is, access to Grade A6 as a maximum with the new grandfathering provisions.

The viability of these proposals is in part dependent upon the institution of a more vigorous and effective "outplacement" program for Secretarial and Clerical Assistants who return to the SGSS. Not only will the Fund ensure that positive measures are taken to provide training where necessary in order to pass the proficiency tests at the end of the two-year grandfathering period, but departments and Executive Directors' offices will be actively encouraged by the Recruitment Division to carefully consider such individuals for vacancies as they arise.