



Before: Duty Judge

Registry: Geneva

Registrar: René M. Vargas M.

SOPHOCLEOUS

v.

SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

**ORDER ON
MOTION FOR FURTHER
SUSPENSION OF PROCEEDINGS**

Counsel for Applicant:

George Irving

Counsel for Respondent:

Isavella Maria Vasilogeorgi, DAS/ALD/OHR, UN Secretariat

Introduction

1. The Applicant, a staff member of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, contests the decision to impose on him the disciplinary measure of demotion by one grade with deferment for three years of consideration for eligibility for promotion, in accordance with staff rule 10.2(a)(vii), as well as the administrative measure of requiring him to undertake a gender sensitivity training, in accordance with staff rule 10.2(b).
2. On 26 October 2023, the parties filed a joint motion for suspension of proceedings, pending informal settlement discussions, until 17 November 2023 and for the adjustment of any pending deadlines accordingly.
3. By Order No. 141 (GVA/2023) of 27 October 2023, the Tribunal suspended proceedings until 17 November 2023 pending ongoing settlement discussions between the parties.
4. On 16 November 2023, the parties filed a joint motion seeking a further suspension of the proceedings until 5 January 2024, and the resulting adjustment of any pleadings' deadlines.
5. By Order No. 159 (GVA/2023) of 17 November 2023, the Tribunal further suspended proceedings until 5 January 2024.
6. Upon the parties' joint requests, the proceedings were further suspended until 31 January 2024, and lastly until 29 February 2024.
7. On 28 February 2024, the Applicant filed a motion seeking a further suspension of the proceedings until 31 March 2024, and the resulting adjustment of any pleadings' deadline.

Consideration

8. In his motion, the Applicant informs the Tribunal that the Respondent has been consulted and has no objection to the current motion.

9. In support of his request, the Applicant informs the Tribunal that the settlement of the case has progressed, but a final agreement has not yet been reached. He submits that the parties require more time to continue to engage in informal discussions.

10. Recalling that amicable settlement of disputes is encouraged and is important, especially in circumstances where there is an ongoing employment relationship, the Tribunal is inclined to continue supporting the parties' efforts to reach an amicable settlement of their dispute.

11. Consequently, pursuant to art. 10 of its Statute, the Tribunal will grant the present motion.

12. However, noting that the proceedings have been suspended since 27 October 2023, the Tribunal urges the parties to engage in meaningful discussions to reach a concrete outcome.

Conclusion

13. In view of the foregoing, it is ORDERED THAT:

a. The proceedings before the Tribunal in Case No. UNDT/GVA/2023/032 be further suspended during informal settlement discussions until **Tuesday, 2 April 2024**;

b. If a settlement agreement is reached within this period, the parties shall inform the Tribunal accordingly without delay, and the Applicant shall confirm to the Tribunal, in writing, that his application is withdrawn; or

c. If no settlement agreement can be reached within the prescribed period, the Tribunal will resume proceedings in the matter, and the Respondent shall file his comments on the Applicant's rejoinder by **Tuesday, 16 April 2024**.

(Signed)

Judge Sun Xiangzhuang (Duty Judge)

Dated this 29th day of February 2024

Case No. UNDT/GVA/2023/032

Order No. 019 (GVA/2024)

Entered in the Register on this 29th day of February 2024

(Signed)

René M. Vargas M., Registrar, Geneva