

Confirmed MINUTES

FUTA Board of Representatives Meeting

Monday 16 July 2018 at 2.00 pm, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Attendance List

| No | Name | Affiliation and Designation |
|----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 01 | Prof. K.K.I U. Aruna Kumara | President, FUTA |
| 02 | Prof. Anura Uthumange | Vice President, FUTA |
| 03 | Mr. W.M.R. Laksiri | Treasurer, FUTA |
| 04 | Dr. Athulasiri Samarakoon | Acting Secretary, FUTA |
| 05 | Dr. Iresha Lakshman | Assistant Secretary, FUTA |
| 06 | Dr. Naleen Ganegoda | Assistant Secretary, FUTA |
| 07 | Dr. H.K. Salinda Premadasa | IT Coordinator, FUTA |
| 08 | Dr. C.B. Illangasinghe | Representative, FOMTA-UVPA |
| 09 | Dr. Nilantha Liyanage | President, RAFTA |
| 10 | Dr. S. Wanniarachchi | President, RUSTA |
| 11 | Dr. Nalaka Ranasinghe | Vice President, RUFTA |
| 12 | Dr. M.M. Mahusoon | President, TAEU |
| 13 | Dr. K.T.M.U. Hemapala | President, UMTA |
| 14 | Dr. Tharaka Gamachchige | Joint Secretary, UWUTA |
| 15 | Dr. K.G.P.V. Gunarathna | Treasurer, TUFMF |
| 16 | Dr. B.L. Galhena | Representative, TUFMF |
| 17 | Dr. U.E.S.Kumara | Representative, KUTA |
| 18 | Dr. G.S.N.Karunarathna | Secretary, EFTU |
| 19 | Dr. N.W. K. Balasooriya | Representative, UPSTA |
| 20 | Dr. G.A.N. Suranjith | Treasurer, UPSTA |
| 21 | Dr. Chandika Gamage | Secretary, PFMTA |
| 22 | Dr. Anil Pushpakumara | President, VFTU |
| 23 | Dr. Shyamantha Subasinghe | Representative, PAFTA |
| 24 | Dr. Dilini Hemachandra | Secretary, PUATA |
| 25 | Dr. Pahan Godakumbura | President, VISTA-SJP |
| 26 | Dr. Rajitha Gunaratne | Treasurer, UTA-SJP |

Preliminaries: Announcements and Excuses

This was the seventh regular BoR meeting after the election of the new FUTA office bearers, and the sixth meeting for 2018. The President welcomed the members to the meeting and requested Dr. Athulasiri Samarakoon (Assistant Secretary) to work as the Acting Secretary. The Acting Secretary announced the excuses received from the following members; Prof. Arjuna Parakrama (Secretary, FUTA), Dr. Barana Jayawardana (President, PUATA), Chaminda Abeysinghe (President, KUTA), Mr. K.P. Nishantha (President, OUTA), and Dr. R.Wimalasiri (Secretary, OUTA).

The following documents were circulated among members;

- (1) Agenda of the Meeting
- (2) Minutes of the BoR Meeting held on 23 April 2018

(3) Summary Report of National and Provincial School Admission

General: Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes were confirmed by the members present with the following amendment;

The decision in the underlined section of item No: 6.2018.3 was amended.

“4. It should be communicated to the authorities clearly that unless there is a satisfactory resolution provided to the school admission needs of members, FUTA will be forced to consider not taking part in the GCE AL evaluation process”.

Members agreed to amend the underlined section of the above decision as follows:

4. It should be communicated to the authorities clearly that unless there is a satisfactory resolution provided to the school admission needs of members, FUTA will not take part in the GCE AL evaluation process.

7.2018.1 Matters Arising out of the Minutes

There was a general agreement among the members that there is a reasonable increase in the salaries of academics with the decision to unfreeze allowances and increase basic salaries. Nevertheless, FUTA should continue to work on persisting anomalies in the salary structure and the future situation after the fifth and the last increase of salaries which was granted according to the agreement reached by FUTA with authorities following its prolonged struggle in 2012.

Prof. Arjuna Parakrama’s decision to resign as Secretary, FUTA was discussed once again. The following statement made by Secretary/FUTA under item No. 6.2018.7.3 (Resignation of FUTA Secretary) was found ‘not the decision made by the members’ and, hence, required to be referred back to the Secretary: **“He [Secretary] pointed out that his resignation will come into force in one month [i.e. after 8 June 2018], and that he would continue to work on all relevant FUTA activities until the...”**.

Regarding the issue of school admission, members commended the hard work done by Prof. Parakrama, Secretary/FUTA; yet, they proposed to take trade union actions if those appeals made by some members who were not satisfied with the type of schools allotted to their children.

Main Agenda Items

7.2018.2 Recent Developments: Meetings (UGC/Ministry) and Special Category.

a. A meeting was held with the Secretary of Ministry of Higher Education and Cultural Affairs on 19.6.2018 to discuss the issues related to the amended circular on vehicle permits [1/2018 (1)]; property loan for academics; need for increasing salaries of temporary academic staff; issues related to various allowances paid to different services rendered by academics in different capacities; and grade one admission for the children of academic staff. The minutes of meeting have already been circulated; yet, the following developments/decisions need to be highlighted;

1. Complexity of the vehicle permit application has been addressed and the process was simplified by removing certain administrative requirements in the checklist (for instance submission of two affidavits is not necessary now and members can submit either the

Letter of Credit (LC) or the vehicle registration certificate when they apply for the second time).

2. A certain category of academic staff members (promoted to academic positions from the position of instructor subject to the title “personal to the holder”) whose applications were not initially processed are now granted approval for applying for vehicle permits.

3. Ministry and the UGC would help to minimize the delay in issuing permits and if a certain member finds that his/her application is not processed even after one month period, the matter should be brought immediately to FUTA’s attention.

4. FUTA’s request to increase the salaries of temporary academic staff was agreed and FUTA needs to submit a proposal in this regard and further discuss the matter with UGC/Ministry/Treasury.

5. FUTA proposed to increase the property loan for academics up to ten million rupees (10 Million). The Ministry is willing to increase it up to 5 million and matter requires to be pursued further.

6. Incidental allowance for academics travelling abroad can be approved by Vice Chancellors.

b. Special Category

The Ministry of Higher Education and the UGC agree with the FUTA’s proposal (rationale was submitted by FUTA some two years ago) to establish a special category of services of university academics. Currently, a FUTA appointed committee is working on the matter and it will negotiate with UGC. FUTA needs to study the subject further and submit a comprehensive proposal which will enable the universities to retain their academic and administrative autonomy while the academics are recognized as a special category of professionals.

7.2018.3. National and Provincial School Admissions 2018: Update and Progress

Secretary/FUTA submitted a report on the progress of school admissions. Accordingly, allocations were only made for Grade 01 and other Grades have not yet been considered by the Ministry of Education. Admissions for Grades 3,5 and 6 will not be done as the rules of the Ministry. Ministry has allocated schools for academics only with a period of three-year service. Currently, the Ministry is addressing the issues and the appeals made by academics.

Members agreed that the major issue regarding school admission was the level of satisfaction which was perceptibly very low among the members who were, perhaps, allocated second or third tier schools. Altogether, 97 applications were submitted for the year 2018 and 89 applicants were assigned schools (60 national schools and 29 provincial schools) by 16 July 2018. However, the number of applicants who accepted the original allocations remained very low at a rate of 22%. Meanwhile, the appeal process is still going on and several members have been able to change the schools originally allotted for their children.

7.2018.4 University Level Awareness Programs

The importance of organizing the seminars to discuss the current issues of the education and higher education was discussed widely. The last session was held at the University of Colombo. Sister Unions need to focus on this necessity and submit dates to FUTA for the meetings.

7.2018.5 Agenda Items Submitted by Sister Unions and BoR Representatives

1. Issue of IELTS Score

Several academics have faced issues in obtaining UGC scholarships and NCAS funding (for PhD work) because of earning low scores for IELTS. The UGC is asking for 7.0 IELTS score while some members have earned 6.0 or 6.5 points. FUTA is requested to intervene in this matter and help the academics who have already got placements in foreign Universities for PhD studies to start their research at the earliest.

2. OUTA: Mr. Achintha Madusanka, lecturer probationary, sent an appeal to FUTA requesting to intervene in the issue of obtaining confirmation in his current position. FUTA requests him to forward his appeal to the UAB and will pursue matter with the UGC.

3. State Universities' Trade Union Center had requested to have a meeting with FUTA to discuss the issues pertaining to the alleged misuse of the Employees Provident Fund of the UGC;

4. Teachers' Association of Arts and Aesthetic University announced that the organization has been renamed as Professionals Union of the Faculty of Music, Arts and Aesthetic University. Members agreed to continue the membership of the sister union under its new name.

7.2018.6 Treasurers' Update

Treasurer reminded the member unions to pay the annual membership fee at their earliest. Only 03 unions have paid memberships fee for 2018. Only 08 unions out of 43 unions who are member unions of FUTA have updated their registration at the Labour Department.

7. 2018.7 Any other matters

7.2018.7.1 Undue Delay in Processing Professorship Applications

The undue delay in evaluating professorship applications needs to be addressed for the benefit of our members. FUTA should discuss the matter with the UGC and prepare a guideline which help ameliorate the current situation.

7.2018.7.2 Misuse of UPF Money

FUTA is seriously concerned with the issue of investing UPF money in other business such as buying treasury bonds. There is a huge uproar against the UGC for allowing such malpractices causing heavy losses to the earnings of employees in the higher education sector. FUTA should take stern actions if the losses suffered by the UPF are not recovered immediately by the UGC.

Athulasiri Samarakoon, Acting Secretary FUTA

16 July 2018