

## **AFICS Activity Report 2021**

The complete report of the activities of the Association in 2019 was included in AAFI-AFICS BULLETIN VOL. 79, NO. 1 February - February 2020, sent to our members in 2020.

We had hoped to hold an assembly already in 2021. This was not possible due to the Palais des Nations remaining closed except for essential activities.

An article on our activities in 2020 was published in Bulletin No AAFI-AFICS BULLETIN, Vol. 80 No.2, 2021-09 (September - September 2021).

Our present report will be as succinct, showing that our Association has done its utmost to adapt to restrictions whilst responding to the needs of its members.

1. We would first like to thank our members for their confidence and welcome the accession of some members: 24 in 2020, 32 in 2021 and already 12 for this year.
2. In 2020 and 2021 the AAFI-AFICS Board and Committee had to resolve to virtual meetings only, with a good participation.
3. It was difficult to call for nominations to renew the Committee. This could only be carried out by email. Only 4 members of the Committee agreed to continue to work for the Association: Ravindra Chopra, Anatoli Kondrachov (who had been co-opted in 2019), Monika Spyczak-von-Brzezinska and Pierre Vangeleyn. We were fortunate to welcome Jocelyne Déruaz as a co-opted member, which brings us to a committee of only 13 members.
4. With great sadness, we were advised of the passing of our dear friends Roger Fontana and Venkataraman Narasimhan (Nari) (our treasurer, who for many years worked tirelessly for our association).
5. We exchanged views with representatives of the different associations in Geneva on the possibilities, or rather the prohibitions, of access of retired people to the different organisations.

6. Anatoli Kondrachov (our treasurer) is commended for keeping the accounts up-to-date, which made it possible to call for contributions and to present the accounts to the auditors, whose advice ensured our providing more accurate information.
7. We would like to acknowledge the dedication of Margarete Hahnen, who was able to continue to manage our database.
8. France Henry is applauded for continuing to assist retirees who cannot or no longer complete their medical claims.
9. Douglas Helland continues providing his precious assistance in the preparation of our paper Bulletin and updating our INTERNET site ensuring accurate and verified information.
10. It goes without saying that we are very grateful to the United Nations publishing and distribution services for their support in the preparation of our Bulletin.
11. I would like to pay special tribute to Juan Mateu for his assistance in tracing more than 50 retirees who had not returned their entitlement certificates to the Pension Fund, thus avoiding their pensions being cut-off. Juan also carried out these searches in 2022.
12. Let us not forget all the members of the Committee who are dedicated to the smooth running of the Association, some for many ann.es. They prove that commitment helps to maintain its vitality.
13. We have been able to maintain a weekly presence and respond to telephone and email requests.
14. On 30 September 2021 we had a face-to-face meeting with Rose-Marie McClean and David Penklis, the new directors of the Pension Fund, wherein we were able to establish important contacts to resolve the problems raised by our members. We discussed the importance of the Geneva Office of the Pension Fund.
15. Odette Foudral stayed in virtual contact with the Pension Fund every week.
16. Our two representatives in the UNSMIS Fund (Pierre Vangeleyn and Mohammed Sebti) are commended for continuing to participate in the Executive Committee meetings on a regular basis.

17. We also participated in the virtual session of the pre-retirement seminar prepared jointly by UNOG and the ILO.
18. We were in close contact with the AFIF (Association of French International Civil Servants) until its dissolution at the General Assembly on 9 December 2021. Odette Foudral participated on behalf of AAFI-AFICS. The AFIF members who have joined us will enable us to have contacts with the missions and to refine our documents concerning French taxes.
19. Odette Foudral continued to participate in the activities of the Platform of Geneva's seniors' associations of Cité Seniors. We were very dependent on the information received from the Platform and were able to show our appreciation to them with a donation in 2020.
20. Through FAFICS, the umbrella federation of 63 local pensioners' associations, Geneva has actively participated in the meetings of the Joint Pensions Committee and Mohammed Sebti, the representative of AAFI-AFICS Geneva, has participated in the Standing Committee, which reviews cases of appeals against the Fund's decisions, and in the Working Group on the modalities of disability pensions.
21. We were represented in FAFICS by Odette Foudral (Vice-President), Katia Chestopalov (Vice-President of the Standing Committee on After Service Insurance), Pierre Sayour (Secretary until July 2021), (Jay Sundaresan) Secretary since July 2021) and Wolfgang Milzow (Treasurer until July 2021). We should also add the auditors Ventura Garcia Garnateo and Mohammed Rharha until July 2021 and Ambi Sundaran since July. Katia Chestopalov was also able to actively participate in the revision of the FAFICS operating rules which were validated during a special session of the FAFICS Council on 4 February 2022.
22. All meetings were held by ZOOM.
23. To sum up, the year 2021 showed that we are entering a new world, a changed world, and more oriented towards virtual relations.
24. In 2022, UN retirees may enter the Palais des Nations with their badges. However, still without the possibility of access by car. Nonetheless, Security has assisted us to

function by granting access badges to all members of the Committee, including those from sister associations.

25. It is more complicated for pensioners from other Organizations to access the Palais des Nations as they are obliged to request a visitor's badge. We are working with the UNSMIS Fund and the CCPNU Pension Fund to improve things, but the COVID epidemic seems to be starting up again, which does not bode well.

26. I would not like to end this report without thanking the UN Administration for allowing us access to our offices, and the staff of the Health and Pension Funds for their work made so difficult during the pandemic and the use of forced teleworking.