Personal statement-Darshak Shah

It would be an enormous honor and privilege to serve as the next President of FAFICS.

I believe I have the broad professional knowledge and multi-faceted international experience required to lead the Federation at this critical juncture. In addition to knowledge and experience, I believe in shared leadership, am passionate about organizational excellence, bring integrity, advocacy, strong listening, influencing, and consensus-building skills to any position I hold.

FAFICS plays a vital role for thousands of retirees worldwide. Our role will be especially critical in the years ahead as the United Nations Pension Board responds to the request of the General Assembly to undertake a holistic review of the design of the pension system especially as retirees face increasing medical costs. We must put our collective best foot forward to meet these challenges.

I believe in strong, open, transparent and accountable governance. FAFICS must be a role model for transparency, accountability and good governance. We must ensure the letter and spirit of our Rules of Procedure are fully implemented. They constitute an inspiring and living blueprint for the highest quality of leadership and management for our Federation.

I believe we must continue to grow our Federation, both increasing the membership of local Associations and the number of Associations in our Federation.

I believe we must constantly search for new talent, engage it and provide opportunities for new talent to serve our Federation.

I believe in engaging as many people as we can from across our Federation in the work of the organization so that we benefit from the broadest possible perspectives on issues.

I will sign and abide by the FAFICS Declaration of Principles.

Finally, I would like to thank Jerry Barton who has done an excellent job for the Federation.

Below is a summary of my current roles in FAFICS and AFICS/NY, professional experience in both the private sector and UN and my education.

CURRENT FAFICS/AFICS/NY RESPONSIBILITIES

FAFICS

- Head of the AFICS/NY delegation to the FAFICS Council
- Lead AFICS/NY Governing Board substantive preparation for the FAFICS Council
- FAFICS representative, Pension Board Audit Committee
- FAFICS Alternate, Pension Board Plan Design Working Group

AFICS/NY

- President of AFICS/NY since 18 June 2024, leading an Association of around 2000 members and overseeing the work of the AFICS/NY Governing Board, including 9 AFICS/NY Committees/Working Groups dealing with inter alia pension, health insurance, communications, finance, IT, social events, visa retrogression
- Lead regular meetings on issues of concern to retirees with senior UN officials including the Under Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, Under Secretary-General for the Department of Operational Support, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources, the Chief Executive of Pension Administration (CEPA) and the Representative of

the Secretary-General (RSG) for the investment of the assets of the UNJSPF, senior staff of the Office of the President of the General Assembly (PGA)

- Lead regular meetings on issues of concern to retirees with the senior leadership of UNFCU
- Serve on the AFICS/NY Pension Committee
- Chair the AFICS/NY Working Group on Visa Retrogression Issues (suspension of green cards for UN staff)

SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

My professional career of 43 years has spanned the private sector and the United Nations.

I served as Senior Advisor to the Administrator of UNDP on Strategic Finance and Risk advising on areas of high-risk for UNDP and devising mitigation strategies to address these risks. I spearheaded improvements in the functioning of the Risk Committee and brought to it fraud and audit matters. I guided the smooth functioning of UNDP's Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee (AEAC) and discussions with Member States on risk, audit and fraud matters.

Prior to this, I was the Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Bureau for Management Services and the global Chief Finance Officer (CFO) of UNDP, a $5 Billion organization with 170 offices around the world. My responsibilities as CFO included strategic resource planning, budget, custodian of the financial regulatory framework, including compliance with the framework, overseeing the compilation of financial statements, treasury function with an investment portfolio of $7 billion, initiating, managing and implementing the Assets Liability Management (ALM) study for UNDP and partner agencies. In my role as Deputy Director of Bureau for Management Services, I also supervised procurement and administrative services.

I worked extensively with governing bodies, oversight committees and member states presenting, advocating and negotiating UNDP positions.

I was a key player in UN reform - Co-chairing the High-Level Committee of Management (HLCM) /Finance and Budgetary (FB) Network. Key achievements included:

- participation in the ASHI Working Group that focused on critical issues, most especially ways to avoid increases in ASHI costs while still ensuring quality medical services. I developed an ASHI funding plan and advocated successfully for outsourcing to professional investment firms, the management of ASHI investments - increasing returns, and augmenting the funding of the ASHI liability. I chaired the Joint ASHI Investment Committee when it was launched for 2 years
- streamlining of banking services at country level for UN agencies, which greatly benefited retired staff; the development of data bases linking the SDGs with finance data (data cube)

I was involved in many UNJSPF matters including digitizing the transfer of information to UNJSPF to reduce delays in pension fund payments to retirees in countries.

I led the inter-agency team on the integrated resources plan and budget, that combined the administrative budget and progamme budget, including the Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF).

I established and later expanded the finance shared service center, serving UNDP and other agencies in Kuala Lumpur, to enhance capacity, efficiency, quality, and compliance.

I was part of the leadership team that steered the business process reengineering and implementation of the global ERP, strengthening compliance through the introduction of finance dashboards and other reporting mechanisms, capitalizing on data intelligence.

I led the global IPSAS implementation, including business process reconfiguration for UNDP, to increase transparency and accountability, thereby increasing donor confidence. I professionalized the finance function within UNDP through introduction of new staff profiles, finance certification, and training programmes.

My private sector experience has included working as an Audit Manager at Ernst & Young; Group Financial Controller of Trade Bank & Lima Finance; and as the regional CFO of Neumann Gruppe - the largest private coffee trading house in the world.

I am currently a member and ex-Chair of WHO's Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee; Member of WFP's Independent Oversight Advisory Committee; Trustee of the Education Development Centre (EDC) and Chair of EDC's Audit Advisory Committee; Assemblyman of International Students House, London and an Independent Consultant on finance and risk.

Education

London School Of Accountancy, London, UK 1977 -1982. I was awarded membership of the Institute of Chartered Association of Certified Accountants, UK and was later recognized as a Fellow of the Institute of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants (FCCA), 1985.