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Staff association of the European Commission

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERPRETERS: FOLLOW-UP AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

*Brussels, 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025*

**TAO has consistently helped the Interpreters' Delegation** while at the same time respecting their autonomy and freedom of action. We have played a decisive role in systematically unblocking negotiations with no temptation to overrule or step in, **putting interpreters' interests first**. We will always be available to assist, act as a sounding board, and if need be, intervene as a trade union to uphold interpreters' working conditions.

**The representation of EU interpreters is played out on two different chess boards.** The social dialogue conducted by the Interpreters' Delegation, but additionally deliberations in a myriad of joint thematic committees where the trade unions vote on fundamental issues affecting our working conditions.

**We commend the Interpreters' Delegation for the result of the General Assembly on 19th September.** The Resolution on the 1987 Recast passed with 97% of votes cast. This spells out consensus and that is always a positive outcome.

**Resolutions are a strange animal.** If they are too generic in language and scope anything goes, if they are too specific there is no room for manoeuvre at the negotiation table because your hands are tied. It is a difficult balancing act. Be that as it may, there is a third consideration to be made. Resolutions can be leveraged to make a stand during negotiations, using the guiding principles as an argument to turn down damaging Management proposals.

**TAO believes the following guiding principles should be etched on our minds.** Some appear prominently in the negotiation mandate; others are more subdued.

- derogations for specific meetings and circumstances must remain circumscribed to the original intention and not open to a wide interpretation covering other instances and meetings, making the exception the rule.
- maximum thresholds should not be understood as a minimum requirement. If maximum capacity is reached regularly the system is no longer protective.
- Updated Programming Arrangements for hybrid meetings are protective and not damaging for demand satisfaction. Prevention-Remediation-Mitigation should be fully applied and the buffer kept at current levels.
- purpose-built hubs must be considered permanent workspaces promoting visual comfort, outside view, and daylight provision equivalent to artificial lighting levels.
- remote is a substandard mode not comparable to in-person: cabled, point-to-point and hybrid should be clearly defined. A controlled environment is not the silver bullet for sound quality equating remote and in-person working conditions.
- the scope of remote should be limited to complementary for modularity, flexibility, and language coverage, but never as a mainstream alternative, strictly limiting the number of meetings per week.
- workload must allow high quality interpretation and should reflect increased cognitive load and complexity of meetings in Council, hybrids, remote and 2/3 booth. Interpreters should not work more. All work should be accounted for and encompass out of the booth activities, consequently SBC standby coefficient needs reviewing.

Your **TAO** team



**Join TAO to reinforce the staff's action and to be informed on your rights!**

**TAO -The Independents**

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