

‘Space Planning’

Having had the pleasure of attending an information session on this subject, I wondered if we had recruited people from the ‘DOGE’ (Department of Government Efficiency in the United States) to come up with such a short-sighted and brutal vision.

We were presented with a proposal which, although not ‘officially’ approved, is the only one on the table. What is the aim? A complete reorganisation of the space in order to rent out two floors. I fully understand the need to replenish the coffers and make the best use of the space, but what will this mean for the staff?

Seventy per cent of offices will be unallocated, meaning hot desking for the vast majority of staff. Having an office and a name on the door may seem trivial, but I believe it is very important for a sense of belonging to an organisation and a team. We will be left with dehumanised offices, empty of memories and personal touches. Was there even a study on well-being and mental health? Were any other solutions considered?

Are we destined to become nothing more than numbers assigned to a task, mere shadows wandering around the building with no real existence? Commitment to the ILO has real meaning, which will slowly disappear if people are no longer at the centre of the system.

The goal of organisations is to put people at the centre of their priorities, and one of the ILO's goals is to strengthen social dialogue. Where are people in this vision of the space? Where is the social dialogue? In these times of global crisis, international organisations should ensure that all their staff are motivated and dedicated to their mandate. My impression is clearly that everything is being done to achieve the opposite.

This reorganisation seems to be only the beginning of the dismantling of the ILO headquarters.

As a fan of J.R.R. Tolkien myself, I will end with a phrase already used by a colleague in this [blog](#), a phrase that is likely to become a signature:

‘Flee, poor fools.’