



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. LOURDES PEREIRA SOTOMAYOR, FIRST SECRETARY, PERMANENT MISSION OF ECUADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 141: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 31 October 2017)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 141: Human Resources Management (HRM).

2. At the outset, the Group wishes to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, Ms. Martha Helena Lopez for the introduction of the Secretary-General's reports on Human Resources Management as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for introducing the related report.

Mr. Chairman,

3. As you are well aware, the United Nations coordinates global efforts to address numerous challenges facing the world, ranging from addressing poverty, settling conflicts, taking care of refugees, vulnerable child, women and gender issues, ending hunger, environmental issues as well as economic welfare and trade among nations to mention but a few.

4. It is also a well-known fact that United Nations has from its founding been a people-centred Organization and that the contribution by the staff to the Organisation is very much intrinsic to the aspirations of the Charter of the United Nations. These staff have, at often times, put their lives at risk to advance the objectives of the Organisation.

5. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the Human Resource implementing the mandates of the United Nations are doing so in an environment which exemplifies diversity, flexibility and dynamism and that they are motivated and adequately compensated, to enable them put out their best efforts in serving the rest of the world.

6. The acknowledgement and appreciation of the dedication and sacrifice of staff members are reflected in the great importance the Group of 77 and China attaches to human resources management and its related issues across the United Nations.

7. The Group takes note of the 18 unrepresented, as well as the 44 underrepresented countries and while welcoming the efforts of the Secretary General to improve the geographical representation. The Group notes with concern that the largest number of appointments to posts subject to geographical distribution were of staff from overrepresented countries (31 appointments). The Group equally notes with concern that this has been an ongoing trend since 2013 where the number of member states in the unrepresented and underrepresented categories is inversely increasing.

8. The Group wishes to also recall Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter of the United Nations where due regard should be paid to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible, and also recalls the system of desirable ranges, established in 1960, which

measures progress towards achieving a wide equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat.

9. The Group wishes to take note of the increase of the number of female staff members who stand at 35.1% of the overall global staff of the Secretariat though we continue to note that the overall number of women in senior positions is still less than 50%. The Group is interested in knowing how many of the women in senior positions come from developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

10. We cannot deny the existence of linkages between a dynamic staffing structure and the rejuvenation of the Organisation. In this regard the Group takes note of the increase in the average age of the secretariat staff from 43.4% to 44.8 years, and wishes to place emphasis on the need to recruit a younger workforce to serve as the basis of a smooth transfer of institutional knowledge and the building of capacity in the wake of retirement and other forms of separation.

11. The Group looks forward to efforts by the Secretary-General to address questions such as the top-heaviness of management, the upward shift in grade structure and the apparent reticence of the Organisation to recruit or retain young professionals and reporting progress thereon to the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

12. The Group takes note of the reported improvement in the responsiveness of investigating entities and the enhanced quality of investigation reports.

13. On the other hand, the Group is concerned that the information contained in the Secretary-General's report on disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behavior (A/72/209) does not provide a comprehensive overview of all the cases relating to allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse within the Organisation but rather just those cases involving civilian personnel disciplined during the reporting period. In view of this, the Secretary-General is requested to include information, and applicable cross references to other United Nations reports relating to the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse that would explain the number of cases presented.

14. Also related to deficiencies in documentation on disciplinary issues is the delay in the finalization of the new Administrative Instruction (AI) on investigative and disciplinary matters. The Group would, among other things, seek to understand the lack of responsibility and accountability for the delay.

Mr. Chairman,

15. The Group remains concerned about the increased number of days to fill a post, which is divergent from the benchmark of 120 days and reached 163 days in 2015 and 202 days in 2016.

16. The Group is interested in learning if the previous recommendations on this matter were followed and what hindrances are causing the process to digress from the agreed benchmarks.

Last but not the least,

Mr. Chairman,

17. The Group reiterates that Staff Rules must comply with Staff Regulations where the latter

cannot be overruled or changed by the former. Staff Rules must reflect the scope and consequences of decisions taken by the General Assembly, with the relevant details reflected in amendments to the regulations submitted for the Assembly's consideration.

18. We also note the efforts of the Secretary-General for endeavoring to provide detailed statics in the above-mentioned reports; however just like the Advisory Committee we wish to reiterate that there is lack of analysis of the trends observed, policy implications as well as proposed corrective measures to be taken and look forward to holding discussions with the Secretariat to correct this trend.

19. The Group of 77 and China believes that addressing the much talked-about issue of mistrust between the Secretariat and member states should start with redressing systemic issues within the management of Human Resources. The Group, on this note, wishes to assure of its readiness to engage constructively on this important agenda item.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.