



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. ABDELHAKIM MIHOUBI, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 135: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 21 November 2012)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 135 entitled "Human Resources Management".

2. The Group expresses its appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Management, Mr. Yukio Takasu, and to the Director of the Ethics Office, Ms. Joan Elise Dubinsky, for their introductions of the relevant reports of the Secretary-General. The Group also thanks Inspector Gerard Biraud for introducing the related reports of the Joint Inspection Unit as well as the Chair of the ACABQ, Mr. Collen V. Kelapile, for introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee.

3. We further thank the Vice-President of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee, Ms. Paulina Analena, for her statement.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Group of 77 and China has often expressed its support for efforts by the Secretary-General to improve human resources management. We know that the efficient and effective delivery of the UN mandates hinges on the quality of its staff and the availability of resources. Ensuring the well-being of all international civil servants is of great importance to the Group. We are therefore strongly in favor of reforms that contribute to a highly motivated, diverse and dynamic workforce for our Organization.

5. Human resources management is a doubly sensitive area. It directly affects the lives of staff and their families. At the same time, putting good policies in place today is crucial to ensuring that we have the Organization that we want and need ten or twenty years down the line. In light of this, human resources must be managed according to the highest standards of accountability and transparency. There is still room for improvement in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Ensuring equitable geographic representation in the Secretariat, especially at the senior level, is a key issue for the Group of 77 and China. This is not merely a question of implementing the relevant provisions of the Charter and of General Assembly resolutions. It is key to the Organization's effectiveness. If the UN is to succeed in implementing its global mandates, it must have a truly global Secretariat, which reflects the diversity of its membership.

7. In this regard, the Group regrets that the Secretary-General has once again not adequately responded to the General Assembly's request for a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges. Given that the original request was made four years ago, the lack of proposals is particularly disturbing. Bearing in mind the integrated nature of human resources issues, it may be difficult to achieve progress in other areas if this critical dimension is not addressed.

8. The Group reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to achieve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance of staff, as mandated by the General Assembly. We underscore the need for greater representation of developing countries, particularly in senior management and in Headquarters, and express our grave concern at the reduction of the proportion of staff from developing countries at the Professional level and above.

Mr. Chairman,

9. The Secretary-General has presented his mobility proposal to the General Assembly. The Group of 77 and China supports the concept of mobility, which can help ensure a responsive and dynamic workforce for the Organization. Mobility might also help reduce vacancy rates in Headquarters and in the field, especially in the harshest duty stations, which is a major concern for the Group. In this regard, the impact of mobility on Field Service personnel must be a priority for the Organisation.

10. The mobility framework before us is complex and raises a number of questions. We look forward to working with partners to better understand the proposal and its implications for the Organization. Among the elements we will wish to explore in greater depth are:

- how effective the system would be in achieving its stated goals;
- how it would contribute to more equitable geographic representation, especially at senior levels;
- what its impact on existing recruitment and selection systems will be;
- the relative advantages and disadvantages of voluntary and mandatory mobility systems;
- impacts of proposed mobility framework on job stability and on the structures of contracts previously stipulated by the General Assembly;
- the financial costs of mobility, as well as "hidden" and indirect costs; and
- how knowledge management practices will be strengthened to ensure that institutional knowledge is not lost when people move.

Mr. Chairman,

11. Any mobility policy that the General Assembly may decide upon must avoid repeating problems that have plagued other transformational projects of the UN. These include the absence of a defined end-state; uncertain and spiraling costs; and lack of transparency and accountability. There must also be regular reviews of any policy that may be agreed on, in order to ensure that downstream implementation is in line with the original objectives of the policy.

12. Transparency will be particularly crucial in regards to mobility, particularly when it concerns staff selection. For instance, the discriminatory treatment of external candidates, which was been recently abolished by the General Assembly, must not be reintroduced. We must also ensure that in implementing human resources policies, management must treat all staff members with utmost dignity and transparency, while fully respecting the terms of contracts.

13. Mobility cannot be implemented overnight. Yet there may be scope to rapidly put in place certain measures that can encourage mobility and set the stage for larger reforms down the road, such as the termination of lien.

Mr. Chairman,

14. Mobility must be linked to the strategic objectives of the UN. It is not an end in itself. Nor is it the only important area of human resources management that needs to be addressed. Just as much or even more attention must be dedicated to other aspects, such as long-term workforce planning, responsiveness in staff selection and recruitment, and equitable geographical representation and

gender balance, which are essential elements of a good human resources framework.

Mr. Chairman,

15. This agenda item is a priority for the Group. We reaffirm our commitment to engage in a constructive debate to foster substantive progress on this issue.

I thank you.