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Chairperson: Mr. Amorín (Uruguay)

*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Bachar Bong

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/75/L.24)

1. The Chair invited the Committee to consider the proposed tentative and provisional programme of work for the first part of the resumed seventy-fifth session, prepared on the basis of the note by the Secretariat on the status of preparedness of documentation (A/C.5/75/L.24).

2. **Mr. Diallo** (Guinea), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, while the Group acknowledged recent efforts to issue reports in a timely manner, there was room for further improvement. The timely availability of documents was essential to the Committee's deliberations and to ensuring that the items on its agenda received the attention they deserved.

3. Human resources management proposals should be considered holistically, as a package rather than in a piecemeal way, in order to reach concrete outcomes related to gender parity, equitable geographical representation, performance management and deficiencies in the staff selection process. The Group attached great importance to accountability as the means for Member States to ascertain whether decisions of the General Assembly were fully implemented. The Group would therefore engage constructively in the Committee's deliberations on the accountability system, paying particular attention to the contribution of reforms to enhancing accountability. The Group would also participate actively in the Committee's deliberations on such matters as construction and property management at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the subvention for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, standards of accommodation for air travel, the United Nations common system and the report of the Joint Inspection Unit.

4. **Mr. Traore** (Mali), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group trusted that the documents for the session would be issued in a timely manner, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. While progress had been made in that regard, the timely issuance of reports in all official languages was more important than ever, owing to the lack of interpretation during crucial parts of the Committee's negotiations, which hampered the participation of non-English-speaking delegations.

5. The Group would pay particular attention to the deliberations on human resources management, including the composition of the Secretariat and the system of desirable ranges. The most valuable asset of the United Nations was its human resources. The diversity of the Organization's workforce was one of its strengths and the Group would strive to ensure greater geographical representation.

6. The Group would also participate actively in the Committee's deliberations on accountability, the United Nations common system, the use of the contingency fund, the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, and construction and property management, in particular conference services facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi. In that connection, the Group recalled that, in previous resolutions, the General Assembly had emphasized the need to use local capacity, materials, knowledge and technology in construction projects.

7. **Mr. Camelli** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Andorra, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union thanked the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for the timely issuance of its reports, which were essential to the work of the Fifth Committee, and was convinced that the enlarged Advisory Committee would fulfil its mandate efficiently and reliably. The European Union attached great importance to the implementation of the Secretary-General's reforms and appreciated the progress made.

8. The European Union supported the introduction of more modern and effective human resources policies at the United Nations and was of the view that the Secretary-General should use the full extent of his prerogative under the Charter of the United Nations in that regard. The Fifth Committee had previously been unable to reach consensus on human resources management and now had before it a significant number of reports deferred from past sessions. The first part of the resumed seventy-fifth session was an opportunity for Member States to focus on matters pertaining to human resources management, and the European Union would strive to find consensus and ensure that human resources management reforms met the current and future needs of the Organization and its staff.

9. The European Union welcomed the opportunity to strengthen the accountability framework, which was a cornerstone of management reform and an integral part of the new system of delegation of authority. The Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance played a critical role in enhancing accountability. The Organization must foster a culture of ethics and transparency in order to prevent and address misconduct. In that connection, the European Union welcomed the Secretary-General's progress reports on accountability.

10. The proper financing and functioning of the Organization depended on the work of the Committee,

which must strive to reach consensus on the matters before it and improve its working methods. While the European Union acknowledged that the Organization was operating under special circumstances as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the lack of remote interpretation to enable multilingual deliberations was detrimental to the inclusiveness and quality of the Committee's work, and the European Union hoped that the situation would be resolved as soon as possible.

11. **Ms. DeKonty** (United States of America) said that her delegation welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to improve mandate fulfilment, increase transparency and empower managers and staff pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/266](#) and Article 97 of the Charter. Nevertheless, Member States also had a responsibility to take decisions that had been pending for years and to strengthen, where appropriate, the policies underpinning reform efforts.

12. In addition, her delegation looked forward to considering the Secretary-General's tenth progress report on accountability ([A/75/686](#)) and to assessing the Organization's accountability framework, results-based management and the work of the Business Transformation and Accountability Division. The Umoja enterprise resource planning system had a key role to play in enhancing transparency and accountability, and the Secretariat should leverage the system's potential efficiencies. Her delegation also looked forward to discussing such matters as standards of accommodation for air travel, conditions of service for judges, construction at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

13. **Mr. Velázquez Castillo** (Mexico) said that the Committee, in considering the matters before it at the first part of the resumed session, had an opportunity to support the reform of the United Nations and the development of an agile, effective and efficient Organization that made appropriate use of the funds entrusted to it by Member States. Human resources were one of the most important assets of the United Nations. Personnel costs accounted for a significant proportion of the Organization's expenses. Given the scale and significance of the services provided by the United Nations, including in the field, the Secretariat's policies and procedures must be modern and effective. Currently, there were a number of major structural challenges hampering human resources management, as well as problems in the areas of policy design, application and evaluation. The Organization needed a modern, flexible, effective and efficient human resources system in which responsibilities were clearly delineated, with a view to

avoiding duplication and waste and promoting transparency, fairness and excellence.

14. With regard to standards of accommodation for air travel, in line with the austerity policies followed by Governments, and in a gesture of responsible budgeting and accountability to taxpayers, the entitlement to first-class travel should be removed in all cases. The Secretariat must continue to comply with recommendations aimed at streamlining ticket purchasing, maximizing the use of communication technologies and generating savings, particularly in the light of the experience gained during the pandemic with regard to the use of virtual meetings and telecommuting.

15. Amending the Staff Regulations and Rules was a complex task because it involved both normative and operational issues. The amendments should comply with the mandate that the Member States had given to the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to achieve gender parity in the Secretariat. His delegation recognized the progress made to date in that area. An organization that promoted gender equality and women's empowerment must aspire to gender balance among its staff, in particular management.

16. In addition, his delegation would pay particular attention to the conditions of service and compensation for officials other than Secretariat officials, namely members of the International Court of Justice and the President and judges of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council, the United Nations common system, and the report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2020 and programme of work for 2021 ([A/75/34](#)).

17. **Mr. Cheng Lie** (China) said that the year 2021 would be crucial in efforts to combat COVID-19 and promote economic recovery. As the core platform for global governance, the United Nations was shouldering greater responsibilities than ever. As the Committee entrusted with responsibilities for programme, budget, management and human resources, the Fifth Committee had a unique role to play in supporting the operations of the Organization. The Committee must abide strictly by the Charter and the mandate given to it by the General Assembly, and must follow the Assembly's rules of procedure. The Committee should adapt its working methods in response to the difficulties caused by the pandemic and strive to become more effective and efficient. All reports should be issued in a timely fashion.

18. His delegation attached great importance to human resources management. During the previous two sessions, the Committee had failed to adopt a resolution on the matter, thereby depriving the Secretariat of

necessary guidance. With regard to geographical representation, the number of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States remained high. The Secretariat must avoid tackling tangential issues and instead take effective measures and develop specific programmes aimed at improving geographical representation, in particular of developing countries.

19. His delegation supported the Secretariat's efforts to enhance accountability, strengthen comprehensive budget performance management and improve internal control mechanisms in support of management reform. The conference facilities of the United Nations Office at Nairobi should be renovated properly and in an orderly fashion, on the basis of comprehensive analysis and sound management. The Joint Inspection Unit should continuously strengthen external supervision of the United Nations.

20. **Mr. Kimura** (Japan) said that, during the first part of the resumed seventy-fifth session, the Committee would consider a number of important issues, including accountability, the jurisdictional set-up of the United Nations common system, standards of accommodation for air travel, and human resources management. The Committee had not adopted a resolution on human resources management for several years. His delegation intended to engage constructively with all partners on those issues, in support of the Secretary-General's reform agenda and the goals set by Member States.

21. The judgments of the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal on the post adjustment for Geneva had had a significant impact on the stability and coherence of the United Nations common system. The jurisdictional set-up was a key factor in ensuring inter-agency fairness in the conditions of service for United Nations staff. The Secretary-General had proposed a broad range of options, which his delegation would consider carefully from the perspective of the stability of the common system and the judicial arrangements related to conditions of service.

22. With regard to standards of accommodation for air travel, the adoption of a single-threshold model would make travel simpler, more effective and more cost-efficient. More frequent use should be made of the working methods adopted as result of the pandemic, including virtual meetings and remote working. Although the governance of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board was not before the Committee at the first part of the resumed seventy-fifth session, his delegation wished to welcome the Board's progress report on the matter and looked forward to receiving, at the main part of the seventy-sixth session, concrete reform plans to improve the Board's performance.

23. **Mr. Mmalane** (Botswana) said that his delegation attached great importance to human resources management and had long called for action to ensure equitable geographical representation, refine performance management and address deficiencies in staff selection. Innovative measures were needed to ensure that more nationals of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States entered the workforce. The Young Professionals Programme, the Junior Professional Officers Programme, the United Nations Volunteers programme and the United Nations internship programme should therefore be efficiently managed.

24. The Joint Inspection Unit was the only independent external oversight body of the United Nations mandated to conduct evaluations, inspections and investigations, and as such it was an agent for system-wide change. His delegation would participate actively in the Committee's deliberations on the work of the Unit, in particular the rate of implementation of accepted recommendations. His delegation would also participate in the Committee's discussions on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council, the subvention for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, the United Nations common system, construction and property management at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, and progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat. The promotion of a culture of accountability was essential in order to ensure a more prudent, effective and competent workforce, driven by integrity and service to humanity.

25. **Ms. Jun Ji Sun** (Republic of Korea) said that her delegation attached great importance to the Secretary-General's ongoing management reform efforts. Human resources management was at the core of effective and efficient operations, and it was therefore regrettable that the Committee had been unable to provide the Secretariat with guidelines on human resources management during previous sessions. Her delegation looked forward to working with all parties to reach a consensus that would strengthen accountability, fairness and equity. Welcoming the Secretary-General's tenth progress report on accountability, she said that a timeline was needed for the implementation of measures aimed at creating a culture of accountability, which was the cornerstone of management reform. The Secretary-General's management reforms had contributed to the Organization's effective response to COVID-19 and her delegation hoped to identify additional areas of human resources management where the lessons learned during the pandemic could be applied.

26. A consistent operating framework that reflected the reality in the field was essential for the smooth operation of the Organization, and her delegation

therefore looked forward to reaching a consensus on the amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules at the current session. Resolving inconsistencies in the implementation of decisions of the International Civil Service Commission would indicate that the Organization could operate consistently across the United Nations common system. With regard to standards of accommodation for air travel, the utmost discipline was needed regarding the use of taxpayers' money, and her delegation therefore looked forward to reaching an optimal solution that ensured both mandate fulfilment and cost-effectiveness.

27. **Mr. Koba** (Indonesia) said that the Committee had the heavy responsibility of ensuring the proper financing and functioning of the United Nations at a time when the Organization was expected to play a critical role in addressing many global challenges, including COVID-19. His delegation was a strong proponent of a fair, effective and transparent United Nations. Administrative and budgetary matters were fundamental and served as clear parameters for the effective operation and performance of the Organization. The Committee should improve its working methods and conduct its negotiations in a more productive manner. He encouraged all delegations to engage constructively and in a spirit of compromise in negotiations, with a view to reaching consensus.

28. **Mr. Espinosa Cañizares** (Ecuador) said that the Organization's human resources were its greatest asset. The United Nations needed a human resources system that promoted excellence, training, learning and effective use of resources, in line with efforts to make the Organization more agile, effective, efficient, transparent and accountable.

29. His delegation welcomed the work of the Joint Inspection Unit, in particular its review of management and administration in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean ([JIU/REP/2020/4](#)). According to the Unit, the Commission continued to be responsive to regional needs, providing valuable support and services to countries in the region in key areas such as the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and efforts to tackle the pandemic, including through the establishment of a COVID-19 observatory to carry out analysis, make policy recommendations and build capacities to address the pandemic's economic impact. His delegation looked forward to the Unit's review of management and administration in the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), to be conducted in 2021. UN-Habitat, which played a vital role in coordination related to urbanization and sustainable human settlements, was responsible for the

implementation, follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, held in Quito in October 2016.

30. His delegation would also pay close attention to the Committee's deliberations on conference services facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, internship programmes in the United Nations system, the pension scheme for members of the International Court of Justice and the President and judges of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and standards of accommodation for air travel.

31. **Mr. Croker** (United Kingdom) said that his delegation trusted that the expanded Advisory Committee would continue to provide the Fifth Committee with timely, technical and evidence-based advice to inform its deliberations. The Organization's response to the unprecedented challenges of 2020 had been enhanced by the reforms shaped and authorized by the Fifth Committee in previous years. The first part of the resumed seventy-fifth session was an opportunity to take decisions that would ensure that the United Nations was equipped to respond to both current and future challenges. The year 2020 had reminded everyone of the importance of preparing for the unexpected.

32. The greatest asset of the United Nations was its people. The Committee had a responsibility to provide staff with a framework in which they could thrive and fulfil the mandates entrusted to them. Strengthening the Organization's human resources framework would help to ensure a modern, agile, mobile and diverse workforce, which was particularly important as the United Nations sought to build back better after the pandemic. Staff must be provided with opportunities for skills and career development, through a modern approach to mobility, training and effective performance management. Ensuring that staff were well trained, motivated and in the right place at the right time, and fostering a culture of respect, well-being and inclusion, in which all staff felt valued and diversity was celebrated, would help the United Nations to deliver high-quality results. His delegation therefore hoped that the Committee would reach consensus on the Secretary-General's proposals for strengthening the Organization's human resources framework.

33. Seconded military and police personnel, who brought much-needed expertise to help the United Nations to fulfil its most vital mandates, must be able to do their jobs without risk or concern regarding their situation. The matter affected Member States from various regions, including those that had seconded such personnel and those that wished to do so in the future.

34. Strengthening the culture of accountability was central to making the United Nations more effective. His delegation looked forward to discussing the implementation of the various initiatives aimed at enhancing accountability and the progress achieved to date, including with regard to the delegation of authority, results-based management and enterprise risk management.

35. The new working methods introduced as a result of the pandemic could help to make the United Nations a more inclusive and accessible place to work, expanding opportunities for all staff. The United Nations should continue to make use of such methods where appropriate, in order to enhance opportunities and reduce the Organization's costs and carbon footprint.

36. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that he would focus his statement on human resources management, an area in which much work had been done to prepare for the current part of the resumed session; the Committee had before it around 50 reports, based on which it must approve a draft resolution on the matter. His delegation would consider the Secretary-General's proposals from the perspective of whether they would make human resources policy more effective and meet the Organization's needs in terms of qualified staff and the successful, efficient functioning of the Secretariat. The General Assembly had not adopted a resolution on human resources management since its seventy-first session and Member States needed to set the correct course in the area.

37. The principle governing the recruitment of staff was enshrined in Article 101 of the Charter, and should be the basis for the development of new human resources policies and the improvement of existing ones. It was necessary to focus on improving geographical representation, in accordance with the mandates that Member States had repeatedly given to the Secretary-General. His delegation was wary of new approaches that had not been approved by Member States, in particular the concept of regional diversity. Any action taken by the Secretariat on its own initiative must be aligned with the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

38. His delegation was concerned that the proposals on staff mobility and the Young Professionals Programme might reduce the opportunities for external candidates to join the United Nations. It would pay close attention to the jurisdictional distribution of responsibilities and the workforce diversity parameters developed by the International Civil Service Commission. An important criterion for diversity should be multilingualism. The updated concept of diversity

contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of human resources management reform for the period 2019–2020 and an outlook beyond (A/75/540) did not fully correspond to the framework developed by the Commission.

39. **The Chair** said he took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work on the understanding that it would be adjusted as necessary, as the first part of the resumed session progressed.

40. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 146: Human resources management

(A/75/82, A/75/82/Corr.1, A/75/515, A/75/540, A/75/540/Add.1, A/75/591, A/75/591/Add.1, A/75/648, A/75/756, A/75/765, A/75/771, A/75/775 and A/75/776)

41. **Ms. Pollard** (Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of human resources management reform for the period 2019–2020 and an outlook beyond (A/75/540), said that, in the report, the Secretary-General highlighted the ways in which the Organization-specific and broader context had influenced the reforms, as well as the ways in which the various human resources components contributed to the achievement of the reforms' goals. The results of the reforms were emphasized, rather than the inputs and activities required to put them in place.

42. Rapid and radical global changes were reshaping organizations and the field of human resources, with organizations compelled to move towards greater diversity and inclusion in the workplace, employee engagement, workforce agility and continuous learning. The United Nations must develop a mobile and adaptable workforce, equipped with the skills and knowledge to respond to the Organization's evolving mandates and changes in the external environment.

43. In order to put the human resources reform efforts into perspective, the linkages between the organizational environment and the Secretariat's human resources system were outlined in the report. In addition, the strategic, longer-term outcomes of the reforms, namely agility, diversity and accountability, were articulated, and the progress made in the attainment of each outcome during the period 2019–2020 was described. Lastly, the way ahead and the priorities for the near future were set out.

44. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the new approach to staff mobility: building an agile Organization by providing opportunities for on-the-job learning and skills development (A/75/540/Add.1), she

said that, in accordance with the new approach, mobility was defined as a way for staff to benefit from the diversity and richness of organizational mandates and duty stations in order to acquire and continuously develop the skills needed to fulfil the Organization's evolving mandates through continuous learning and skills development. The career enhancement framework was based on the fundamental link between learning and skills development, on the one hand, and career fulfilment on the other. The aim was to articulate that achieving job impact and professional excellence must be the primary career driver in the Organization, thus closely linking career advancement with skills acquisition and development, and with learning.

45. Previous efforts had focused on geographical and functional mobility, while the new approach was geared towards geographical movement to ensure mandate fulfilment and opportunities for staff to gain broader experience in both headquarters and non-headquarters duty stations. The approach would be implemented gradually as serving staff retired and newly recruited staff joined the Organization, with serving staff able to opt in. The full implementation of mobility was a long-term endeavour.

46. Introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics (A/75/591) and the composition of the Secretariat: gratis personnel, retired staff and consultants and individual contractors (A/75/591/Add.1), she said that, in response to requests from the General Assembly, the reports contained, for the first time, in-depth analysis of factors that affected progress towards improving diversity in the Secretariat. The analysis, which was intended to help Member States and legislative bodies to make better decisions regarding human resources management, focused on key challenges and opportunities for the achievement of gender parity and geographical diversity – in terms of both geographical representation and regional group diversity – in accordance with the targets established in the system-wide strategy on gender parity and the Secretariat's Geographical Diversity Strategy. Efforts were under way to make most of the demographic information contained in the report on staff demographics available to Member States online, in order to ensure timely and continuous access to key demographic data and to enable Member States to carry out tailored analysis.

47. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019 (A/75/648), she said that the report provided an overview of the administrative framework in disciplinary matters,

summaries of individual cases of misconduct, and information on the considerations taken into account by the Secretary-General in cases where disciplinary measures had been imposed. The report also provided statistics on the numbers and types of cases received during the reporting period, as well as the disposition of completed cases.

48. Turning to the reports of the Secretary-General that had been issued during the seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions and were also before the Committee, she said that the Secretariat had made progress on many of the reform initiatives outlined in those reports, in order to ensure a decentralized, agile, field-focused management paradigm for the effective and transparent management of human resources. Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules had been proposed in order to provide decision-makers with a simplified regulatory framework that was aligned with the new management paradigm. To improve agility, the Secretariat had reviewed and updated the 20-year-old competency framework and overhauled the leadership and management development programmes to align them with the system of delegation of authority and leadership frameworks. Under development were a new career enhancement framework, in which principles, processes, tools and resources to help staff to achieve career fulfilment would be established, and a new performance management approach, in which managerial accountability, team-oriented goals and ongoing feedback would be emphasized. The Geographical Diversity Strategy provided a focused, systematic and deliberate approach to increasing such diversity.

49. In 2018, the Secretary-General had requested the General Assembly to lift the barriers that hindered staff in the General Service and related categories from competing for positions at the Professional level. The proposal was that the principle of equal treatment of all applicants to positions in the Professional category at the P-2 level (not earmarked for the Young Professionals Programme) and P-3 level be extended to staff members in the General Service and related categories and in the Field Service category, up to the FS-5 level, and that the "G to P" element be removed from the Young Professionals Programme so that the positions subject to the system of desirable ranges at the P-1 and P-2 levels would be filled exclusively by external candidates from underrepresented or unrepresented Member States. The proposal would not only improve career satisfaction but also help to achieve equitable geographical representation.

50. Other pending proposals that would affect the reforms included amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules (A/74/289); guidance on the review of the system of desirable ranges, including the updating of the

upper and lower limits in order to establish a more effective mechanism for ensuring equitable geographical distribution, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics ([A/74/82](#)); and increasing the earnings limit for retirees from \$22,000 to the equivalent of six months of salary at grade P-4, step VI, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of human resources management reform for the period 2017–2018 ([A/73/372/Add.1](#)).

51. **Ms. Armstrong** (Director, Ethics Office), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Ethics Office ([A/75/82](#) and [A/75/82/Corr.1](#)), said that the report covered the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019 and also included information on the activities of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations. During the reporting period, the Ethics Office had continued to assist the Secretary-General in enhancing the Organization's culture of ethics, transparency and accountability. The year 2019 had been the Office's busiest since its establishment, with over 2,000 requests for services. The Office had continued to provide advice on due diligence and best practices in corporate compliance programmes. Under the financial disclosure programme, over 6,000 statements had been reviewed; the Office counted on sufficient budgetary support to continue administering the programme, whose financing had been under strain as a result of the liquidity challenges facing the Organization. A total of 73 per cent of senior officials had participated in the voluntary public disclosure initiative. With regard to outreach, some 32,000 individuals had taken part in the 2019 Leadership Dialogue facilitated by the Office under the theme "Conflicts of interest: why do they matter?".

52. Under the policy on protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations, the Ethics Office had received over 200 requests. It had responded to 12 referrals for preventive action from the Office of Internal Oversight Services and had conducted preliminary reviews of 44 claims, 12 of which it had considered to represent prima facie cases of retaliation; of those cases, it had determined, after investigation, that 3 had involved retaliation. To ensure coherence in the application of ethical standards, the Ethics Office had participated in the annual meeting of the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations.

53. As requested by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General had, in his previous report ([A/73/89](#)), proposed three measures for approval by the Assembly in order to strengthen the independence of the Ethics Office: the direct submission of the Office's annual

report to the Assembly, without going through the Executive Office of the Secretary-General; the enhancement of the accountability of the Ethics Office through the addition of a reporting line to the Independent Audit Advisory Committee and the creation of a consultation role for that Committee on matters involving the Secretary-General, including allegations of conflicts of interest; and raising the rank of the head of the Office to the level of Assistant Secretary-General, starting with her successor. The Secretary-General had also proposed three additional measures, to be noted by the Assembly, concerning term limits, security of tenure and re-employment restrictions for the head of the Office. The merits of the proposals were highlighted in the report.

54. As noted by the Secretary-General in a previous report on the activities of the Office ([A/71/334](#)), in an operating environment marked by increasing complexity, the United Nations faced new and increasing challenges, which called for an Organization served by an international civil service that was fit for purpose. Looking ahead, the Office must strengthen its independence. A reminder of service to the public would help to rally staff to recommit themselves to the vision and purpose of the United Nations.

55. **Mr. Bachar Bong** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the overview of human resources management reform for the period 2019–2020 and an outlook beyond ([A/75/765](#)), said that the related report of the Secretary-General ([A/75/540](#)) appeared to include new elements that had not been contained in his previous overview report ([A/73/372](#)), such as the principle of geographical diversity, in relation to which a new strategy had been adopted, and the notion of a diverse workforce. Given that the scope of the reform outcome related to diversity, as described in the Secretary-General's latest overview report, was not fully in line with what the General Assembly had approved in its resolution [73/273](#), the Advisory Committee trusted that clarification would be provided to the Assembly. With regard to the key performance indicators for senior managers, in 2018, only 2 of 23 departments and offices had met the target of ensuring that 50 per cent of candidates appointed to posts subject to geographical distribution were from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide, for each entity, annual information on the achievement of the target, with comparative data, in his reports on the composition of the Secretariat.

56. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on staff mobility ([A/75/756](#)), he said that the Advisory

Committee supported staff mobility and acknowledged the efforts of the Secretary-General to incorporate the lessons learned from previous experiences. The Secretary-General should provide clarification and updated information on the current status of the approved mobility framework, the implementation of which had been paused in 2017. Major components of the new approach remained undefined or required further analysis and clarification, in particular with regard to external recruitment, financial implications and accountability. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to submit a detailed report for the consideration and approval of the Assembly during the main part of its seventy-sixth session. The Board of Auditors should have appropriate oversight, including through annual reports to the Assembly. While the new approach would apply only to encumbered posts, it would affect external recruitment, as some serving staff members would opt for mobility and more posts would become part of the talent pools, instead of being advertised for recruitment. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to analyse the matter further in order to ensure full compliance with the principle of non-discrimination against external recruitment.

57. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics ([A/75/775](#)), he said that the Advisory Committee acknowledged the efforts made to present analytical information and identify trends and persistent or emerging challenges. The proposed move to a biennial reporting period, from the current annual reporting cycle, was not justified. With regard to staff recruitment, greater efforts should be made to give due consideration to the principles enshrined in Article 101 of the Charter, including equitable geographical distribution. Regarding the national staffing strategy of the Organization, the Advisory Committee looked forward to the issuance of nationalization guidelines and trusted that more efforts would be made to nationalize positions in accordance with General Assembly resolutions.

58. The Advisory Committee trusted that detailed disaggregated statistical information on external and internal appointments would be provided in the next composition report and that further clarification regarding the basis for categorizing appointments as external or internal, upon initial appointment or reappointment, would be provided in the refined global human resources strategy. With regard to the ageing of staff and the rejuvenation of the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee looked forward to the inclusion of more junior-level posts in future budget submissions

and trusted that information about the rejuvenation strategy and upcoming retirements would be included in the next human resources management report. The Advisory Committee stressed the continued need to monitor the overall top-heaviness of the Organization and ensure that any future proposals for the establishment of high-level positions entailed a thorough review of existing functions and structures.

59. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the composition of the Secretariat: gratis personnel, retired staff and consultants and individual contractors ([A/75/771](#)), he said that the Advisory Committee was concerned about the continued reliance on retired staff, which ran counter to the need to rejuvenate the Secretariat, and recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to reduce the reliance on retirees in order to improve workforce succession planning. The continued use of a significant number of consultants and individual contractors for extended contractual periods was also a source of concern. Efforts should be made to rely on internal expertise and skills. Options for reducing the number of consultants and individual contractors or making more efficient use of them should be provided in the next overview report on human resources management, along with long-term capacity-building alternatives.

60. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to make further efforts to bolster the applicant pool for the internship programme and attract more applicants, in particular from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States and developing countries, including by making use of remote working opportunities. Greater efforts should be made to improve the gender balance in all categories of gratis personnel, including in peacekeeping operations and special political missions, in line with Article 101 of the Charter and with due consideration for equitable geographical representation.

61. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019 ([A/75/776](#)), he said that the Advisory Committee noted the increase in the average time taken to dispose of cases and recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to conduct a further assessment of the causes and identify solutions to enhance the rate of disposal. The Secretary-General should strengthen his efforts to fully recoup losses arising from misconduct by staff members. With regard to cases involving staff members with managerial responsibilities, more transparency, enhanced accountability and stronger protections for staff who came forward with complaints

were needed in order to create a harmonious environment. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide more detailed information and measures to address the issue in his next report.

62. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the activities of the Ethics Office ([A/75/515](#)), he said that the Advisory Committee welcomed the overall increased participation in the voluntary disclosure initiative. It trusted that the Secretary-General would take all the necessary measures to address potential conflicts of interest with the necessary accountability framework in place and encourage senior officials who had not yet publicly disclosed a summary of their assets to do so in future cycles.

63. With regard to the submission of the annual report of the Office directly to the General Assembly and the addition of a reporting line to the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, any revisions to the stature, reporting line and governance structure of the Office would have consequences for the Secretariat and for the Organization as a whole. Should the Secretary-General wish to make a fully justified proposal concerning the independence of the Office, a detailed report would need to include such matters as the workload, structure and functions of the Office, and the implications for other offices in the Secretariat, including oversight entities, and for United Nations funds and programmes. The proposal to reclassify the post of head of the Office from the level of Director (D-2) to the level of Assistant-Secretary General was not justified, given that the credibility of the Office resided not in the level of its head but in its mandate and functions.

64. **The Chair**, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [35/213](#), invited a representative of the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA) to make a statement.

65. **Ms. Nemeth** (Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System) said that, while staff members had done their utmost to keep the Organization running during the previous year, the COVID-19 pandemic was taking a heavy toll on their mental health. CCISUA requested the General Assembly to support efforts to strengthen mental health and occupational health and safety capabilities.

66. CCISUA shared the concerns of the Advisory Committee regarding the human resources strategy, which did not provide details of how the high-level aspirations invoked in it would be achieved. It was regrettable that the staff unions had not been consulted

about either the global human resources strategy 2019–2021 or its successor. The new strategy would therefore lack any significant buy-in or contribution from staff. CCISUA hoped that that anomaly would be corrected.

67. The staff unions also shared the concerns of the Advisory Committee regarding the new mobility proposal and the lack of supporting data. The Advisory Committee, in its report on the matter ([A/75/756](#)), indicated that staff representatives generally supported the new mobility approach, but that was an overstatement. An outcome report from the Staff-Management Committee had been possible only after the Administration had overruled staff concerns about five key elements of the proposal.

68. Staff members reported lack of trust in the system and fear of retaliation as the main obstacles to reporting misconduct. Harassment and abuse of authority remained the main concerns. Simple measures could be taken to improve the situation, including anonymizing cases in the formal justice system and adopting a zero-tolerance policy on retaliation. The General Assembly should also keep pressing for genuine accountability in the area.

69. While most of the proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules had been discussed with staff representatives, some had been incorporated without consultation, including an addition under Rule 4.13 (d) that would limit the jurisdiction of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal to grant interim measures. CCISUA requested the General Assembly to reject that amendment or request the Secretary-General to consult the staff representatives on it.

70. CCISUA fully supported the Secretary-General's proposal to allow all staff serving in the General Service and related categories and at the FS-1 to FS-5 levels in the Field Service category to apply for positions in the Professional category up to the P-3 level. CCISUA urged Member States to abolish the "G to P" examination, which was an obsolete and antagonistic limitation. With regard to the Young Professionals Programme, challenges included career stagnation at the P-2 level, a high percentage of resignations among P-2 and P-3 staff, a low proportion of entry-level P-2 posts and a lengthy placement process for successful candidates.

71. **Mr. Diallo** (Guinea), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, in the midst of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations was coordinating global efforts in such areas as addressing poverty, settling conflicts, taking care of refugees, vulnerable children, women and gender issues, ending hunger, resolving environmental issues and increasing economic welfare and international trade. The Group's appreciation of staff members' dedication

and sacrifice was reflected in the great importance that it attached to human resources management and related issues across the United Nations system, particularly in view of the pandemic, which required system-wide coordination in areas such as entitlements, flexible alternative working arrangements, and work-life balance, in order to ensure the continuity of operations. Staff must implement the mandates of the United Nations in a rule-based environment that exemplified diversity, flexibility and dynamism, and that motivated and helped them to make their best efforts to serve the rest of the world.

72. The reform of human resources management was essential to the overall reform of the United Nations. The Group commended the progress made, particularly in streamlining rules and policies, and making changes in the conditions of service. It also welcomed the strengthening of internal anti-corruption measures, the establishment of a safe environment for staff to report misconduct, and the efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace.

73. The workforce of the United Nations must be geographically diverse, balanced in terms of gender, international, talented and representative of all the peoples that the Organization served. The principles of equitable geographical representation and gender parity were cornerstones of such a workforce.

74. The Group was concerned about the imbalance in geographical representation in the Secretariat, given the reference in Article 101 of the Charter to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. That principle was essential to ensuring that the Organization was international in character and represented all its Member States. The Secretary-General should intensify his efforts to achieve equitable geographical representation among United Nations staff, especially at senior levels. Due attention needed to be given to the representation of troop- and police-contributing countries. The Group also stood ready to engage in negotiations on the improvement of the system of desirable ranges. Member States should not shy away from embracing changes that would advance the Organization.

75. The Group welcomed the increase in the number of female staff members, who accounted for 38.4 per cent of the overall staff of the Secretariat. It noted, however, that the proportion of women in senior positions remained below 50 per cent. Regrettably, the proportion of women from developing countries in such positions was disproportionately low.

76. The Group was concerned about the rise in the average age of Secretariat staff and the fall in the number of entry-level positions, particularly at the P-1 and P-2 levels. The situation hampered the achievement of important human resources targets, including the rejuvenation of the Organization and the acquisition of fresh talents from the different regions of the world, in particular unrepresented and underrepresented developing Member States.

77. Language skills were important in selection processes; the equality of the two working languages of the Secretariat must be respected and, during recruitment, due consideration must be given to a good command of the official languages at specific duty stations. The Group was concerned about the lack of success of efforts to reach out to potential candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented countries, particularly developing countries.

78. **Mr. Teo** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the Organization's human resources management policies must evolve in tandem with the ongoing reform of the United Nations so that they advanced, rather than hindered, those changes. Regrettably, the Committee had been unable to reach satisfactory conclusions on key policy issues at previous sessions; it was to be hoped that those issues would be resolved at the current session.

79. A staff whose composition reflected the Organization's international character would enhance the range of views and skills available, and the effectiveness of mandate fulfilment. The Association commended the Geographical Diversity Strategy but reiterated that the principle of equitable geographical representation should not be undermined by broader concepts, such as regional diversity. Equitable geographical representation should receive a similar level of attention to gender parity, in particular at the senior levels.

80. The Secretary-General should improve recruitment to rejuvenate the Secretariat and address the ageing of its staff. ASEAN commended such efforts as the online examination platform, which enhanced the accessibility of recruitment opportunities. Such platforms were all the more important in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, more should be done to create equal opportunities for candidates from developing countries. To enhance accountability, the Secretary-General should report regularly to the General Assembly on tangible improvements in geographical representation. The updates should include analysis of the root causes of, and measures to address, the non-representation and underrepresentation of developing countries.

81. Consistent training and development of staff was the cornerstone of a sustainable organization. Despite the ongoing liquidity challenges facing the United Nations, expenditure on training should not be postponed to make short-term savings, since doing so would be detrimental to long-term mandate fulfilment. In-house capacity should be developed and strengthened. The Secretary-General should invest in the necessary staff training and development, which was an important aspect of human resources management.

82. **Mr. Fifield** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that the most valuable asset of the United Nations was its staff. The three delegations were mindful of the difficult working conditions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and appreciated the Organization's efforts to adapt its work practices and prioritize staff welfare. Now more than ever, in order to fulfil the Organization's challenging mandates, it was important to have a capable, diverse workforce that reflected gender parity, consisted of empowered staff and operated to the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and efficiency. The three delegations continued to support the Secretary-General's reform efforts, of which human resources management was a critical part. They were pleased that a more collaborative culture was emerging as a result of the reforms and looked forward to a United Nations that delivered better for the people it served around the world.

83. Human resources management was a crucial agenda item comprising many different elements. The Committee should strive to achieve an outcome in respect of each report before it, including those from previous sessions on which action remained pending, and to provide clear direction to the Secretary-General, as well as guidance on future reports under the item. It was regrettable that the Committee had been unable to reach consensus on human resources management at the seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions of the General Assembly; it must do better, and the three delegations were committed to achieving a positive outcome at the current session.

84. **Mr. Camelli** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Andorra, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that human resources were the cornerstone of the management reform of the Secretary-General, who must be able to use the full extent of his prerogative under the Charter in that regard. A more modern and effective human resources system and an organizational culture based on results and mandate fulfilment were essential to his efforts to modernize the United Nations.

85. Those efforts must make the Organization more nimble and improve its response to the challenges that it faced. The European Union supported the global human resources strategy, which was intended to foster strategic people management and proactive talent acquisition, and to transform the organizational culture. The Organization's workforce should continue to embody the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, as set out in Article 101 of the Charter. It should, moreover, reflect the diversity of the Organization's membership, including in terms of geography, gender and skills.

86. The States members of the European Union welcomed the progress made towards gender parity among United Nations staff, in particular high-level managers and resident coordinators. System-wide efforts should be made at all levels, including in the field missions, where differences between men's and women's representation were most evident.

87. There was an urgent need to rejuvenate the Organization, acquire new talent and update the approach taken to internships. Multilingualism, too, was of paramount importance for the United Nations, and linguistic diversity should be adequately reflected in human resources management. The European Union welcomed the Secretary-General's emphasis on broadening the understanding of diversity in organizational settings and supported the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy.

88. A well-functioning mobility framework at Headquarters and in the field was essential to the Organization, and would serve the interests of staff and facilitate mandate implementation. The European Union welcomed the new approach to staff mobility, which allowed staff to benefit from the diversity and richness of organizational mandates and duty stations within the Secretariat in order to acquire and continuously develop skills through on-the-job learning and skills development. Training was essential in order for the Organization and its workforce to adapt to the current complex working environment. Enhanced mobility, further training opportunities for staff and managers and a smoother transition to the Professional category for staff members from other categories were necessary to give individuals a chance to broaden their experience and develop their careers to the fullest.

89. The European Union attached great importance to the roll-out of a strong and robust accountability framework as an integral part of management reform. It was essential to foster a culture of ethics and transparency, as well as to prevent and address any type of misconduct. The European Union welcomed the work of the Ethics Office, the independence of which must be reinforced.

90. The goals of United Nations reform must be translated into specific and clear guidance for staff. The European Union therefore supported the proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, and appreciated the Secretary-General's efforts to go beyond editorial amendments and to modernize the text to reflect the new culture introduced through the reform.

91. A sustainable solution must be found to the issue of the remuneration and benefits paid to seconded active-duty military and police personnel. As the Committee once again addressed the potential conflict between the Staff Regulations and Rules and national legislation in the area, the European Union hoped that the Committee would consider the options presented by the Secretariat in a constructive manner. It was in everyone's interest to reach a consensual agreement while adhering to the principle that no Member State should be prevented from seconding such personnel.

92. **Mr. Traore** (Mali), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group hoped that the Committee would adopt a resolution on human resources management, which was of the utmost importance to the Organization, at the current part of the resumed session. The Group noted the Secretary-General's global human resources strategy beyond 2021 and his efforts to inform Member States of the progress of his initiatives in the area.

93. In accordance with Article 101 of the Charter, due regard should be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. In addition, the General Assembly, in its resolution 71/263, had called for the attainment of equitable geographical distribution in the Secretariat in order to reflect the Organization's multicultural and geographically broad membership. A comprehensive strategy, including concrete actions, benchmarks and timelines that should be incorporated into the overall refined human resources strategy, must urgently be developed to improve geographical representation. The Group attached great importance to the attainment of equitable geographical representation in accordance with the Charter. Regrettably, no concrete proposals containing appropriate measures to achieve such representation had been brought before the Committee. The Group was concerned that senior managers in the Secretariat were far from achieving the target, stipulated in their compacts, of ensuring that 50 per cent of candidates appointed to posts subject to geographical distribution were from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States. The increase in the representation of developing countries must be expedited, particularly at senior levels, in order for the United Nations to reflect the

diversity of its Member States and address complex global challenges that transcended borders.

94. The Group was concerned about the number of vacant posts subject to geographical distribution and the temporary occupancy of such posts by staff without geographical status. The situation adversely affected the already low number of posts subject to geographical distribution pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/247.

95. With regard to gender balance, further efforts were needed to attract and retain more female staff, particularly from Africa, to work in field operations, where the ratio of female staff to total staff remained relatively low.

96. He thanked the delegations that had endorsed the position statement, initiated by the Group in January 2021, on standing together to combat racism and racial discrimination, and all other forms of intolerance, at the United Nations. Despite the Secretary-General's administrative instructions and other guidance materials intended to sensitize United Nations staff to the importance of combating discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority, there was a need to build upon the progress made and intensify organizational efforts to detect, deter and eliminate any potential for racism and racial discrimination, and any other forms of intolerance, across the United Nations system.

97. The six official languages of the United Nations must receive equal treatment and multilingualism was essential to the Organization's activities. The equality of the two working languages of the Secretariat must be respected.

98. **Mr. Ammann** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that the most valuable asset of the United Nations was its staff, on whose expertise and skills the Organization depended to fulfil its mandates. It therefore needed modern, rationalized human resources management that supported a high-performing workforce and a more productive, flexible and results-oriented United Nations. Accordingly, the agenda item on human resources management deserved the Committee's full attention. Unfortunately, the Committee had not reached agreement on the item at several previous sessions, and thus had various reports to consider and important decisions to take at the current part of the resumed session.

99. The two delegations appreciated the Secretary-General's overall strategy and his efforts to strengthen human resources management. The Organization's senior managers must lead by example and take

measures in that regard. Appropriate human resources management was crucial to management reform, which was essential to the other reform processes.

100. The two delegations supported the Secretary-General's approach to the recruitment and development of a mobile, field-oriented, multilingual and diverse workforce. They commended him on the detailed analysis of the root causes of lack of diversity in recruitment and on the launch of the Geographical Diversity Strategy. Particular attention should be paid, however, to gender equality in senior and middle management posts, and in field services.

101. Staff mobility was essential to building a skilled, dynamic and adaptable workforce that could interact with different stakeholders in different settings, while offering staff learning opportunities and career development, so that the Organization could meet the challenges of an interconnected world and ensure the long-term sustainability of that workforce. The two delegations welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals on the matter.

102. The two delegations welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen human resources management through initiatives, strategies, and amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules. The Member States must now provide clear guidance on the way forward by adopting a resolution on the item.

103. **Mr. Benhamida** (Libya) said that his delegation welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to implement the necessary reform of human resources management. It supported measures aimed at attracting young people while also retaining staff with expertise to contribute to the radical transformation of the Organization. Despite the progress made, further reforms should be pursued in order to address the challenges faced. He wished to stress the importance of staff training and development using modern methods and technologies. The principles of equitable geographical distribution and gender parity reflected the Organization's values. Their attainment was a cornerstone of the Secretary-General's reforms and would be consistent with the ultimate goal of a modern, diverse and inclusive United Nations. His delegation trusted that, in future, all Member States would have the opportunity to participate equitably in the Organization's agencies, projects and programmes. It would participate in the Committee's work to arrive at objective, transparent resolutions and recommendations.

104. **Mr. Kimura** (Japan) said that human resources management was a key element of an effective, efficient and inclusive organization, and the United Nations must recruit and invest in highly skilled and motivated staff. In order to achieve a more diverse organization in

accordance with Article 101 of the Charter, which referred to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible, the long-standing challenge of the underrepresentation or non-representation of some Member States must be addressed; his delegation once again called on the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts to that end. His delegation also looked forward to discussing the ways in which the principle of gender parity could be reflected in human resources management policy.

105. The reduced number of entry-level Professional posts and the increase in the number of senior-level posts in the Secretariat were a cause for concern and made the Organization increasingly top-heavy. The Secretary-General should make further efforts to rejuvenate the United Nations, bring in fresh ideas, and promote succession planning and agility in the workforce to advance management reform.

106. While his delegation recognized the importance of staff mobility, elements of the Secretary-General's proposed new approach, including the impact on external recruitment and the additional costs of putting the framework into operation, remained unclear. His delegation would welcome the opportunity to examine the proposal carefully through deliberations on the details.

107. **Mr. Mmalane** (Botswana) said that, with the staff of the Secretariat numbering over 37,000, Botswana supported the Secretary-General's reform efforts, of which human resources management was a critical part. Despite the progress made, more needed to be done, with due consideration given to equitable geographical representation. An effective human resources management system based on such representation was needed. The achievement, in the Secretariat, of broad geographical representation, gender balance, and diversity in terms of regions and cultures would strengthen the Organization's ability to work with and for Member States. In addition, the system of desirable ranges should be reviewed. The human resources management structure must be modernized, streamlined and integrated, particularly where it ran counter to the Charter.

108. His delegation welcomed the increase in the number of women in the Organization but believed that more should be done to achieve system-wide gender parity at every level. His delegation also welcomed the Secretary-General's measures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace.

109. The United Nations needed a modern human resources system that reflected its membership at all levels. Such a system would increase tolerance and the

appreciation of all cultures and of the challenges faced by the Member States and regions, and would ensure that mandates were optimally fulfilled. Despite the progress made, his delegation was concerned about the imbalance in equitable geographical representation and gender parity in the Secretariat, and would actively engage in the deliberations on the agenda item to arrive at a positive outcome. He urged the Committee to build on the gains made through the human resources management reform and ensure that the Organization was reflective of the Member States.

110. **Mr. Manalo** (Philippines) said that the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen human resources management despite the COVID-19 pandemic had helped to ensure the continuity of operations, including through remote working, and were key to the success of the overall reform efforts. The Secretary-General's strategy should be refined through a review in order to ensure satisfactory outcomes and allow the Committee to adopt a draft resolution on the agenda item. A skilled international workforce reflecting the principles of equitable geographical representation and gender parity would provide a strong foundation for an efficient and effective United Nations.

111. The Secretary-General should redouble his efforts to improve geographical representation in the Professional and higher categories. The Philippines appreciated the improvements in the gender balance of the Secretariat and hoped that the Secretary-General would provide information on the measures taken in that regard in his gender strategy.

112. The Philippines supported the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, through which the Secretary-General aimed to achieve equality for persons with disabilities and foster an inclusive culture. An extensive analysis of trends in the establishment of high-level positions should be conducted, and measures should be taken to avoid overlaps. There was a need to attract more applicants to the internship programme, in particular from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States, including developing countries. The hiring of a significant number of consultants and individual contractors for extended contractual periods should be reassessed. The Secretariat should propose options for reducing the Organization's reliance on individual contractors and improving internal expertise and skills in the Secretariat. Staff in the General Service category or on fixed-term appointments, who had proved themselves in their respective areas of service, should be protected.

113. **Ms. Jerbouï** (Morocco) said that the greatest asset of any international organization was its staff. The

recruitment process should therefore be based on attracting, developing and retaining talented, diverse personnel. The role of United Nations staff in mandate fulfilment was as essential as that of the Member States. Morocco paid tribute to the staff of the Secretariat, who had been obliged to adapt to new working arrangements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and had demonstrated their ability to meet the challenges facing the Organization.

114. Morocco reiterated its support for the Secretary-General's human resources management reform. The Secretary-General's commitment had been demonstrated by the attainment of gender parity among senior officials and non-field operations. Greater achievements would follow, given the remarkable contribution of women at the United Nations. In order to enhance women's role in all areas of Moroccan society, 10 women diplomats had been appointed to the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations in New York. Her delegation welcomed the significant results of the Secretary-General's efforts to achieve equitable geographical representation in the Secretariat.

115. With regard to the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of human resources management reform for the period 2019–2020 and an outlook beyond (A/75/540) and the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/75/765), Morocco noted the long-term outcomes of the human resources reform, namely, an agile, diverse and accountable organization at which the recruitment, training and assignment of a competent, adaptable and geographically diverse staff that was balanced in terms of gender were effectively managed.

116. **Mr. Koba** (Indonesia) said that human resources were a vital asset of the United Nations and the most productive capital of the Organization. Although human resources management needed continuous improvement, it had been a challenge to achieve consensus on the agenda item at previous sessions. Delegations should strive to achieve consensus on all the matters before the Committee.

117. As the strength of human resources was based on the skills and expertise of staff, the Secretariat must improve the quality of, and staff's access to, training and development. The United Nations served the whole world, and its staff should therefore be diverse and reflective of the principle of equitable geographical distribution rather than rely on limited perspectives drawn from a homogeneous talent pool. Diversity in terms of both gender and geography was essential to maintaining the global society's trust and confidence in multilateralism. Developing countries needed more access and capacity-building in relation to recruitment;

the Secretariat must improve transparency and provide a user-friendly interface in order to discover more talent worldwide. The United Nations should also manage rosters transparently and effectively, since roster members had completed demanding recruitment processes and their future depended on the fairness of the Organization's procedures.

118. **Ms. Pollard** (Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance) said that the Secretary-General was committed to strengthening the Organization in the area of human resources management to ensure that the staff was representative of the Member States. In particular, the number of staff who were subject to the system of desirable ranges and nationals of unrepresented or underrepresented countries would be increased in order to achieve equitable geographical distribution, and the geographical diversity of staff in the Professional category who were not subject to the system would be improved.

119. **Mr. Bachar Bong** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, with regard to the observations made, during the Committee's consideration of its organization of work, on the timely issuance of evidence-based reports, the Advisory Committee would continue to strive to provide Member States with clear advice to help them arrive at conclusions on the matters before them.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.