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## Fifth Committee

### Summary record of the 14th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 18 November 2014, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Ružička ..... (Slovakia)  
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative  
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 137: Human resources management**

(A/69/117, A/69/190, A/69/190/Add.1, A/69/190/Add.2, A/69/190/Add.2/Corr.1, A/69/190/Add.3, A/69/190/Add.4, A/69/292, A/69/292/Add.1, A/69/283, A/69/332 and A/69/572)

1. **Mr. Takasu** (Under-Secretary-General for Management), introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on human resources management (A/69/117, A/69/190, A/69/190/Add.1, A/69/190/Add.2, A/69/190/Add.2/Corr.1, A/69/190/Add.3, A/69/190/Add.4, A/69/292, A/69/292/Add.1 and A/69/283), said that the overview report (A/69/190) focused on the progress made in the implementation of human resources management reform, which was designed to improve mandate delivery. Progress had been made in harmonizing conditions of service in the field and streamlining the contractual system, and the barriers to mobility within the Organization had been removed. That had enabled the Secretary-General to manage talent in a more holistic and deliberate way in response to complex and rapidly evolving mandates. If the United Nations was to maintain its effectiveness and relevance as an organization it must attract, engage, support and retain a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce.

2. The report highlighted the ongoing efforts to develop and institutionalize effective workforce planning in the Secretariat. Many aspects of talent management would in the future be carried out by job network boards with the support of network staffing teams, which represented a shift from vertical to horizontal talent management. On staff selection and recruitment, the Secretariat had developed a new, harmonized Global General Service Test and the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) was also piloting an online test to assist hiring managers in reducing the time needed to manually review applications.

3. The Secretary-General continued to attach great importance to efforts to achieve gender parity, improve geographical representation and intensify outreach activities. With regard to gender, the ratio of female staff to total staff had increased over the previous five years from 32.9 per cent to 34.1 per cent but gaps remained, especially at the senior levels. The Secretariat would continue to promote a system-wide strategy to increase representation of women at senior levels. Furthermore, since there were significantly

fewer female applicants than male applicants, the Secretariat would target outreach to encourage diverse female professionals to apply. Significant outreach activities had been undertaken to attract candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented countries, including collaboration with Governments, universities and professional organizations. The report also drew attention to the practice of United Nations staff members having to renounce permanent resident status in a country outside the country of their nationality, which was a long-standing issue on which the Committee's guidance was sought.

4. The report on mobility (A/69/190/Add.1) provided information on the preparations for the implementation of the refined mobility framework as well as additional data on the costs of moves and on external candidates, in response to the request made in General Assembly resolution 68/265. The refined mobility framework approved by the Assembly would enable the Secretariat to develop the ability to ensure that staffing decisions were aligned with the Organization's evolving mandates on a global, strategic level while ensuring a fair sharing of the burden of service. The Secretary-General had intensified efforts to begin the phased implementation of the mobility framework in January 2016, starting with the political, peace and security (POLNET) job network.

5. Significant progress had been made in preparing for the implementation of the framework. A dedicated mobility implementation team had been created within OHRM. A governance structure had been established, including a steering committee to provide strategic oversight and a technical advisory group to provide guidance on substantive matters, policies and processes. In addition, workflows and terms of reference for the new staffing bodies and structures were being developed in close consultation with department heads and other stakeholders. The report was the first in a series of annual progress reports leading up to a five-year comprehensive review of the framework which would be submitted at the seventy-third session.

6. The report on performance management (A/69/190/Add.2) proposed the refined performance management system. A fair, credible performance management system was a pillar of modern human resources management; the system must be closely linked to the overall objectives of the Organization and to each individual's role in achieving them. It was also

a key tool for evaluating staff, providing them with effective feedback, acknowledging good performance and managing underperformance. In the United Nations, the main impediments to timely assessment and to dealing with underperformance were unclear and complicated performance management systems, lack of guidance, and lack of commitment and engagement by managers. Four key changes were needed in order for the performance management system to have the right impact in the Organization: more engagement on the part of senior managers to increase accountability; the establishment of a fair and credible system; more effective handling of underperformance; and simplified tools and policies to ensure compliance. It was hoped that the new system would be endorsed and then introduced in the cycle starting in April 2015 in order to support the launch of the mobility framework.

7. The report on the young professionals programme (A/69/190/Add.3) proposed three changes designed to reduce the timeline of the examination under that programme and the related costs: elimination of the general paper from the written examination; offering the examination by job network rather than job family; and introducing a computer-based online pre-test.

8. In his report on the assessment of the system of desirable ranges (A/69/190/Add.4), the purpose of which was to promote equitable geographical distribution in the composition of the Secretariat, the Secretary-General invited the Assembly to approve his recommendation to update the calculation used to determine the lower and upper limits of the desirable range.

9. The Secretariat had responded to the unprecedented Ebola crisis in West Africa by supporting the health and welfare of United Nations staff and their families. Staff in the countries affected carried out their vital work in the face of immense challenges and the Secretariat was taking all necessary medical and safety measures for staff before deployment, while they were serving in the field and upon their return from those countries. It was important for staff to have access to up-to-date information, since the situation was evolving quickly. To that end, the website of the OHRM Emergency Preparedness and Support Team served as the key gateway for staff and families to access information on the crisis.

10. **Ms. Wainaina** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management) said that, as she took up her new duties as Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, she looked forward to working with the Committee to implement human resources reforms that would support the Organization in delivering its mandates.

11. **Ms. Dubinsky** (Director, Ethics Office), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Ethics Office (A/69/332), said that the Office continued to strengthen delivery of services in accordance with its mandate. Between 1 August 2013 and 31 July 2014 it had responded to 924 requests for services and had reviewed 4,573 disclosure files as part of its financial disclosure programme. In addition, it had undertaken 152 outreach, training and education activities, administered the Secretariat's first-ever leadership dialogue, enhanced the coherent application of ethics among United Nations entities and received 55 inquiries relating to the Organization's policy on protection against retaliation.

12. On outreach, the Office continued to reach out to as many Secretariat staff as possible and had found that there was a direct correlation between its investment in outreach services and increased use by staff of its confidential advisory services. Through the leadership dialogue programme, the Organization ensured that all staff engaged in annual ethics education. In its initial year, 67 per cent of all Secretariat staff had participated in the programme.

13. The financial disclosure programme had again achieved a high compliance rate of 99.9 per cent for the 2013 cycle. In order to enhance the detection and mitigation of personal conflicts of interest, the Office had expanded its review methodology. It had also completed an internal review of the policies, practices and standards under which the programme operated and had identified areas for improvement.

14. The Office had completed its detailed review of the current policy on protection against retaliation and had made recommendations to improve its focus and operation. The draft revised policy was currently under consideration by the Secretary-General. Once the review had been completed, staff would be consulted on the proposed amendments in accordance with the Organization's normal practice. To date, in all four matters in which it had been determined that retaliation

had occurred, management had implemented the remedial recommendations made by the Office.

15. Lastly, ongoing collaboration among members of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations reflected the importance of a coherent and consistent application of standards of ethics and integrity among the Secretariat and the funds and programmes. The Ethics Panel remained the sole mechanism that effectively served that purpose and provided a knowledge-sharing base.

16. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/69/572), said that, with regard to the current composition of the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee had no objection to the proposed change in the reporting cycle and the cut-off date for the data included in the composition report, but stressed that those changes would not in themselves improve the analytical quality of the report. Additional efforts were required to complete trend analysis and explain the possible reasons for certain trends. The Advisory Committee noted that the number of high-level positions had increased significantly since 2009 despite a decrease in the overall number of staff over the same period. By contrast, the majority of United Nations entities had seen the opposite trend. A comprehensive strategy was needed to identify suitable candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented countries and outreach activities should be analysed to determine their effectiveness. With regard to the representation of women in the Secretariat, particularly at the senior level, the progress made was unsatisfactory and much too slow, and the Secretary-General should be requested to undertake intensified and targeted outreach efforts in that regard.

17. On mobility, the Advisory Committee recognized that significant preparatory work was needed, much of which was ongoing, prior to the implementation of the first phase of the mobility framework in 2016. In particular, it stressed the importance of establishing the criteria for determining a viable comparative baseline against which future mobility trends could be measured. It also reaffirmed the need for complete and accurate cost data to be included in future reports of the Secretary-General and reiterated its view that efforts to encourage internal mobility should not have a negative impact on efforts to engage fresh talent from outside. Moreover, the criteria to be applied by the special constraints panel in determining possible

deferments or exemptions from mobility requirements needed to be clearly defined and set out in the relevant administrative instructions prior to implementation.

18. Performance management was fundamental for the fair treatment of staff, for rewarding high performance and addressing underperformance, and for the effective delivery of mandates. The Advisory Committee had no objection to the proposed amendments to the performance management system set out in the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/190/Add.2) and in particular supported all efforts to ensure greater consistency in performance ratings.

19. With regard to the young professionals programme, the Advisory Committee regretted that recent reductions in Secretariat staffing levels had led to fewer junior professional job opportunities, which consequently reduced the effectiveness of the young professionals programme as a tool to rejuvenate the Organization and improve geographical representation. The Committee therefore recommended that the Assembly should broaden the pool of available posts and positions for successful candidates from the programme to include P-2 positions funded from general temporary assistance for more than a year and should consider other possibilities for broadening the pool. The Advisory Committee had reservations concerning the proposed replacement of the general examination paper with a certification requirement to demonstrate language proficiency, as well as the introduction of proposed new testing techniques.

20. Concerning the system of desirable ranges, which measured progress towards achieving a wide equitable geographical distribution of staff within the Secretariat, the Secretary-General had not responded adequately to the request of the General Assembly for a comprehensive review, since his report (A/69/190/Add.4) did not put forward any new elements that could enhance the effectiveness of the system. In the absence of a comprehensive review, the Advisory Committee did not see merit in making the minor changes to the calculations proposed by the Secretary-General.

21. The Advisory Committee regretted that more information had not been provided concerning the development of a workforce planning system, which was, in its view, essential in order to optimize staff placement decisions. With regard to staff selection and

recruitment, the Advisory Committee noted with concern that the average selection time exceeded the current target by approximately 50 per cent. In response to the Secretary-General's proposal for a review of the long-standing policy concerning permanent resident status, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly should reconsider the requirement for staff members to renounce permanent resident status in a country other than the country of their nationality.

22. Noting the 15 per cent increase in the number of requests received by the Ethics Office over the reporting period, the Advisory Committee recommended that additional efforts should be undertaken to clarify the correct reporting and advisory mechanisms relating to cases of alleged wrongdoing. It also recommended that the Assembly should request the Secretary-General to finalize his consultations concerning post-employment restrictions and propose related measures without further delay.

23. **The Chair**, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/213, invited the Vice-President of the Staff-Management Committee to make a statement.

24. **Mr. Richards** (Vice-President of the Staff-Management Committee), speaking on behalf of the staff unions of the United Nations and the 70,000 staff members of the Secretariat and the Organization's tribunals, funds and programmes, said that, as a result of the decision taken in 2013 to reduce staff numbers and costs, a reduced number of staff were currently doing more with fewer resources. In return for risking their lives in dangerous places and hardship locations, staff should be treated with dignity and respect and should benefit from a fair wage, a secure contract and a decent working environment.

25. In that context, it was a serious concern that more than 100 United Nations Development Programme staff members had been laid off, in some cases with little time to leave New York with their families and return to their home countries. The budget cuts had been harsh and unprecedented and the staff for whom he spoke strongly condemned them. He was also concerned about the 2.5 per cent budget cut in administrative personnel to be made in 2016, which management justified on the basis that the new Umoja enterprise resource planning system had made the work of administrative staff redundant. However, given that Umoja was still being rolled out, the Staff-

Management Committee questioned the way in which the cuts appeared to be predetermined.

26. On performance management, it was important to recognize and reward good performance, but the one tool used elsewhere to reward good performance — promotion — was excluded at the United Nations. In addition, current staff had no preference over external candidates when being considered for new posts and past performance was not taken into consideration at the selection stage. While the new performance appraisal system was an improvement, the staff selection system needed to be improved. With regard to continuing appointments, most staff who had lost their appointments following the first review were women. The review process had taken two and a half years, during which time many of them had extended their maternity leave without pay and had therefore become ineligible. That issue should be addressed in an Organization that sought to retain women. Similarly, staff who had performance appraisals covering fewer than twelve months following a change of position had also failed to obtain continuing appointments despite being eligible. It was therefore hoped that the Committee would support the Secretary-General's proposals on that matter.

27. With regard to the new hot-desking model being piloted in the Secretariat Building, the research on that method of working was not encouraging. All the evidence showed that staff worked best when they had their own space and did not have to worry every morning about where they would sit. In an organization that demanded so much of its staff, surely a personal workspace, which studies showed enhanced productivity, was not too much to ask. Hot-desking would only lead to increased absenteeism, a decrease in the quality of output and a reduction in productivity. In addition, it would result in confidential documents being drafted in spaces accessible to passers-by. Given that hot-desking had been extended to another floor of the building, he questioned whether the practice was still a pilot and wondered what mandate had been given to begin using it in the rest of the Organization.

28. There was a lack of whistleblower protection at the United Nations even though the Ethics Office was expected to protect staff against retaliation. Staff were required to report any misconduct witnessed; however, it was unlikely that they would come forward when the Ethics Office had protected less than 1 per cent of the 343 staff members who had turned to it for help since

its establishment. An urgent review of that Office should be carried out, the Office should be made independent from the Organization in order to avoid conflicts of interest and anyone who retaliated against whistleblowers should be disciplined. Since the reactivation of the Staff-Management Committee by management, relations between staff and management had been constructive and productive. However, while relations at the United Nations had improved, they had deteriorated elsewhere. The Director-General of the World Intellectual Property Organization had recently fired the president of its staff association after that individual had reported a number of problems. The Director-General was now the subject of a formal investigation and the staff for whom he spoke called for the president of the staff association to be fully reinstated.

29. **Ms. Rios Requena** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the effective delivery of United Nations mandates required a diverse, flexible and dynamic workforce that was both motivated and adequately compensated for its invaluable contribution. The Group supported reforms that would enable the Organization to tackle global challenges and make it more effective, representative, transparent, accountable and responsive to the needs of Member States. However, staff welfare must remain a central consideration and reforms must therefore be implemented in a consultative, non-discriminatory manner.

30. Equitable geographical representation in the Secretariat was a key issue for the Group and measures were needed to increase the representation of developing countries and of women from developing countries in the Secretariat, especially at the senior level. There should also be greater transparency in the recruitment process and workforce planning. If the Organization was to succeed in implementing its global mandates, it must have a truly global Secretariat and international staff composition.

31. In view of the integrated nature of human resources issues, it might be difficult to achieve progress in other areas if that critical dimension was not properly addressed. The Group regretted that the Secretary-General had once again failed to respond to the Assembly's request for a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges. It also noted with concern that the Secretary-General had not put forward

any new concrete proposals to enhance the effectiveness of that system and to include peacekeeping and extrabudgetary posts in the system. The Group was disappointed that developing countries remained underrepresented at the Professional and higher levels. She urged the Secretary-General to take more substantive actions to address all those issues so that the staff composition of the United Nations was truly representative of the diversity of its Member States.

32. The Group would seek further information on the preparatory work under way for the implementation of the first phase of the refined managed mobility framework and on the impact of the policy on opportunities for external candidates and staffing in hardship duty stations. With respect to performance management, human resources must be managed according to the highest standards of accountability and transparency. The Group would consider the Secretary-General's proposal, bearing in mind the need for the Organization to have a set of transparent and quantifiable benchmarks to encourage high performance, skills development and talent retention.

33. In informal consultations, the Group would seek further information on the changes proposed to the young professionals programme and the potential impact of those changes on the representation of developing countries. It was concerned at the reduction of junior professional job opportunities and stressed the importance of effective rejuvenation policies. The Group was also concerned at the growth in high-level positions and the apparent upward shift in the grade structure of the Secretariat. Efforts should be made to address the proliferation of high-level positions in order to avoid duplication and overlap in functional responsibilities. In addition, the Group would seek clarification regarding the use of Government-provided personnel, gratis personnel and junior professional officers and the establishment of proper reporting lines to ensure that the activities of Government-provided personnel were aligned with United Nations mandates.

34. **Ms. Tan** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN supported efforts to reform the United Nations human resources management system, adopt best employment practices and streamline processes. The staff composition must reflect the Organization's diverse and international character by providing more balanced gender and geographical representation. In



General Assembly resolution 68/265, the Secretary-General was requested to give equal treatment to internal and external candidates. While that approach might be less efficient than giving priority to internal candidates, it was necessary in order not to limit the ability of the Organization to select the best candidates on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Underrepresented nationalities, especially those from developing countries, must be given a fair opportunity, and the Secretary-General should ensure that external candidates were not disadvantaged and were given the same chance to apply for all job openings.

35. While the Organization needed to attract the best talent to its service, staff motivation, professional development and retention were equally essential. To that end, the staff performance management system should continue to be reviewed and strengthened. ASEAN supported the mobility framework and the Secretary-General's vision of a dynamic, mobile workforce. A well-designed mobility framework and performance management system could shape the Organization's workforce to serve its growing needs and diverse requirements.

36. United Nations staff should exemplify the highest professional ethics in order to be effective in their complex and challenging roles. Financial disclosure requirements should be uniformly applied and any irregularities should be dealt with expeditiously throughout the United Nations system.

37. **Ms. Power** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the States members of the European Union were staunch supporters of human resources management reform and the goal of making the work of the United Nations more effective by implementing a modern human resources system and fostering an organisational culture that enabled staff at all levels to contribute to their greatest potential. However, human resources management reform could not be achieved overnight and ongoing efforts were needed to implement and consolidate past reforms and build on them with new measures. Some progress had been made in implementing earlier reforms such as the new contractual arrangements and harmonization of

conditions of service in the field. However, more remained to be done with regard to performance management, workforce planning and the gender imbalance in the Secretariat.

38. A well-functioning performance management system that was clear and easy to follow was fundamental for effective human resources management. Good work must be recognized and rewarded, while underperformance should be tackled rigorously and honestly, including through the use of regular feedback on performance. Significant improvements were needed in tackling underperformance and staff should embrace new approaches, while managers must assess performance realistically and honestly. The measures proposed by the Secretary-General to address performance management problems went in the right direction; however, a more comprehensive approach combined with serious engagement by managers, especially at the leadership level, would be needed to shift the ingrained culture of inertia towards effective performance management. The Secretary-General should ensure that a robust performance management system was put in place and implemented at all levels.

39. The European Union welcomed the work done so far in outlining a workforce planning system but was disappointed that a fully developed system was not already in place. It also remained concerned at the slow rate of improvement in the gender imbalance in the Secretariat and urged the Secretary-General to make every effort to address that intractable problem. The time taken to recruit staff remained another cause for concern. As a strong proponent of the principle of managed mobility, the European Union welcomed the approval of the refined mobility framework and looked forward to the implementation of the new mobility and career development framework in 2016. It also welcomed the positive developments relating to the activities of the Ethics Office, which should remain independent.

40. **Mr. Sollberger** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that effective delivery of the Organization's mandates depended on the skills and motivation of its staff. As a result, it needed a forward-looking human resources management framework, which, as the Board of Auditors had indicated in its report on the financial statements of the United Nations for the biennium ended 31 December 2013 (A/69/5 (Vol. I)), required matching the appropriate

individual's skills to the appropriate job, and with the correct timing. With regard to specific issues, Switzerland and Liechtenstein shared the concern of the Advisory Committee over the absence of a workforce planning system: it appeared that workforce planning had been confined to the immediate need to fill vacancies, rather than being based on a Secretariat-wide strategic assessment of medium- and longer-term skills requirements. Welcoming the Secretary-General's first progress report on the mobility framework (A/69/190/Add.1), the two delegations believed that that framework, approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/265, would help to improve strategic management of human resources and provide staff with broad experience over the course of their careers, increasing their understanding of the functioning of the Organization. They shared the view of the Advisory Committee that a credible and fair performance management system should reward good performance and address underperformance, as the Organization's staff were responsible and accountable for fulfilling its strategic objectives.

41. **Mr. Mihoubi** (Algeria) said that, despite some progress, human resources management reforms were being hampered by gaps and obstacles in a number of areas. Strategic workforce planning was required to establish recruitment priorities, cope with retirements, develop talent and provide opportunities for younger staff. The current arrangements failed to meet forecast needs or provide for rejuvenation of the staff as a whole, with the number of entry-level vacancies low in comparison to the number of more senior vacancies. Policies that failed to address that problem would have little effect. A concerted effort to redress the gender balance, particularly in senior posts, was vital to increase the representation of women, particularly women from African countries. Moreover, the young professionals programme, which aimed to improve the situation of unrepresented or underrepresented States, had not had the desired effect, as pass rates were low, particularly for developing-country candidates from Africa. There had been little discernible progress towards equitable geographical distribution of staff. The number of unrepresented or underrepresented States had risen, and in the coming years Algeria alone would lose 20 per cent of its former representation in posts subject to geographical distribution rules. A strategy should be adopted to address the phenomenon, taking account of the real underlying causes.

42. Staff members and management needed a legal framework which protected staff while preserving the interests of management. The role of the system of administration of justice was essential, particularly the formal dispute resolution mechanisms. A guide recording the jurisprudence of the tribunals and the remedies awarded would help senior managers to make sound decisions.

43. **Mr. Rahman** (Bangladesh) said that a dynamic and motivated workforce was essential to the functioning of the Organization. Human resources management must be responsive, flexible, empowered and accountable. In the light of the global reach of the Organization, its staff must be diverse, ensuring representation from all corners of the world, and — within the rules and parameters determined by the General Assembly — have equal career opportunities which remained unaffected by the nature and source of funding of the Organization's programmes. If managed properly, the mobility framework due to be launched in 2016 would enable staff to better meet the Organization's needs, sharing the burden of serving in the most difficult duty stations. However, the existence of the framework should not stand in the way of efforts to improve conditions of service in field missions, meet the needs of field-based organizations, ensure equitable treatment of staff and retain high-quality personnel in the field.

44. While appreciating the Secretariat's efforts to reform human resources management, his delegation was concerned at the lack of adequate progress in ensuring fair and equitable representation of all Member States in all duty stations, including field duty stations, particularly in the light of the request for proposals to address the current problems made by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/255. The system of desirable ranges required review, as it was currently skewed away from taking due account of considerations such as Member States' population levels. With specific regard to peacekeeping operations, his delegation emphasized that — as troops and police on the ground risked their lives for the greater good of humanity — failure to implement the mandates established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 65/247 and 66/265 regarding proper representation of troop-contributing countries in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support was unjust, as it did not give those countries sufficient representation in policy



decisions. Such matters must be taken into consideration in human resources management reform.

45. **Mr. Alramezi** (Kuwait) said that his delegation supported the efforts outlined in the overview of human resources management reform and welcomed the progress made with reforms. However, reform was still needed in the areas of training and career development, to ensure that all Member States could participate without discrimination in the work of the Organization, and that senior posts would not be monopolized by the nationals of a few countries. A system to monitor and follow up on reform measures must be developed in order to ensure that effective action was taken. With regard to representation of the nationals of his own country, Junior Professional Officer opportunities remained important, as ten young Kuwaitis of both genders had been recruited during the current biennium.

46. **Ms. Yajima** (Japan) said that the Organization would suffer if human resources management failed to function properly. In a good human resources management system, staff would be placed in the appropriate positions at the appropriate time by a fair and merit-based recruitment arrangement providing a diverse, multi-skilled and versatile staff, whose members worked together for the effective and efficient delivery of the Organization's mandates. Her delegation welcomed the information on the Organization's mobility policy supplied to supplement the overview of human resources management reform and agreed with the Advisory Committee that much preparatory work remained: deciding the operation and composition of staffing bodies and listing non-rotational posts, which should be limited so as not to run counter to the aims of the mobility policy. With regard to the costs of the policy, more accurate data should be provided; the implementation of Umoja should make that task easier.

47. The Secretary-General's response to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/252 for proposals regarding revision of the performance management system, which was an essential adjunct to the mobility policy, was welcome. Mandates could be fulfilled effectively by rewarding high performance and addressing underperformance. Turning to the geographical representation of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States, she highlighted the role of the young professionals programme and welcomed the comprehensive review of its

implementation, with a focus on continuous outreach efforts and reducing the cost of administering the exams.

48. **Mr. Khalizov** (Russian Federation) said that one of the many human-resources-related issues facing the Committee at the current session was the mobility policy, which had absorbed a great deal of the General Assembly's time in the past. Significant in that regard was the comprehensive request for additional information contained in General Assembly resolution 68/265. It was unfortunate that the information provided in the first annual report on the subject ([A/69/190/Add.1](#)) was incomplete. In particular, comparative figures for Professional and higher category staff moves between duty stations and for Field Service staff covered the period 2008-2012 only, and no information at all had been provided on moves within duty stations. Information on the costs associated with implementation of the mobility system was also lacking, with direct costs provided only for the biennium 2011-2012 and no indirect cost information, such as that connected with alterations to the Inspira system, supplied at all.

49. Also missing from the report were explanations of the criteria to be applied to mobility in 2016 and 2017 should the number of staff reaching their post incumbency limit exceed the average number of geographic moves in 2014 and 2015. Answers in that connection were essential to understanding the possible legal implications of the mobility policy and the risk of staff making appeals through the system of administration of justice. His delegation trusted that the Secretariat would explain the reasons for the absent or incomplete response to the General Assembly's requests for information, and specify when the Member States could expect to receive full information. The matter of providing external and internal candidates equal access to vacancies was an important concern, as the information received from the Secretariat indicated that the number of external candidates recruited had fallen between 2010 and 2013. The mobility policy should not be allowed to further worsen that situation.

50. On 26 June 2014, the Secretary-General had decided to issue Secretary-General's bulletin [ST/SGB/2004/13/Rev.1](#), which redefined the personal status of staff members. That decision ran counter to General Assembly resolution 58/285, which specified that personal status should be recognized on the basis of the legislation of the staff member's country of

nationality. It should be noted that the Member States had not been consulted on the matter, nor had the Secretary-General been given a mandate to develop new approaches in that regard. In altering the determination of personal status to encompass decisions of any competent authorities, the new Secretary-General's bulletin had also come into conflict with staff regulation 4.3, pursuant to which the Organization recognized only one nationality for each staff member. That conflict held multiple legal and financial risks. It had implications for staff members' immunity, host-country residence permits and recruitment under local or international contract conditions. It would provide opportunities for abuse, including falsification of a change in status for single staff members or staff members with no dependants in third countries, in order to claim related benefits. Those considerations, and others, merited detailed consideration by the Secretariat and negotiation in the Fifth Committee. His delegation trusted that the Secretariat would immediately halt the application of the Secretary-General's bulletin until the General Assembly had taken a decision on the matter, and that steps would be taken to prevent a similar occurrence in the future of violation of the prerogatives of the governing bodies and undermining of Member States' hard-won compromises on extremely sensitive issues connected with the functioning of the Organization.

51. **Mr. Upadhyay** (United States of America) said that the Organization could not deliver on its complex global mandates without the heroic and dedicated work of staff around the world. His delegation took the Committee's consideration of human resources management as an opportunity to adopt policies which genuinely supported that work, regarding three issues as particularly important. The first, the mobility policy, would enable staff to be moved to different posts or duty stations as needs required, promoting the acquisition of skills and experience. His delegation was confident that the policy would lead to better execution of mandates. The second, the performance management system, must lead to staff being motivated to work at a consistently high level. In order to be effective, the system must encompass reliable appraisals to measure performance, coupled with effective tools to reward and encourage good performance and sanction underperformance. The third, comprehensive workforce and succession planning, was a precondition for the Organization to fulfil critical human resources policy objectives, such as improving diversity and

gender balance, and addressing the increasing proportion of senior staff members. The Secretary-General should begin work on such planning without delay.

52. **Mr. Kim Jihoon** (Republic of Korea) said that, as the Organization's greatest source of strength was the quality of its staff and managers, a better performance management system was required to make the most of their capabilities. The Organization had long pursued a fair, credible and well-funded performance management system. Effective management of performance not only resulted in the Organization's mandates being delivered but also provided the foundation for staff selection, mobility, promotion and contract renewal. It also addressed one of the causes of staff recourse to the system of administration of justice. While progress had been made, improvements were needed, first and foremost in the credibility of staff evaluations. Clearly, as they were conducted by people, evaluations were inherently subjective, and different evaluators would make different observations, interpretations and judgments.

53. In order to have a credible evaluation system that staff could accept, subjectivity in the evaluation process must be addressed. One of the fundamental flaws of the current arrangement was the failure to count ratings attached to core values and work-related competencies towards overall performance ratings, with ratings for each element of performance and the overall rating being treated as separate. That practice was susceptible to intuitive evaluation by managers and was a source of distrust in evaluation results. A complementary mechanism to enable managers to make more balanced and objective judgments was required. The evaluation process must ensure that overall performance ratings were a comprehensive reflection of ratings for the work performed and competencies demonstrated, providing stronger grounds for justification of each overall rating and increasing the credibility of the evaluation. However, performance evaluations were a means to an end, not an end in themselves. They gave managers and their staff a deeper understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Evaluation was a continuous process which transformed individual performance into team performance.

54. The critical task was to revive the team-building function of performance management. Consideration should be given to evaluating team performance as an

effective means of inspiring managers and their staff to pursue shared goals and ideals. That concept gave managers responsibilities, but also natural opportunities to interact with staff at various levels in order to produce a harmonious team outcome.

55. **Mr. Masood Khan** (Pakistan) said that an independent international civil service, with the highest standards of performance, integrity and accountability was vital to achieve the goals of the Organization. His delegation was pleased with the objectives and direction of human resources reform, and believed that streamlining contractual arrangements, harmonizing conditions of service and establishing a managed mobility framework represented significant advances. The continuity of reform efforts should be preserved, but their impact should be evaluated at regular intervals so as to refine and improve them.

56. Reaffirming its support for the mobility framework as a means of helping the Organization to ensure equitable burden-sharing at hardship duty stations, his delegation emphasized the scale of the change involved as the Secretariat sought to respond to the growing needs of a field-oriented Organization. While taking note of the additional information on the mobility framework provided to the Member States, he said that more detail was needed on the framework's impact on the current staff selection system; treatment of external candidates; advertising of positions; geographic representation and gender balance. Clearer indications were also needed of how the proposed staff-related processes and mechanisms would address the risks of a time-consuming recruitment system. His delegation looked forward to considering proposals on performance management and the young professionals programme, to examine their underlying assumptions, expected benefits and expected impact on the work of the Organization.

57. Equitable geographical representation was an obligation arising from the Charter of the United Nations. The Organization must reflect the diversity and dynamism created by drawing its staff from all regions of the world. Despite the progress made in many areas of human resources management, no meaningful change had been made to the system of desirable ranges. Disparities in Member States' representation in the Secretariat had persisted despite the General Assembly's clear wish for the system to be reviewed. Thought should be given to re-establishing an open-ended working group of the Fifth Committee

to consider the formula for the determination of equitable geographical distribution, on the basis of Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Charter, as set out in General Assembly resolution 41/206 C and other resolutions. Recalling his delegation's earlier suggestions that the human resources management scorecard should promote geographical distribution as one of its priority indicators, he said that the job network boards and programme managers to whom authority was delegated should be held accountable for the recruitment process and effective scorecard implementation. As the recommendations in the assessment of the system of desirable ranges were modest and failed to address the systemic issue of inadequate representation of Member States, his delegation looked forward to receiving details of alternative calculation methods.

58. **Mr. Deme** (Senegal), recalling the proposals described in the 2006 report of the Secretary-General entitled "Investing in the United Nations: for a stronger Organization worldwide" (A/60/846), said that all Member States hoped that human resources reform would make the Organization more efficient, against the backdrop of a complex global financial and economic situation. The success of the Organization's work depended heavily on the quality of its staff. In that connection, he welcomed such steps as the introduction of the HR Insight online reporting tool, which enabled Member States to see human resources data on matters including the number of retirements; the reform of recruitment, with the aim of ensuring transparency, equity and uniformity; the associated review of continuing appointments, which had been completed; the deployment of the Inspira system, which aimed to treat all candidates equally and accelerate recruitment; the improved young professionals programme; new training and career development arrangements, and the preparation of the new managed mobility framework.

59. Recruitment must be performed in a careful, objective and transparent way, and must seek competence and integrity and respect equitable geographical distribution. In an increasingly competitive environment, it was also desirable for the Organization to provide better career opportunities. In that connection, care must be taken to integrate the Inspira talent-management system properly with Umoja, to ensure that the Organization had effective, responsive and comprehensive human resources

management. The mobility framework due to be launched in 2016 should facilitate the establishment of a dynamic corps of international civil servants able to use their skills and competencies for the effective implementation of the mandates conferred on the Organization by the Member States. Forecasting staff needs should be a continuous process guided by staff needs, profiles and qualifications. It should have a global and reliable foundation, including the mobility and career framework, to help meet the long-term requirements of the Organization.

60. Despite the progress made in improving geographical representation in the Secretariat, many developing countries remained unrepresented or underrepresented. There should be a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges, in order to improve effectiveness and enable equitable geographical distribution for all posts funded from the regular budget, in conformity with the provisions of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations. In keeping with their valuable and considerable role in peacekeeping, troop-contributing countries should be appropriately represented in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. Efforts should continue to ensure gender parity, and to increase the number of women occupying senior positions. Lastly, human resources reform at all levels of the Secretariat should be driven by a culture of accountability, results-based management, risk mitigation and effective internal oversight mechanisms.

61. **Mr. Takasu** (Under-Secretary-General for Management) said that he welcomed the Committee's strong support for the efforts made in connection with human resources management, including mobility. While he would supply more information in the Committee's informal consultations, he wished to make some concluding remarks. The priorities of the Secretary-General were clear: a geographical and gender balance must be sought. While some delegations had pointed to a deterioration of the situation, progress had been made in reducing the number of unrepresented States, and outreach efforts specifically targeted unrepresented and underrepresented States, and States whose representation was at risk of declining. The candidates considered for job vacancies must include women. Efforts were being made to speed up recruitment, as manual evaluation of applications took weeks, and

even months. With regard to mobility, he welcomed the feedback from the Member States, as it would help to prepare for the launch of the framework. Some information, particularly that relating to moves and cost, could not be provided until the Secretariat had the tools to collect it; Umoja should make that possible. Likewise, some aspects of implementation required consultation with staff associations and the Member States. Lastly, he welcomed the reference made by the representative of the staff associations to the steps taken by management to restore consultations within the Staff-Management Committee.

*The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.*