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**EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS  
ADAPTATION AND STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
MACHINERY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Composition of the staff of the Office of the United Nations  
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**Report of the High Commissioner**

**Introduction**

1. The present report on the composition of the staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is submitted pursuant to the request made by the Commission on Human Rights in operative paragraph 23 (c) of its resolution 2004/73 of 21 April 2004.
2. Section I of this report provides information on the composition of OHCHR. At the request of the Commission it includes data on staff in posts subject to geographical distribution as well as data on staff in temporary posts funded from extrabudgetary resources or in technical cooperation project posts, neither of which are included in the definition of posts subject to geographical distribution.
3. Section II is a description of the High Commissioner's measures for improvement aimed at addressing the geographical composition issues identified by the Commission in resolution 2004/73 and at fully observing United Nations Secretariat human resources policies and, in particular, its recruitment and contractual policies (paragraph 12 of resolution).

## I. COMPOSITION OF OHCHR

4. The recruitment of staff to posts subject to geographical distribution is governed by the system of desirable ranges at the global United Nations Secretariat level. For that purpose, Member States are grouped into four categories: unrepresented, underrepresented, within range and overrepresented. A Member State is considered “unrepresented” when not a single one of its nationals, throughout the entire Secretariat, is serving in a post subject to geographical distribution and having been filled in accordance with the established selection process. It is “underrepresented” when the number of its nationals appointed to such posts throughout the entire Secretariat is below the lower limit of the desirable range. It is within range when the number of its nationals appointed to such posts is between the upper and lower limits of the desirable range, and it is “overrepresented” when the number of its nationals appointed to such posts within the entire Secretariat exceeds the upper limit of the desirable range. The representation status of Member States is affected by many factors, notably turnover of staff, changes in the scale of assessments and changes in the total number of Member States.

5. OHCHR is part of the United Nations Secretariat and the breakdown of its geographical composition has to be seen against the breakdown of overall distribution within the Secretariat. In the case of OHCHR, the departmental data shows that developing as well as developed countries are to be found among both over- and underrepresented countries.

6. The official report on the composition of the United Nations Secretariat is submitted annually by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly in accordance with a number of Assembly resolutions, the most recent of which are resolutions: 49/222 A of 23 December 1994; 51/226 of 3 April 1997; 52/219 of 22 December 1997; 53/221 of 7 April 1999; 55/258 of 14 June 2001; 57/305 of 15 April 2003; and 59/266 of 26 December 2004.

7. The latest report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat is contained in document A/59/299.

8. Table 1 provides a breakdown of OHCHR staff in the Professional and above category by nationality, grade and gender for posts subject to geographical distribution as at 31 December 2004.

9. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the following categories of OHCHR staff in the Professional and above category by nationality, grade and gender as at 31 December 2004:

- (a) Staff holding appointments of less than one year;
- (b) Staff charged to General temporary assistance funds;
- (c) Staff employed in OHCHR field offices; and
- (d) Staff employed as technical cooperation project personnel.

10. In accordance with paragraph 4 of section IX of General Assembly resolution 53/221, the practice of showing the representation of staff according to major geographical grouping has been discontinued. The information is provided by country, listed in alphabetical order.

## II. MEASURES FOR IMPROVEMENT

11. Since taking up her position in July 2004, the High Commissioner has sought to address the issue of geographical distribution in OHCHR; it is one of her priorities in the area of human resources management. She notes, however, that achieving an appropriate geographical balance of staff in the Professional and above categories will take time.

12. The High Commissioner recently submitted a comprehensive proposal to the Office of Human Resources Management which will effectively discontinue the practice of hiring temporary staff for regular functions of the Office through the regularization of all core posts at headquarters and in the field. The proposal reflects the High Commissioner's commitment to align OHCHR recruitment policy with that of the United Nations Secretariat which is consistent with section XIV, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, of General Assembly resolution 59/266 on human resources management, in which the Assembly "[e]mphasized that recruitment in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights should be done in full consultation with and under the guidance of the Office of Human Resources Management, consistent with the provisions of the present resolution and other relevant legislative mandates".

13. The following measures implemented by the High Commissioner refer to matters dealt with in resolution 2004/73 of the Commission on Human Rights:

(a) In an effort to widen the pool of candidates interested in the subject of human rights, the High Commissioner had recommended that the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) establish a human rights occupational group. It was felt that such a measure would contribute to attracting to the area of human rights qualified junior professionals from unrepresented and underrepresented countries. OHRM organized in May 2001 a specialized competitive human rights examination. The examination was offered to 38 Member States: Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Germany, Grenada, Honduras, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Norway, Oman, Palau, Republic of Moldova, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Solomon Islands, Sweden, Tonga, Tajikistan, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu. The following 17 Member States chose to participate in the exam: Argentina, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Germany, Grenada, Honduras, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Sweden and Uzbekistan. OHRM is conducting in 2005 a second competitive examination in the human rights occupational group. The written test was held on 22 February 2005. The examination was offered to 69 Member States. The following 57 Member States participated: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bhutan, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Central African Republic, China, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, Niger, Norway, Oman, Panama, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Suriname, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and

Viet Nam. The following 12 Member States did not participate: Bahrain, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Guinea-Bissau, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Qatar, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Yemen;

(b) Since not all OHCHR positions are of an ongoing or core nature, OHCHR would continue to employ staff under the 200 series for technical cooperation activities and advisory services. The recommendation for the selection of staff against these positions will be subject to the review of the OHCHR internal Advisory Panel on Personnel Issues (APPI) to ensure a fair and transparent staff selection mechanism. The composition of APPI has been reviewed to balance its geographical distribution;

(c) OHCHR has systematically developed job descriptions and advertised vacancies in respect of temporary positions at headquarters and in the field on the OHCHR web site.

14. In accordance with the Human Resources Action Plan: Third Cycle (January 2003-December 2004) agreed upon between OHRM and OHCHR, and bearing in mind the recommendations of policy-making organs such as the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the High Commissioner, in filling vacant posts, is working with OHRM on procedures aiming at balancing, for all current and future vacancies, the recruitment of candidates from Member States within range and those from un- or underrepresented Member States.

15. The High Commissioner has instructed all programme managers to take geographical representation into account when reviewing and recommending candidates for recruitment. OHCHR has instituted measures to apply the Organization's principles of geographical distribution with particular regard to unrepresented or underrepresented developing countries when filling extrabudgetary posts. These measures involve the screening of candidates at the initial recruitment stage, including of short-term staff, to ensure that, between equally qualified candidates, priority is given to candidates from such countries.

16. To assist programme managers when evaluating and recommending candidates, geographical distribution tables are provided on a quarterly basis:

- (a) Member States' representation in the United Nations Secretariat;
- (b) Member States' representation in OHCHR by nationality, grade and gender.

17. In conclusion, the High Commissioner wishes to assure the Commission on Human Rights that she attaches the utmost importance to an equitable geographical representation as well as the need for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity on the part of the staff in her Office. In the recruitment of the senior managers she has made to date, the High Commissioner has paid particular attention to geographical diversity. Currently, at the senior management level in the Office, developing countries are well represented since four out of seven posts subject to geographical distribution at the D-1 level and above are encumbered by staff from developing countries.

**Table 1**  
**OHCHR STAFF ON POSTS SUBJECT TO GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION, BY NATIONALITY, GRADE AND GENDER**  
**(as at 31 December 2004)**

Country of nationality	United Nations representation status (as at 30 November 2004)	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1	
		All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Algeria	Within range, below midpoint	1	0											1							
Argentina	Overrepresented	1	1																1		
Australia	Overrepresented	1	1										1								
Austria	Overrepresented	3	1															2	1		
Bolivia	Within range, above midpoint	1	0														1				
Cambodia	Within range, below midpoint	1	1												1						
Cameroon	Within range, above midpoint	1	0											1							
Canada	Within range, above midpoint	1	1		1																
China	Within range, below midpoint	1	1															1			
Côte d'Ivoire	Within range, above midpoint	2	0														2				
Croatia	Within range, above midpoint	1	1															1			
Denmark	Within range, below midpoint	3	0											1		1		1			
Dominican Republic	Within range, below midpoint	1	0											1							
Equatorial Guinea	Within range, below midpoint	1	0											1							
France	Within range, above midpoint	4	0									1		1		2					
Georgia	Within range, below midpoint	1	0									1									
Germany	Within range, above midpoint	6	4									1					3	1	1		
Guatemala	Within range, below midpoint	1	1														1				
Guyana	Within range, above midpoint	1	1														1				
Indonesia	Within range, above midpoint	1	1														1				
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Within range, below midpoint	1	1										1								
Italy	Overrepresented	12	7									3		1	1	3	1	3			
Japan	Underrepresented	6	2									1		2		1	1		1		
Jordan	Within range, above midpoint	1	1										1								
Maldives	Within range, below midpoint	1	0													1					
Malta	Within range, below midpoint	1	1																1		
Mexico	Underrepresented	1	1							1											
Mongolia	Within range, below midpoint	1	0													1					
Netherlands	Within range, below midpoint	2	1											1	1						

Table 1 (continued)

Country of nationality	United Nations representation status (as at 30 November 2004)	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1	
		All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Pakistan	Overrepresented	1	1				1														
Peru	Within range, above midpoint	1	0											1							
Poland	Within range, below midpoint	2	0							1								1			
Republic of Korea	Within range, below midpoint	2	1													1	1				
Russian Federation	Overrepresented	1	0											1							
Saudi Arabia	Underrepresented	1	1											1							
Senegal	Within range, above midpoint	1	0					1													
Serbia and Montenegro	Within range, above midpoint	1	1														1				
Spain	Within range, above midpoint	7	6										1	1	2		3				
Sri Lanka	Within range, above midpoint	1	1												1						
Switzerland	Underrepresented	1	1														1				
Ukraine	Overrepresented	1	0											1							
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Within range, above midpoint	4	3										1	1	1		1				
United States of America	Within range, below midpoint	5	1									1		3	1						
TOTAL		88	44	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	8	5	17	9	11	19	6	8	0	0

**Table 2**  
**OHCHR STAFF ON POSTS NOT SUBJECT TO GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION, BY NATIONALITY, GRADE AND GENDER**  
**(as at 31 December 2004)**

Country of nationality	United Nations representation status (as at 30 November 2004)	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2/L-7		D-1/L-6		P-5/L-5		P-4/L-4		P-3/L-3		P-2/L-2		P-1/L-1	
		All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Argentina	Overrepresented	3	1											1	2						
Australia	Overrepresented	7	1										1		4	1	1				
Austria	Overrepresented	2	0									1			1						
Bangladesh	Within range, above midpoint	1	1																1		
Belgium	Overrepresented	2	0												1		1				
Benin	Within range, below midpoint	1	0														1				
Brazil	Overrepresented	2	0												2						
Bulgaria	Within range, above midpoint	2	0												1		1				
Burundi	Within range, above midpoint	1	1														1				
Cambodia	Within range, below midpoint	1	0										1								
Cameroon	Within range, above midpoint	1	1										1								
Canada	Within range, above midpoint	12	6									1	2	1	1	3	2	2			
Chile	Overrepresented	2	0									1			1						
Costa Rica	Within range, below midpoint	2	0										1		1						
Côte d'Ivoire	Within range, above midpoint	1	0												1						
Croatia	Within range, above midpoint	1	0														1				
Czech Republic	Within range, below midpoint	1	1													1					
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Within range, below midpoint	6	3												2		1	3			
Denmark	Within range, below midpoint	2	2													2					
Eritrea	Within range, above midpoint	1	1															1			
Estonia	Within range, below midpoint	1	0						1												
Ethiopia	Overrepresented	2	0									1					1				
Finland	Within range, above midpoint	2	0												2						
France	Within range, above midpoint	19	15											1	2	4	2	10			
Germany	Within range, above midpoint	5	3											1	1	1	1				1

Table 2 (continued)

Country of nationality	United Nations representation status (as at 30 November 2004)	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2/L-7		D-1/L-6		P-5/L-5		P-4/L-4		P-3/L-3		P-2/L-2		P-1/L-1	
		All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Greece	Within range, below midpoint	1	0											1							
Haiti	Within range, below midpoint	1	1														1				
Hungary	Within range, above midpoint	1	1																1		
India	Overrepresented	3	1													2	1				
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Within range, below midpoint	1	1														1				
Ireland	Within range, above midpoint	2	1														1	1			
Italy	Overrepresented	9	3									1		2		1	3	2			
Japan	Underrepresented	1	1														1				
Jordan	Within range, above midpoint	2	1														1	1			
Lebanon	Within range, above midpoint	1	1																1		
Mali	Within range, above midpoint	1	0													1					
Mauritania	Within range, below midpoint	2	0													2					
Mexico	Underrepresented	2	1													1			1		
Mongolia	Within range, below midpoint	1	1														1				
Netherlands	Within range, below midpoint	3	2											1			2				
New Zealand	Within range, above midpoint	1	0															1			
Norway	Underrepresented	1	0									1									
Paraguay	Within range, below midpoint	1	0													1					
Peru	Within range, above midpoint	5	2												1	2	1	1			
Portugal	Underrepresented	1	0													1					
Republic of Korea	Within range, below midpoint	1	1																1		
Senegal	Within range, above midpoint	2	1															1	1		
Singapore	Within range, below midpoint	1	1																1		
South Africa	Within range, above midpoint	1	1														1				
Spain	Within range, above midpoint	9	4													2	1	3	3		
Sweden	Overrepresented	7	3						2			1	1			1	2				
Switzerland	Underrepresented	8	5											1	1	2	2	2			
Syrian Arab Republic	Within range, above midpoint	1	1																1		
Trinidad and Tobago	Within range, above midpoint	1	1													1					
Tunisia	Within range, above midpoint	2	1										1			1					
Uganda	Overrepresented	1	0															1			



**Table 2 (continued)**

Country of nationality	United Nations representation status (as at 30 November 2004)	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2/L-7		D-1/L-6		P-5/L-5		P-4/L-4		P-3/L-3		P-2/L-2		P-1/L-1		
		All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Within range, above midpoint	7	3									2	1			2	1	1				
United States of America	Within range, below midpoint	9	6									1	1	1	3	1			2			
Uruguay	Within range, above midpoint	2	1											1				1				
Subtotal		172	82																			
Palestine		1	0											1								
Subtotal		1	0																			
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>173</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	