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## Fifth Committee

### Summary record of the 20th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 25 November 2013, at 10 a.m.

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

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Agenda item 139: Human resources management (*continued*)

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

**Agenda item 139: Human resources management**  
(*continued*) (A/68/358, A/68/483, A/68/495, A/68/580, A/68/601 and A/68/615)

1. **The Chair** drew the Committee's attention to a letter dated 22 October 2013 from the President of the General Assembly addressed to the Chair of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/68/10).

2. **Ms. Malcorra** (Chef de Cabinets), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on mobility: towards a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce (A/68/358), said that in recent years Member States had implemented a number of changes designed to create a truly global Secretariat that could best meet the complex challenges the Organization faced and deliver on mandates worldwide.

3. With the development of Umoja and the improved transparency and accountability heralded by implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), a dynamic, adaptable and mobile workforce constituted the third pillar of a modern Organization. The mobility proposal for internationally recruited staff was critical in that regard.

4. To date, human resources reform had focused on contractual reforms and harmonizing conditions of service. The related decisions of the General Assembly had helped to create a level playing field for all staff and put in place the necessary human resources tools: the Inspira talent-management system, the Umoja enterprise resource planning project and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards were modernizing the Organization's business processes and promoting a standardized approach to administration across all duty stations. A managed mobility policy would maximize the benefits of those initiatives by introducing a more structured approach to staff management and career development.

5. While United Nations staff were already mobile, movements were not managed, or guided by the Organization's strategic needs, but, rather, by the desire of individual staff members to move and the selection decisions of managers. As a result, some staff members rarely changed positions, others moved solely between headquarters duty stations, while others remained at hardship duty stations, so that the benefits

that mobility could bring to Organization and staff were not fully realized.

6. A more structured approach to career development and mobility was needed, including position occupancy limits, to ensure that staff changed positions and took on new roles and functions periodically. The Secretary-General was also proposing centralized job network boards that would allow for more strategic selection and reassignment of staff. Moreover, by ensuring that selection decisions took organizational priorities fully into account, the boards would also promote staffing goals with regard to gender and geographical diversity, as well as a fairer sharing of the burden of service in difficult duty stations.

7. In its resolution 67/255 the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to refine his proposed mobility policy, and also to present an alternative proposal, based on incentives. The new proposals, contained in the report, embodied significant changes in relation to external candidates, while maintaining a managed approach to mobility.

8. Under most managed mobility approaches, and the Secretary-General's initial proposal, internal staff were considered for positions first, before competition was opened up to external applicants. However, in response to the concerns of Member States, it was now proposed that all vacancies would be advertised, allowing internal and external applicants to compete equally for vacant positions. There would always be a need for external recruitment to replace staff who retired or separated from the Organization and to fill newly created positions. Assuming that the number of posts and the rate at which staff left the Organization remained roughly unchanged, it was expected that the number of external recruitments would remain the same as under the current system.

9. With regard to the direct and indirect costs of implementing the managed mobility framework, while a career development and mobility system would require investment, the model developed would not result in any increase in indirect costs, as additional staff would not be required to administer it. Direct costs did of course arise when staff moved between duty stations. However, the Secretary-General proposed to change the pattern of movements, not increase their number, thereby making them more

strategic, so that all parties benefited from managed mobility.

10. At present, an average of around 1,635 duty station moves per year were made by internationally recruited staff. The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management would explain in informal consultations how those differed from the lateral moves referred to in the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/68/356), which represented only a small percentage of the moves between duty stations.

11. As recognized by the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, a managed mobility policy would enable the Organization to manage its most important asset, its staff, more effectively. A voluntary system, based on incentives, would not bring the same benefits. She urged the Committee to seize the opportunity to bring about a historic change in the way the Organization's workforce was managed, one that would better equip the Secretariat to serve Member States and to deliver on mandates globally.

12. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the placement of United Nations staff members who had been adversely affected by natural disasters, malicious acts and other critical incidents (A/68/483), she said that the Assembly was requested to allow the Secretary-General, in exceptional circumstances, and subject to strict eligibility criteria, including medical certification, to place staff who had been traumatized by a critical incident in their duty station and were unable to perform their functions there, but could continue to contribute to the work of the Organization elsewhere. Approval would better equip the Organization, in line with its duty of care, to address the needs of staff who had sacrificed much in service to the United Nations.

13. Lastly, introducing the report of the Secretary-General on seconded active-duty personnel (A/68/495), she said that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/287, the Secretary-General was suggesting possible ways forward to address conflicts between the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules and the national legislation of some Member States with respect to such secondments.

14. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on mobility (A/68/601), said that the

Advisory Committee had noted that the Secretary-General's refined mobility proposal foresaw periodic movement of all internationally recruited staff through the application of position occupancy limits linked to the hardship classification of the duty station and a managed lateral reassignment programme. The alternative proposal was based on incentives rather than position occupancy limits, and promoted geographical mobility, particularly in field-oriented job families, for eligibility for promotion to senior levels.

15. Overall, the Advisory Committee maintained its support for staff mobility at the United Nations and welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to develop both refined and alternative proposals. However, the Advisory Committee had concerns with regard to the refined proposal: it did not provide equal opportunities for internal and external candidates, since openings arising from lateral movements of staff would be filled by internal candidates; and the enforcement of position occupancy limits under the refined proposal was likely to increase the number of geographical moves, leading to significant financial implications. The Secretary-General's report did not contain realistic data projections concerning future mobility trends and the associated cost implications. A more prudent approach was therefore warranted, and the Advisory Committee recommended the adoption of the alternative proposal, subject to its recommendations.

16. The Advisory Committee saw merit in the one aspect common to both the refined and alternative proposals put forward by the Secretary-General, namely, the job network boards. However, the authority of each board needed to be clearly explained and codified, given that the boards would assume the functions and responsibilities currently assigned to hiring managers and heads of department. In addition, there was a need to bring greater clarity in terms of where accountability would lie for achieving staffing targets, and to avoid an unduly rigid application of job network requirements.

17. The Advisory Committee did not concur with the Secretary-General's proposal that recommendations on positions at the D-1 level should fall under the purview of a senior review board: adequate justification had not been provided for treating staff selections at the D-1 level differently from selections at lower levels. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended two modifications to the alternative proposal. First, external candidates entering the Organization at the P-4

level should be allowed an opportunity for one promotion without being required to make a geographical move. Second, the Advisory Committee proposed a modification concerning the job families which would be covered by the additional requirements for eligibility to serve at senior levels, to better reflect the job families that were field-oriented.

18. The report of the Advisory Committee also addressed other related issues, including allowing the Secretary-General to make greater use of his authority to move staff through the application of staff regulation 1.2 (c), subject to the provisions of the relevant General Assembly resolutions concerning staff selection; ensuring a more equitable sharing of the burden of service in hardship duty stations, including as part of the upcoming review of the Field Service category; supporting the continued provision of the financial incentives to encourage mobility; and improving the Organization's performance management system and workforce planning. Should the General Assembly approve the alternative proposal, or a version thereof, suitable transitional measures for the introduction of the proposal and its applicability to existing staff would need to be developed.

19. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the placement of United Nations staff members who had been adversely affected by natural disasters, malicious acts and other critical incidents (A/68/580), he said that the Advisory Committee noted that the Secretary-General's report was limited in scope to internationally recruited staff, and that the Secretary-General sought broader authority to place staff outside the regular staff selection system. Although the number of unresolved cases was minimal and would not appear to justify any amendment of the Secretary-General's existing exceptional placement authority, the Advisory Committee, recognizing the particular needs of staff members in such circumstances, would have no objection to the inclusion of related proposals in the next biennial overview report on human resources management reform. The General Assembly might also wish to request the Secretary-General to broaden the scope of the current proposal.

20. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on seconded active-duty military and police personnel (A/68/615), he said that the Advisory Committee had sought to gain a better understanding of the extent to which the national legislation of Member States conflicted with United Nations regulations and rules,

and the possible ramifications of the proposed changes. While it noted the effort made to address a complex issue, the Advisory Committee considered that the suggested approach required further analysis and refinement. Furthermore, Member States should be given the opportunity to consider reviewing their legislation, and all other options should be considered before the Secretary-General suggested amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules which touched upon some of the most fundamental principles and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations regarding Secretariat staff.

21. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Assembly should extend for a further two years the exceptional measures authorized in its resolution 67/287; request the Secretary-General to intensify his engagement with Member States with a view to identifying alternative solutions for addressing the issue; and request the Secretary-General to report thereon, and, if necessary, submit a new proposal at the main part of the seventieth session, taking into account the comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

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

23. **Mr. Richards** (Staff-Management Committee), speaking on behalf of the staff unions of the United Nations, said that the vast majority of the 60,000 staff of the Secretariat and the Organization's funds and programmes worked in the field, many in hardship duty stations and a significant number in conflict zones. Those staff members were not naive; they knew that it could be tough and uncompromising and did not expect special treatment. They did, however, expect the Organization to do all it could to protect them and their families, which was not currently the case.

24. Since the 2003 terrorist attack on the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, 555 United Nations staff members had been attacked and 200 killed. An agreement was therefore needed that would allow staff members to negotiate with management to establish minimum security standards. Staff members should have a basic right to safe facilities and to be protected by security officers who had been trained and screened by the Organization, rather than contractors of uncertain loyalties. In some countries, the United Nations flag was now seen as a target, rather than a

shield, and staff members who were nationals of the countries where they worked were now seen as legitimate targets by some rebel groups. Yet the Organization would not evacuate them from their country, even if their Government fell to those rebels.

25. The body responsible for staff safety and security in the field, the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, did not allow negotiation with staff unions, and the Staff-Management Committee was only an observer on that body. He called on the Secretary-General to restore staff negotiating rights, which had been revoked in July 2013, as the management team on the Staff-Management Committee needed to be empowered to enter into binding agreements, to be implemented directly, if they fell under the Secretary-General's purview, or, if not, brought before the General Assembly for consideration. Such meaningful social dialogue would only make the Organization stronger and its reforms more effective. The Staff-Management Committee was not asking for the right to veto reform or to co-manage the Organization, it was simply requesting that its views should be listened to and taken into consideration.

26. In 2013, the Secretary-General had launched the "Rights up front" action plan to improve United Nations action to safeguard human rights, in response to which some 14,000 people from around the world had already contacted the Secretary-General to demand that he restore United Nations staff members' labour rights: before the Organization could be respected as the promoter of human rights it must first implement them in-house.

27. On the question of mobility, the Secretary-General's proposal for managed mobility, as considered by the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, had been developed by both management and unions, with the exception of staff unions in New York. He therefore did not speak on their behalf on that matter. The proposal contained all the points considered to be essential to making mobility work for staff and the Organization. As recognized by the Advisory Committee, it was difficult to develop a mobility policy that did not give preference to internal candidates. Without assurances that the Organization would recognize and take into account the fact that staff had served at a hardship field duty station, staff would not want to move to the field, fearing they could get stuck there while jobs at Headquarters were given to external candidates. Giving

priority to internal candidates would not stop new blood being injected into the Organization, as the number of external recruits would always equal the number of staff who resigned or retired.

28. The Staff-Management Committee also considered that staff representatives should be included on the new job network boards, as they currently were on the central review bodies. As in the comparator service, staff participation would ensure that the boards respected the regulations and rules, reduce the risk of cronyism, and help to prevent a flood of appeals to the Dispute Tribunal. The Staff-Management Committee had examined the Secretary-General's refined and alternative proposals, on which it had not been consulted, and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, and was of the opinion that those proposals would not aid career development or burden-sharing. It therefore reiterated its support for the initial proposal. It also called for measures to be put in place for the rapid redeployment of staff members who had been victims of malicious acts.

29. With regard to the net remuneration margin, the General Assembly had reaffirmed in its resolution [67/257](#) that the range of 110 to 120 should continue to apply, on the understanding that the margin would be maintained at a level around the desirable midpoint of 115 over a period of time. The combination of the pay freeze, recommended by the International Civil Service Commission, and inflationary pressures on the wages of the comparator service meant that the average margin of 115 would be achieved over the medium-term. However, the margin did not take into account all elements of the comparator service's compensation package, such as bonuses. The real margin for 2013 was thus significantly less than the 119.6 reported by the International Civil Service Commission. Moreover, if the salaries of United Nations staff were compared to the compensation paid to United States civil servants posted abroad, the margin would be below 100.

30. While the Staff-Management Committee welcomed the fact that the staff of many offices had been consulted on the budget proposals for the biennium 2014-2015, so that staff affected by budget cuts could be redeployed where possible, consultations had not been held at some offices, including the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in Beirut. Reasonable measures should be taken to minimize the impact of any budget cuts on the hard-working staff there and elsewhere. Lastly, he

reiterated that the system of administration of justice was an important tool in ensuring good management and respect for the regulations and rules; however, while resources had been redeployed to boost the Administration's legal team, that was not true of the Office of Staff Legal Assistance. Pursuant to Article 17.2 of the Charter, the Organization should provide the Office with the additional resources it needed, as it had for management.

31. **Mr. Daunivalu** (Fiji), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to the human resources of the Organization, as the staff were the cornerstone of the United Nations. The efficient and effective delivery of mandates required a diverse, flexible and dynamic workforce that was motivated and adequately compensated for its invaluable contributions. The Group was also committed to the reforms needed to enable the Organization to address present and emerging global challenges. In that regard, it had examined the Secretary-General's proposals for a mobility framework. As the scope and complexity of the mandates given by Member States expanded, human resources played an increasingly critical role: a well-planned mobility scheme could provide a much-needed opportunity for staff to develop their skills and expertise and thus perform their various duties better. Mobility should, however, be considered as part of broader workforce and succession planning, incorporating the Organization's strategic objectives, as mandated by Member States, and taking into account issues related to geographical representation, gender parity, workforce rejuvenation, career development and retirement. An effective mobility framework must not only satisfy the requirements of the Organization, but should also take into account the views of staff and adequately address issues related to establishing a work-life balance.

32. The Group concurred with the Advisory Committee that by introducing job network boards, the goal of increasing the strategic movement of staff would be more likely to be achieved, and believed that the boards could also help to reduce vacancies; however, further clarification should be provided of how the boards would function and what steps would be taken to ensure that they did not create barriers to the movement of staff between different job networks. As the job networks were directly linked to the proposed job network boards, more information should

be provided on the reconfiguration of the job networks. The Secretariat should also provide details of the lines of accountability, the authority and the configuration of the job network boards, and how the boards would assist incoming staff members in developing their career. The definition of the envisaged non-rotational positions within the Secretariat also needed to be developed further.

33. While noting the Secretary-General's efforts to present a refined and an alternative mobility proposal, the Group remained concerned that many of the principles highlighted by the General Assembly in its resolution [67/255](#) still required further elaboration by the Secretariat, in particular the principle of non-discrimination against external recruitment to avoid potentially limiting the ability of the Organization to select the best candidates on as wide a geographical basis as possible. The Group also attached great importance to increasing the representation of developing countries at the Professional level at the four headquarters duty stations through the implementation of mobility. However, the Group was concerned that the Secretary-General had not clearly identified the probable costs of the scheme or how he intended to fund any additional requirements resulting from a mobility policy. The Group also queried how a new mobility framework would address the issue of institutional memory, while developing a mobile workforce. A mobility policy should promote greater burden-sharing of service in hardship duty stations and provide an opportunity for advancement through rotation, however that issue had not been sufficiently addressed in the Secretary-General's proposal.

34. With regard to the placement of United Nations staff members adversely affected by natural disasters, malicious acts and other critical incidents, the Group regretted the delays in the submission of the Secretary-General's report and concurred with the Advisory Committee that a proposal should be presented that took into account the needs of all United Nations staff and their families, not just internationally recruited staff. The Group also aligned itself with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee with regard to seconded active-duty military and police personnel, attaching critical importance to the principle of equal pay for equal work and to the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of United Nations staff, in accordance with Articles 100 to 102 of

the Charter. Any amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules should be a last resort and must be considered carefully. The Group agreed with the Advisory Committee that further analysis was needed of the conflict between national legislation and United Nations rules and regulations. In that regard, the Group thanked the 25 Member States that seconded highly qualified military and police officers to the United Nations and invited the Secretary-General to engage in further discussions with those Member States as to the possibility of amending their national legislation.

35. **Ms. Tan** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN supported the principle of mobility; however, it was essential for Member States to understand exactly what a mobility policy would entail. With regard to the scope of the policy, the Secretary-General's report stated that approximately 14,000 staff members in the Professional, Director and Field Service categories would be subject to the policy; but the reconfiguration of current job networks and families, needed to ensure a more consistent distribution of staff and positions, and the analysis needed to determine which positions would be non-rotational, had not been completed. The Association urged the Secretariat to continue to allow staff members to cross between job families in order to build up a truly versatile workforce.

36. In its resolution [67/255](#), the General Assembly had reaffirmed the principle of non-discrimination against external recruitment. While such an approach might appear to be less efficient than prioritizing internal candidates, it was necessary in order to avoid potentially limiting the ability of the Organization to select the best candidates on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Nationals from underrepresented Member States, particularly developing countries, must be given a fair chance. The Association therefore urged the Secretary-General to ensure that external candidates were not disadvantaged and were given the chance to apply for every vacancy.

37. With regard to the cost of the scheme, the Secretary-General's report did not contain a detailed breakdown and projection of the cost of implementation, predicting instead that average future costs would be broadly in line with those currently incurred by staff movements. The Association asked the Secretariat to elaborate on what was meant by making moves more strategic, rather than increasing

the number of moves. It also noted that under both the refined and alternate proposals, staff could apply to move after one year, which might not be optimal in terms of both cost and building institutional capacity. Lastly, she said that ASEAN concurred with the Advisory Committee that the successful implementation of any mobility policy would be largely contingent on improved forecasting of future staffing requirements, and looked forward to receiving more details regarding those areas of concern in order to be able to make an informed decision about the long-term staffing needs in the best interests of the Organization and the Member States.

38. **Ms. Power** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the goal of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the United Nations by implementing a modern human resources system and by fostering a culture that enabled staff at all levels to contribute to their greatest potential was one to which the European Union fully subscribed. However, reform of the human resources management system could not be achieved overnight.

39. While some progress had been made, more needed to be done in certain key areas, such as performance management; only motivated staff members, who were proud of the Organization and confident that good work would be rewarded and mediocrity not tolerated, would go the extra mile and perform at the highest possible level. Her delegation remained concerned that new approaches to ensuring robust performance management had, in practice, not been embraced by staff or managers, and decisive steps should be taken to tackle underperformance. Similarly, the slow rate of improvement in the gender imbalance within the Secretariat remained a cause for concern, and she trusted that further action by the Secretary-General would address that seemingly intractable problem. As strong proponents of managed mobility, her delegation was of the view that any proposal must meet the needs of the Organization and its staff, as well as the concerns of Member States, particularly with regard to financial implications, a fuller explanation of which was still needed, and to recruitment and the potential implications for externally recruited

candidates. Robust performance management was necessary to ensure valid decisions by the job network boards.

40. **Mr. Dettling** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that it was in the interest of the Organization and its Member States to move from the current system of voluntary mobility to one of managed mobility, in order to improve the strategic management of United Nations human resources and thus optimize implementation of its increasingly complex mandates. The Secretary-General's refined proposal would provide a good starting point for deliberations on a future mobility policy, and the consequent decompartmentalization of the various United Nations entities.

41. He expressed support for the Secretary-General's proposals to introduce minimum and maximum post occupancy limits and to establish job network boards, as well as to foster a strong link between mobility, particularly geographical mobility, and career development. It was also important for a managed mobility policy to guarantee the fair rotation of staff members between hardship and other duty stations, as the current situation in which staff members were forced to spend several years in hardship duty stations was unsustainable.

42. He welcomed efforts under the proposed mobility scheme to address the concerns of the General Assembly with regard to the treatment of external candidates. Although it was assumed that the introduction of a managed mobility policy would inevitably have an impact on how external candidates were recruited, it should not reduce the number of external candidates hired. The Secretary-General's proposals offered an opportunity to consider the development of mobility support measures to ensure that the Organization was not deprived of the possibility of hiring new talent.

43. Lastly, such a change in the Organization's human resources policies could not be considered in isolation, but must form part of other ongoing human resources and broader management reform projects. The Secretary-General's proposed phased implementation approach was therefore worthy of further consideration. Before being rolled out to all job networks, the framework could initially be implemented and tested in those fields that would benefit the most from mobility, such as peacebuilding

and security or humanitarian efforts. Such a pragmatic approach would not only ensure the best support for the reform and bring costs under control, it would also optimize coordination and synergies between the various reform initiatives currently under way. The refined version of the mobility framework was a better solution for the Organization, as the Secretary-General's alternative proposal remained too modest and did not adequately address the need for staff mobility.

44. **Mr. Oh Joon** (Republic of Korea) said that the current voluntary mobility policy had failed to realize the full benefits of mobility, as there had not been enough movement of staff, and those moves that had taken place had mainly been between duty stations in the same category. The introduction of a managed mobility system would therefore be opportune and would allow staff members to move between duty stations in different categories, to gain experience and to share the burden of service in difficult duty stations more fairly. The foreign services of most Member States already had such a framework as an important tool for flexible and efficient staffing; it was therefore only reasonable to expect the United Nations to also be so equipped in order to meet the challenges of a globalized world.

45. While his delegation thus supported the Secretary-General's refined proposal, it did not share the view that the proposed managed reassignment process failed to maintain equal opportunities for external candidates, as such reassignments related to incumbent positions, not open to external candidates. However, the Secretariat should explain in detail under what circumstances lateral reassignments would take place, how they would differ from those under the current system, and what impact the process would have on the recruitment ratio of external to internal candidates.

46. The managed mobility proposal, including the job network boards and maximum position occupancy limits, would surely lessen the burden on long-serving staff in hardship duty stations. Regarding the lack of accurate cost projections, owing to the fact that the number and type of geographical moves that would be undertaken in the future could not be firmly established in advance, the Secretariat could have produced estimates based on different scenarios and its strategic goals, including the optimal number of geographical



moves. Such data would allow Member States to make a better-informed decision.

47. A managed mobility framework would form the basis for a number of different human resources policies, including performance management, staff-management relations, the administration of justice, the enterprise resource planning system and human resources development. By combining those elements strategically, the Organization would be able to maximize the potential of its valued workforce.

48. **Ms. Koyama** (Japan) said that effective human resources management enabled staff to contribute to the delivery of the Organization's mandates. A fair and merit-based recruitment system provided a diverse, multi-skilled and versatile staff, the most valuable asset of the United Nations. A mobility framework would make an essential contribution to the development of staff members' professional skills and expertise, as well as to their morale and their cross-cultural understanding. From a managerial perspective, it could provide staff with broader opportunities, share the burden of service more fairly and improve vacancy management.

49. Her delegation therefore supported the emphasis on mobility, but would need to consider the potential effects of the proposals, especially the impact on external recruitment. Careful analysis of the cost implications of the mobility framework was needed, and any policy would be more effective when considered in conjunction with performance management approaches and workforce planning.

50. **Mr. Soomro** (Pakistan) said that the goal of the human resources management reforms was to create an Organization that was better able to implement the mandates entrusted to it by its Member States, delivered by a truly global, dynamic and adaptable workforce. While the United Nations had a long way to go before the character, orientation and composition of its workforce was truly global, steps could be taken to make it more dynamic, adaptable and field-oriented.

51. The Secretary-General's timely submission of the refined and alternative proposals on staff mobility should facilitate consensus and strengthen the ongoing human resources management reforms. During the course of those reforms, the Organization should also address fundamental weaknesses and deficiencies in the human resources system, particularly with regard to recruitment and selection, transparency, strategic

workforce planning, representation of developing countries at the Professional and higher levels, accountability, and mechanisms to monitor implementation of geographical and gender representation targets.

52. There was an emerging consensus on the establishment of job network boards and their potential contribution to a viable mobility framework. The boards would contribute to the timely completion of recruitment processes, relieve managers of some staffing responsibilities, and enable a holistic view of the Organization's staffing needs through a biannual staffing exercise. As the introduction of job network boards would change the nature of staffing decisions fundamentally, it was essential for the boards and the network staffing teams to make full use of existing accountability mechanisms, including the senior managers' compact and the human resources management scorecard for geographical and gender targets. Accountability tools and intergovernmental oversight must, in fact, be strengthened during the reform process.

53. Other critical areas that should be developed further as part of a mobility and career development framework included the Organization's readiness to embrace change; suitable transitional measures; measures to ensure non-discrimination against external candidates and bring in fresh talent at all levels; and reliable data on current mobility patterns, including a baseline for lateral geographical mobility, and realistic projections of future trends. Member States should also have a clear understanding of how the proposed mobility policy would ensure more equitable sharing of the burden of service in difficult duty stations among internationally recruited staff, particularly those in the Field Service category. The Secretariat should also provide details of the total cost of geographical and non-geographical moves and define clear performance indicators.

54. His delegation supported a recruitment and selection process based on merit and existing eligibility criteria, including qualifications, experience and skills, as well as gender and geographical representation. A mobility policy that attempted to overturn those desiderata would not enjoy consensus. To ensure the success and sustainability of human resources reform, all aspects of human resources policy must be addressed comprehensively. In that connection, the Secretary-General should present proposals for a

comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges.

55. **Mr. Lieberman** (United States of America) said that the United Nations could not do its essential work without the dedication and professionalism of its staff. Consequently, his delegation considered human resources management to be one of the most critical elements to the success of the Organization and had supported the significant human resources management reforms undertaken in recent years on the understanding that they would improve the Organization's ability to recruit, develop and retain the best and brightest talent from every Member State.

56. In that connection, his delegation supported the principle of a managed mobility framework that would allow the Secretary-General to move staff where mandates required them and give staff more avenues to achieve their career aspirations. However, the Secretary-General's original proposal lacked clarity with regard to costs and significantly reduced opportunities for external candidates to compete for posts. Mobility was not an end in itself, but one element in the whole package of ongoing human resources management reforms.

57. As a policy that would have far-reaching effects on the Organization, it was essential for Member States to understand and be able to meet all the costs of mobility, and for the framework not to significantly reduce the prospects for external candidates and their vital contribution. His delegation therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's refined proposal, which appeared to address its main concerns and reservations.

58. While it was helpful to know that 1,635 geographical moves were currently made by internationally recruited staff per year, at a cost of \$150 million, not including financial incentives, and that the Secretary-General did not anticipate a significant increase in those numbers should the proposed mobility policy be implemented, it was not clear how the Secretary-General would determine the number of moves necessary in each year to achieve the goals of the proposed policy, or whether the figures given represented all current costs. Understanding the number of annual moves required was crucial to understanding the cost of the policy and limiting potential budgetary exposure, a prerequisite for his delegation's support of any proposal.

59. Similarly, while the refined proposal appeared to give greater opportunities to external applicants, more clarity was needed, and he asked the Secretary-General to quantitatively demonstrate the effect the refined proposal would have on external applications.

60. Given the connection between mobility and other human resources management reforms, his delegation would like to have a better understanding of how those reforms were interconnected and what the Organization's human resources management system would look like in five or ten years' time, once they had all been implemented. There was, however, one reform that was essential to a successful mobility policy, namely an effective performance management system. His delegation had long noted that the Organization did not measure performance effectively, a shortcoming that precluded rewarding excellent performance or sanctioning underperformance. In those few cases where sanctions were imposed, decisions were too frequently appealed through the internal justice system and often overturned as a result of the ineffective performance management system. A fair and effective performance management system and reform of the administration of justice could be implemented in a manner that would make the Organization more effective while respecting due process for staff members. Besides being crucial reforms in their own right, they were needed to prevent poor performers being moved from post to post at considerable financial expense to Member States and at the expense of the morale of high-performing colleagues. His delegation therefore welcomed the fact that the Secretary-General had started work on reforms in that area.

61. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation attached particular importance to questions of human resources management, as they were crucial to the implementation of management reforms. The Secretary-General's proposals must be considered in the context of key General Assembly resolutions on human resources reform, including resolutions [63/250](#), [65/247](#) and [65/248](#), and on the basis of whether they would increase the effectiveness of staffing policy; enable the Organization to recruit the highly qualified staff it needed; make the Secretariat more effective and efficient; and be financially feasible for Member States.

62. His delegation reiterated that internal and external candidates must be given equal opportunities

to be considered for vacant positions. Moreover, significant changes would have to be made to the performance management system if the mobility framework was to function properly. He also noted that the proposal to create job network boards would transform the Secretariat's staffing procedures and prerogatives. His delegation remained concerned by the arguments put forward to justify those changes, which were only indirectly related to mobility, and their potential impact on the effectiveness of the staff's work. While his delegation shared the goals of providing staff with opportunities for career development and ensuring greater burden-sharing between Headquarters and the field, it was essential that any mobility framework should not result in chaos. The constant redeployment of staff was not the purpose of the exercise. The Committee must therefore consider thoroughly the proposals and the various scenarios for the evolution of the policy, examining how it would allow staff members not only to change their career path or duty station but also to discharge their duties effectively. The primary concern for the Organization should be that its staff were experts in their field.

63. The current mobility proposals were not the first to have been considered by the Committee. It should therefore build on the lessons learned from having examined proposals that had either been rejected as unworkable or that had been implemented and had subsequently failed. While his delegation welcomed the presentation of an alternative proposal, it was concerned that the Secretariat itself appeared to have doubts as to its feasibility; the Member States had asked for and needed proposals that would work. Echoing the doubts expressed by the Advisory Committee, his delegation was also concerned about the vague assessments of the financial implications. Both proposals would transform the culture of service in the United Nations, with substantive implications for staffing and financial processes. Member States must therefore examine the proposals thoroughly to assess whether overall they would be beneficial to the Organization.

*The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.*