



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. LUKE DAUNIVALU, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE AGENDA ITEM 139, "HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT: MOBILITY, PLACEMENT AUTHORITY AND SECONDMENT", AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 25 November 2013)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 139 entitled: Human resources management, in particular on the reports of the Secretary-General on Mobility, Placement Authority, and Secondment of active duty military and police personnel.

2. The Group wishes to thank the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, Ms. Susana Malcorra, for the introduction of the reports of the Secretary-General on these issues, contained, respectively, in documents A/68/358, A/68/483, and A/68/495, as well as the Chair of the ACABQ, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for introducing the related reports of the Advisory Committee. Furthermore, the Group also wishes to thank the Vice-President of the Staff Management Committee, Mr. Ian Richards, for his statement.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the human resources of this Organization. As we all know, staff are the cornerstone of the United Nations. The efficient and effective delivery of mandates requires a diverse, flexible and dynamic workforce that is both motivated and adequately compensated for their invaluable contributions. The Group is committed to addressing the reforms that are necessary to better equip the Organization to meet with present and emerging global challenges.

4. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China has examined the Secretary-General's proposals for a mobility framework for the United Nations. As the mandates given by Member States continue to gain in scope and complexity, human resources come to play an increasingly critical role, and a well-planned and implemented mobility scheme could provide a much-needed opportunity for staff to develop their skills and expertise in order to better fulfill their various duties.

5. However, the Group of 77 and China believes that mobility is not a stand-alone issue. It must be considered within a broader perspective, as part of a comprehensive workforce and succession plan that incorporates the strategic objectives of the Organization, as mandated by Member States, and also addresses issues related to geographic representation of staff, gender parity, recruitment, workforce rejuvenation and career development and retirement. An effective mobility framework must not only satisfy the requirements of the UN, but should also take into account the views of staff and adequately address questions related to work/life balance.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group of 77 and China continues to support the concept of staff mobility. In this regard, the group concurs with the ACABQ that the introduction of Job Network Boards may achieve the goal of increased strategic movement of staff, and believes that it may equally help in reducing

vacancies in the Secretariat. However, much needs to be clarified about the functioning of the Job Network Boards. It is essential that the introduction of the Job Network Boards does not create barriers to the movement of staff between different Job Networks. Furthermore, the Group notes that the current job networks will be reconfigured by the Secretariat. As they have a direct link with the Job Network Boards to be established, the Group is eager to receive more information on how this will be undertaken in order to ensure their effectiveness. During informal consultations, the Group will seek answers from the Secretariat on this and other issues, such as lines of accountability, authority and configuration of the Job Network Boards, as well as the role they may play in assisting incoming staff members in developing their career track early on in order to meet organizational requirements. The Group is also interested in inquiring further about the definition of the envisaged non-rotational positions in the Secretariat.

Mr. Chairman,

7. An effective mobility policy cannot be implemented overnight. In considering such a transformative initiative for the Organization, Member States must make sure that every aspect is adequately elaborated. While noting the efforts made by the Secretary-General in presenting both his refined and alternative proposals for a mobility framework, the Group of 77 and China remains concerned that many of the items on which the General Assembly requested further development in resolution 67/255 still need further elaboration by the Secretariat, in order to ensure that there is no discrimination against external candidates in the recruitment and staffing process, and to provide competitive employment opportunities to talented candidates from the widest possible geographic basis, particularly by making efforts to attract candidates from developing countries. The Group attaches great importance to the enhanced representation of developing countries at the professional level in the four UN main offices through the implementation of mobility and intends to stress this issue in the informal consultations on this agenda item.

8. The Group is also concerned that the Secretary-General has not clearly pointed out the likely costs that will be incurred, and how he intends to fund any possible additional requirements resulting from the implementation of a new mobility policy.

9. The Group of 77 and China is interested in discussing how a new mobility framework will address the issue of retaining institutional memory throughout the Secretariat, while developing a mobile workforce.

Mr. Chairman,

10. The Group of 77 and China is of the view that a mobility policy should promote greater burden sharing of service in hardship duty stations and an opportunity to advance through rotation. In this regard, the Group agrees with the ACABQ that this issue has not been sufficiently addressed by the Secretary-General and will inquire accordingly during consultations.

11. On the issue of Placement Authority of United Nations staff members who have been adversely affected by natural disasters, malicious acts and other critical incidents, the Group of 77 and China regrets the delays in the presentation of the Secretary-General's proposal and concurs with the view of the ACABQ that the Secretary-General should have presented a proposal taking into account the needs of all United Nations staff and their families, not just internationally recruited staff.

12. Lastly, the Group of 77 and China wishes to align itself with the views of the ACABQ on the measures proposed by the Secretary-General regarding the secondment of active duty military and

police personnel. The Group of 77 and China attaches critical importance to the principle of equal pay for equal work, as well as to the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of United Nations Staff, in accordance with Articles 100 to 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

13. The Group of 77 and China maintains that any amendments to staff rules and regulations must be carefully planned and that all other alternatives must be adequately considered before any action is taken. Consequently, we concur with the ACABQ that further analysis on the issue of conflict between national legislation and United Nations rules and regulations is needed. In this regard, the Group thanks the 25 Member States that provide highly qualified military or police officers on secondment to the UN and invites the Secretary-General to further engage with these Member States regarding the possibility of making amendments to their national legislation.

Mr. Chairman,

14. In conclusion, allow me to reaffirm the commitment of the Group of 77 and China to the development of the human resources of this Organization. The G-77 is convinced that mobility must be considered as part of a system-wide human resources policy and is ready to engage in a constructive dialogue on this and other HR issues. We look forward to the informal consultations on this agenda item.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.