



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MRS. AICHA AFIFI, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY, PERMANENT MISSION OF MOROCCO TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 118: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, IN THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S FIFTH COMMITTEE- New York, 5 March 2003**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 118 entitled: Human resources management, in particular on the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the implementation of all provisions of General Assembly resolution 55/258 on human resources management by the Department of Management.

2. The Group wishes to thank Under-Secretary-General Mr. Dileep Nair for the introduction of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on this issue contained in document A/57/726.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China appreciates the recent efforts and progress made by the Secretary-General aimed at reforming human resources management of the Organization and reaffirms the importance of the central role of the Office of Human Resources Management in achieving such an objective. The Group also wishes to stress the need that the reform process be conducted in accordance with relevant resolutions, in particular resolution 53/221 and resolution 55/258.

4. The Group of 77 and China concurs with the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services stated in its report that it is too early to assess the full impact of the human resources management reform. In this regard, the Group notes that the Office of Human Resources Management commenced implementing a number of reform initiatives. The Group expresses its readiness to consider this matter in-depth once we have received sufficient information on the implementation of the reform initiatives, in accordance with the relevant resolutions and taking into consideration the relevant observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in this regard.

5. Concerning human resources planning, the Group of 77 and China notes that the Office of Human Resources Management is establishing a new Planning, Administration and Monitoring Service to support human resources planning capacity throughout the Secretariat. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is encouraging the Office of Human Resources Management in its ongoing efforts to include more indicators in the action plans to enhance planning at departmental levels.

6. The Group shares the view that such service needs further refinement, as well as strong alignment with the departments' operational goals and stronger link to new staff selection system, and that additional targets and indicators would improve the value of actions plans as planning tools.

7. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the introduction of the new recruitment and selection method through the Galaxy system as a means of implementing the initiatives of human resources management reform, provided that it contributes to enhancing transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the recruitment process of the United Nations system.

8. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China concurs with the observation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services that, despite the significant advantage of the Galaxy system, it should be noted that, among other factors, its lack of accessibility poses a risk to achievement of the objectives of the new staff selection method. Appropriate mechanisms to process the growing number of applications received through this system need to be introduced urgently.

9. The Group would like to stress that such a system should improve the equitable geographical distribution among Member States in recruiting UN staff. It should be kept in mind that some developing countries might experience serious difficulties in accessing this new system because of lack of access to information technology.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Concerning mobility, the Group of 77 and China notes that the Office of Internal Oversight Services in its report states that the Office of Human Resources Management has introduced, in an experimental stage, several mechanisms to promote mobility. The Office of Internal Oversight Services considers in this regard that offering incentives to promote mobility is the most effective way to ensure a smooth implementation of the new mobility policy. Voluntary mobility also needs to be encouraged through streamlined administrative procedures and processes that facilitate staff transfers and integration into new duty stations.

11. The Office of Internal Oversight Services notes also that since increased mobility can negatively impact on the institutional memory of the organization, it is essential that mechanisms for knowledge transfer and continuity of expertise are built into the mobility process. To prove its value, staff mobility must ultimately enhance the productivity of people in the Organization through broadening experiences and increasing work satisfaction. The Office of Internal Oversight Services notes further that meaningful criteria and measures to capture the impact of increased mobility would be advantageous to OHRM in its efforts to assess programme success.

12. The Group is willing to discuss the matter of mobility in detail during the informal consultations.

13. Concerning competencies, continuous learning and career development, the Group of 77 and China shares the view expressed by the Office of Internal Oversight Services that the foundation of a high-performing Organization is well-trained staff, in possession of a set of clearly defined competencies and core values, who strive constantly for career development. The Group notes that the Office of Human Resources Management has, in a relatively short period, implemented a number of programmes to promote such characteristics within the United Nations.

14. Concerning the introduction of electronic performance appraisal (e-PAS), the Group notes that the Office of Internal Oversight Services is of the view that the application of this system still faces major obstacles that require organization-wide solutions.

15. As far as streamlined rules and procedures are concerned, the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services states that this was one of the most visible initiatives recently undertaken by the Office of Human Resources Management through dissemination of the revised administrative document and the Personnel Manual by means of the Internet and the establishment of a human resources policy service to enhance uniform interpretation and application of rules throughout the organization. The Group of 77 and China notes that the Office of Internal Oversight Services deems that such system still leaves a significant potential for increasing the efficiency of administrative procedures which are presently not fully exploited.

16. Regarding the annexes of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Group of 77 and China notes that in several areas the Office of Internal Oversight Services has concluded that the provisions of resolution 55/258 have been implemented. The Group is of the view that there are large discrepancies between what was sought and what was achieved.

17. In conclusion, the Group concurs with the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services that further advancing the human resource management reform will necessitate the continuous commitment of the Office of Human Resources Management and the Organization to the reform process. Moreover, the Group reiterates its request that the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services be considered in the context of the agenda item relating to human resources management.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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