

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. MÁRCIO BURITY,
THIRD SECRETARY OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ANGOLA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 141: HUMAN
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-SECOND
SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY.**

(New York, 31 October 2017)

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the distinguished representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Group wishes to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, Ms. Martha Helena Lopez for the introduction of the Secretary-General's report on Human Resources Management as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for introducing the related report.

We would like to take this opportunity to renew its compliments and gratitude to UN staff for their invaluable contribution to the delivery of the mandates of the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group takes note that the report of the Secretary-General related to the composition of the Secretariat covers a six-month transitional period from 1 July to 31 December 2016. In this regard, the Group looks forward to receive during the 73rd Session, the future report of the Secretary-General, aligned to a new period from 1 January to 31 December, as endorsed by the General Assembly. It is our expectation that this report will provide more extensive trends analysis and possible underlying reasons for those trends for better consideration by the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

An equitable geographic representation in the Secretariat remains the priority of the Group. Regarding this issue, we note with serious concern that the number of Member States within the desirable range for representation of Member States in geographic posts has decreased by 18 per cent from 125 to 102. Also, the largest number of appointments to Posts subject to geographical distribution were of staff of overrepresented countries.

The Group will be interested to learn more about the reasons of the above situation, despite the appeals of the General Assembly on the importance of recruiting staff on a wide geographical basis as possible to reflect the diversity of staff from all regions of the world. In this regard, we will need to have information on the progress made in the implementation of the General Assembly decision regarding the desirable ranges system to address the issue of geographical representation. It would also be useful to receive the first analysis on the inclusion in the report of the two new tables to show the regional groupings for all staff of the United Nations Secretariat.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group notes also with concern, the persistent issue of the ever increasing number of high level posts which, from our view, contradicts the objective of the Organization to be more agile and more field-oriented. Further, we expect to receive clarification from the Secretariat on the reasons of the continuing delay of the implementation of the 120 days guidance provided by the General Assembly to fill the vacant posts as well as the apparent lack of effort to rejuvenate the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to disciplinary matters, the Group notes the efforts made to provide an overview on actions taken in case of misconduct and/or criminal behavior (A/72/209). However, the Group urges the Secretary-General to take more substantive actions to address issues connected to allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse within the Organization, as indicated by the Advisory Committee.

The Group would also like to recall that celerity and quality should be the criteria observed for the disposal of cases and will be interested to receive information on the progress made in this regard.

Turning to the proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules, the Group will seek more information on these issues during informal consultations and in the meantime, wishes to emphasize that proposals to amend the Staff Regulations and Rules must follow the decisions of the General Assembly as well as those of the Administrative Tribunals. In this connection, the Group will carefully examine the amendments related to the retirement age and the allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Mr. Chairman,

Human Resources represent the most important asset of the Organization and require all our attention for an effective delivery of the Organization's mandates. Guided by this objective, the African Group stands ready to engage constructively on this important agenda item with an expectation of fruitful deliberations during the informal negotiations.

I thank you.