



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY H.E AMBASSADOR BOUBACAR DIALLO, G-77 COORDINATOR OF
THE PERMANENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 146: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT,
AT THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED 75TH SESSION OF THE FIFTH
COMMITTEE OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(New York, 1 March 2021)**

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 146. Human Resources Management.

2. At the outset, the Group wishes to thank Ms. Martha Helena Lopez, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, for the introduction of the Secretary-General's reports on Composition as well as Mr. Abdalla Bachar Bong, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for introducing the related report.

Mr. Chair,

3. The Group of 77 and China notes that the Secretary-General presented an overview of human resources management reform for the period 2019–2020 and an outlook beyond, focusing on three integrated, coherent and interdependent outcomes, namely agility, diversity and accountability, with an aim to lead to impact for the Organization. The Group looks forward to a productive discussion and thorough consideration, in order to ensure that the final outcome will effectively guide the Secretariat in its endeavors to address the persistent challenges, many of which have been recurring over the previous sessions.

4. At the midst of an unprecedented global pandemic, the United Nations coordinates global efforts to handle numerous issues, ranging from addressing poverty, settling conflicts, taking care of refugees, vulnerable children, women and gender issues, ending hunger, environmental issues as well as economic welfare and trade among nations, to mention but a few.

5. The acknowledgement and appreciation of the dedication and sacrifice of staff members are reflected in the great importance that the Group of 77 and China attaches to human resources management and its related issues across the United Nations. This is especially true in the context of the COVID-19

pandemic, which triggered an unparalleled situation that required coordination at the United Nations common system level in areas such as entitlements, alternative and flexible working arrangements and work-life balance. These exceptional measures ensured business continuity at such exceptional times.

6. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that the staff implementing the mandates of the United Nations is doing so in a rule-based environment which also exemplifies diversity, flexibility and dynamism, an environment that motivates and facilitates the staff members to put out their best efforts in serving the rest of the world.

7. The Group takes note of the ongoing efforts to reform human resources management in the organization, which is key component of the overall UN reform efforts. We commend the progress made thus far, especially with regard to the simplification and streamlining of rules and policies and changes in the conditions of service. We also welcome the steps taken to strengthen internal anti-corruption measures and to ensure a safe environment for staff to report misconduct, as well as efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace.

8. The Group believes that the United Nations must be premised on a geographically diverse and gender-balanced, international and talented workforce that is truly representative of all the peoples that the Organization serves. The principles of equitable geographical representation and gender parity are cornerstones to the G-77 and China

9. Persistent imbalance in equitable geographic representation in the Secretariat remains a major concern to the Group, especially given the reference in the UN Charter (paragraph 3, Article 101) to "the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible". We deem this principle essential for ensuring the international character of the Organization, and that it truly represents all its member states. We urge the Secretary-General to step up his efforts towards achieving equitable geographical representation across the UN staff, especially at senior levels. Due attention needs to be given to TCC/PCC representation. The Group also recalls the system of desirable ranges, established in 1960, which measures progress towards achieving a wide equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat. We stand ready to engage in negotiations to advance the sixty-year-old mechanism. We should not shy away from embracing changes that come to the advance of our organization.

10. The Group wishes to welcome the continuous increase of the number of female staff members, which stands at 38.4% of the overall global staff of the Secretariat. We note however that the overall number of women in senior

positions is still below 50%. It is also disheartening to see that the share of women from developing countries in senior positions is disproportionately low.

11. The Group of 77 and China is concerned that the average age of a Secretariat staff members continues to reflect an upward trend, and that the entry level positions, particularly at P1 and P2 levels, continue to fall, which limits the space for achieving important human resources targets, including the rejuvenation of the organization and acquiring fresh talents from the different regions of the world, especially from unrepresented and underrepresented developing Member States.

12. Furthermore, we wish to reiterate that language skills constitute an important factor in the selection processes, and the need to respect the equality of the two working languages of the Secretariat, and that good command of the official languages in specific duty stations should be given due consideration during the recruitment process. We further reiterate our serious concern that efforts made to reach out to potential candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented countries, particularly developing countries, has not been successful.

Mr. Chair,

13. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China intends to engage actively in the upcoming consultations with a view to ensure continuous progress in the implementation of the human resources reform initiatives to build a strong and forward-looking Organization that thrives in a challenging and fast-changing environment. The Group believes that the reform of the human resources function is a key pillar of the overall reform of the United Nations.

I thank you Mr. Chair.