

Statement by Ms. Martha Helena Lopez
Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources
The First Part of the Resumed 76th Session of the Fifth Committee

Human Resources Management (Agenda item 143)

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present the reports of the Secretary-General on human resources management, which consist of the report on the Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics (A/76/570 and A/76/570/Corr.1) and the report on the Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behavior, 1 January to 31 December 2020 (A/76/602).

I am pleased to begin with the Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics report which covers the one-year period, from 1 January to 31 December 2020. The report provides an overview of demographic variables, such as age and gender, as well as structural elements of the workforce, including entity, location, category and appointment type. The report covers staff movements, as well as staff subject to the system of desirable ranges.

You will note that the report has undergone substantial upgrades to provide Member States with enhanced workforce analytics data, including extending the retirement forecast of staff beyond 10 years. It features in-depth analysis of factors that have an impact on the long-term outcome of the human resources reform efforts to realize a diverse and inclusive workplace where the organizational workforce reflects the geographical, gender and other diversity dimensions of the peoples it serves. The report provides a deep dive into key recruitment process stages disaggregated by geographical representation, gender, and age of applicants.

Simultaneously, efforts are underway to make most of the demographic information in the present report available to all Member States, through expanded online reporting. The aim is to have key demographic staff data accessible on a continuous basis, and allow for tailored analysis by Member States, as needed.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

The report on the Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behavior, 1 January to 31 December 2020 (A/76/602) will be the 19th such report. The report provides an overview of the administrative framework, summaries of individual cases and information to better explain some of the considerations taken into account by the Secretary-General when disciplinary measures have been imposed. The report also provides statistics on the numbers and types of cases received during the reporting period, as well as the number and disposition of the completed cases. In this year's report we have added an additional section to include statistics in relation to the handling of cases received and closed during the nine-month period from 1 January to 30 September 2021.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

Allow me to also draw your attention to the Secretary-General's reports from the 73rd, 74th and 75th sessions. Contributing to the objective of ensuring a decentralized, agile, field-focused management paradigm for the effective and transparent management of human resources, the Secretariat has been progressing with many of the reform initiatives that were articulated in those reports.

I would like to address the status of mobility proposals. As you may recall, we presented at the first resumed of the 75th session the report of the Secretary-General entitled "New Approach to Staff Mobility: building an agile Organization by providing opportunities for on-the-job learning and skill development" (A/75/540/Add.1). Consideration of this report was deferred. However, staff mobility remains paramount to the Organization and both staff and managers continue to view mobility as an important element in meeting the Organization's mandates and addressing the professional growth of staff members. Mobility allows staff to benefit from the diversity and richness of the Organizations' mandates and different duty stations, and it is required to meet the needs of mandates with large operational presence.

Therefore, under the new approach, mobility is defined as a way for staff to benefit from the said diversity and richness in the Secretariat, to acquire and develop skills to deliver on evolving organizational mandates, through continuous learning and development.

The framework is anchored in the fundamental link between learning and skills development, on the one hand, and career fulfilment on the other. The aim is to articulate that achieving job impact and professional excellence must be the primary career driver in the Organization, thus closely linking career advancement with skills acquisition and development and, consequently, learning.

Previous efforts focused on geographic and functional mobility, while the new approach is geared towards geographical movement to ensure mandate delivery and opportunities for staff to gain broader experience through service across headquarters and non-headquarters locations. The moves of staff members in the Professional and higher categories and Field Service category in D and E duty stations are expected to double and triple from their current levels with the new approach, which will help to address imbalances including in geographical and gender representation in those duty stations. Under the new approach to staff mobility, particular attention will be paid to staff serving in hardship duty stations. Staff who have spent more than two years in such duty stations will be prioritized for movement.

The new mobility approach will be implemented on a gradual basis as currently serving staff retire and newly recruited staff join the Organization. Current staff will also have the opportunity to opt-in. It should be acknowledged, however, that the trajectory for full implementation of mobility is a long-term endeavor.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

Amendments to the staff regulations and rules were presented to ensure that decision-makers can employ a simplified regulatory framework that is aligned with the new management paradigm.

I would also like to make reference to the three strategic, longer-term outcomes – agility, diversity and inclusion, and accountability - which will be the results achieved once all reforms are implemented. These outcomes reflect a systemic approach to people management, in line with the imperatives for human resources integration.

For instance, to advance agility, we completed a comprehensive review and update of the Secretariat's 20-year-old competency framework. We also overhauled the leadership and

management development programmes to align them with the delegation of authority and the UN system's leadership frameworks.

A new career satisfaction framework has been developed to convey the principles, processes, tools and resources that will help staff achieve career fulfilment. A new performance management approach will also focus on a different performance management culture with strong managerial accountability and more emphasis on team-oriented goals and ongoing feedback.

In addition, the geographical representation strategy is providing a focused, systematic and deliberate approach to make progress in this important area.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

You will also recall that in 2018, the Secretary-General requested that the General Assembly lift the barriers that hinder staff in the General Service and related categories from competing for positions at the Professional level. The proposal is to:

- (i) extend the principle of equal treatment of all applicants to positions at the Professional category at the P-2 (non-YPP) and P-3 positions to staff members in the General-Service and related categories, and in the Field Service category, up to the FS-5 level; and
- (ii) eliminate the G-to-P element from the Young Professionals Programme (YPP) so that the positions subject to the system of desirable ranges at the P-1 and P-2 levels be exclusively filled by external candidates from underrepresented and unrepresented Member States.

The proposal to remove the barriers will not only alleviate some of the difficulties faced by such staff for their career enhancement and satisfaction but will also contribute to improve equitable geographical representation when staff members from unrepresented and underrepresented countries are selected for professional posts.

Other matters pending General Assembly consideration which impact the reforms include (i) approvals of amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules (A/74/289); (ii) guidance on the review of the desirable ranges with a view to establishing a more effective tool for ensuring

equitable geographical distribution (A/73/372/Add.3); and (iii) increase in the earnings limit for retirees from \$22,000 to the current rate of a P4/VI (A/73/372/Add.1).

I hope that that General Assembly will consider the proposals favorably.

Thank you for your attention. I stand ready to answer any questions the Committee may have on the reports.