

STATEMENT BY MR. GOVINDRAO ADIK, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, ON AGENDA ITEM
134 – HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE 65TH
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 28, 2010

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to thank Deputy Secretary-General Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro for her statement to the Committee on the Secretary-General's proposals on human resources management. We also thank Under Secretary General for Management Ms. Angela Kane, and the Director of the Ethics Office Ms. Joan Elise Dubinsky, for their introduction to the relevant reports of the Secretary-General on human resources management. We further thank the Chairperson of the ACABQ, Ms. Susan McLurg, for introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee.



We welcome the presentations by Vice President of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee, Ms. Paulina Analena, and President of the Staff Union of the UN Secretariat, Mr. Stephen Kisambira.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The 44,000 staff-members of the United Nations constitute its backbone and are critical to the efficient and effective implementation of the mandates that we as member-states have set for the UN.

India is a strong votary for reform initiatives that provide the UN a well-trained, motivated, committed, and versatile workforce with real experience. For this, it is important not only to recruit staff with high merit and experience, but also to ensure that they are beneficiaries of skills enhancement programmes and undertake self-improvement.

The current process of HRM reform has its genesis in the outcome of the 2005 World Summit, which rightly recognized that the management systems and staffing policies and regulations of the United Nations had not kept pace with the dramatic transformation of its operational and substantive work and contemporary realities.

This anachronistic situation in the system is sought to be addressed. It is important that this is done as a matter of priority in accordance with the guidance of the General Assembly. Our delegation is appreciative of the work done in this regard and the numerous proposals of the Secretary-General, some of which are already approved and under implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

We are mindful that more needs to be done. The process of reforming human resources systems and practices of the UN to address the contemporary needs of the organization can only be achieved through the collective efforts of the management and the staff. It must, of course, be underpinned by strong consultative process with Member States so that it has their full support and involvement.

As we move to in-depth deliberations on this agenda item, it would serve us well to remember that the proposals before us represent a continuum and must be seen as part of a comprehensive reform package. Our delegation will engage on specific issues during the interactive session. However, permit me to make brief comments on a few specific issues.

On recruitment, our delegation is very concerned about the high vacancy rates, particularly in field missions, and the lengthy recruitment process. Indeed, we are unable to fathom the reasons for the persistence of huge vacancy figures. It surely cannot just be

a case that there are not enough meritorious applicants? While we hope that some of the reform measures we undertake will mitigate the situation, it is important that we address this problem in a comprehensive manner, and to consider out of the box solutions. In this context we do believe that the United Nations should look at tapping into the capacities of member-states by seeking nominations from Member-States. To start with such an exercise could begin in those departments and field missions that are plagued by excessively high vacancy rates.

Another important area is workforce planning and talent management. We have been at the forefront of welcoming the Secretary-General's initiative to implement an integrated workforce planning system through establishment of a Talent Management Framework. While we have noted the issues that have marked the launch of the Inspira tool, we hope these are teething problems associated with a new system and look forward to a detailed update from the Secretariat on its functioning.

Two important pending issues before us that have a direct bearing on the overall functioning of the Organization are that of continuing contracts and the harmonization of the conditions of service across the common system. Our delegation is in favour of reaching a satisfactory resolution on them during this session. We cannot afford any further delay which may result in jeopardizing the reform process.

Turning once again to the issue of staffing, our delegation encourages the Secretariat to intensify efforts to correct the imbalance in terms of equitable geographic and gender representation. We further wish to draw attention to the need to adequately enhance representation of Troop Contributing Countries in the United Nations Secretariat taking into account their experience in peacekeeping, as has been requested by the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

As we open our deliberations on the important proposals before the Fifth Committee during this session, we are acutely conscious that there are no easy choices to make. We further acknowledge that as with any reform, resistance is natural and dialogue is essential.

However, it is important to finish what we started. It is in our common interest to secure a stronger and more efficient Secretariat machinery, and to provide the required resources for the implementation of much needed and pressing reform. My delegation will work constructively to expeditiously arrive at decisions that contribute to the long-term effectiveness and efficiency of the organization.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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