



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

231 EAST 51ST STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10022
TEL: (212) 826 0840 FAX: (212) 826 2964

**STATEMENT BY MR PHILIP ONG,
DELEGATE TO THE 66th SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON AGENDA ITEM 139: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT,
FIFTH COMMITTEE, 17 OCTOBER 2011**

Thank you Mr Chairman.

2 At the outset, my delegation would like to thank Ms Ruth de Miranda, Chief of the Human Resources Policy Service, Ms Joan Dubinsky, Director of the Ethics Office, Mr Collen Kelapile, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), and Mr Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Joint Inspection Unit, for introducing their respective reports A/66/347, A/66/98, A/66/135, A/66/319, A/66/511 and A/66/355/Add.1 on this agenda item.

Mr Chairman,

3 For a small country like Singapore, human talent is key to survival and growth. With no natural resources, we rely on human ingenuity and effort to build our economy and society. We have and continue to make major investments in education, lifelong learning and talent development. We recognise that human resources management (HRM) and development are integrally linked and a continuous process.

4 In the same way, the United Nations' most valuable resource is its workforce. The world is changing, and with it the demands on the Organisation. Owing to its universal membership, inclusive decision-making processes and unequalled reach, the UN; as a unique platform for global engagement, provides critical services that are essential to international peace, security, stability and prosperity. As its operations become increasingly complex, HRM has to be efficient and responsive to develop a flexible Organisation that supports and promotes the goals set by Member States. Given the dynamic nature of HRM, systemic flaws and inadequacies will arise periodically and have to be promptly addressed. Any reforms on the human resource front must be underpinned by the goal of building a culture of accountability and transparency into the system. On this note, we welcome the introduction of the online reporting tool *HR Insight*

by the Office of Human Resources Management, which provides Permanent Missions with access to information on staff representation in the Secretariat in a timely manner.

5 At the same time, there should be continuous efforts to promote high standards of integrity, personal accountability and a strong culture of ethics within the Organisation. In this regard, my delegation maintains that the UN Ethics Office remains central to the HR reform process, given its role to administer financial disclosure, and whistleblower policies. We commend the Ethics Office for proactively raising awareness of its ethics services through broadened outreach initiatives. We also welcome the initiative to develop a briefing package on ethics for senior management and support the ACABQ's recommendation to extend this briefing to all incoming Directors as well.

6 Finally, my delegation would like to reiterate that the staffing of the Secretariat should accurately reflect the diverse character of its Member States. This is a pertinent issue given that approximately 40% of the posts subject to the system of geographic ranges are not filled by "staff having geographic status". While a more equitable geographic representation should not be an end in itself, the Organisation can and should step up its efforts to bringing talented and well-qualified individuals from across the globe in accordance with the established recruitment procedures, including the Young Professionals Programme. Also, greater efforts should be made to improving gender balance, particularly at the senior levels. The promotion of diversity and gender balance in the UN would send a clear signal to many national civil services.

Mr Chairman,

7 Some say the role of HRM is merely "to comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable". We believe HRM is more than that. HRM is a vital tool for change management across the UN system in a fair and transparent way. We made considerable progress at the 65th session and my delegation supports the Secretariat's efforts to equip itself with the best available human resource tools to fully discharge its mandates, duties and responsibilities. We look forward to a full and frank discussion on the points we have flagged and other related issues.

8 Thank you, Mr Chairman.

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