



**STATEMENT BY MR ANG WEE KEONG, DELEGATE TO THE
67TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON AGENDA ITEM 135: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT,
FIFTH COMMITTEE, 21 NOVEMBER 2012**

1. Thank you Mr Chairman. I would like to begin by thanking the Under-Secretary-General for Management, Mr. Yukio Takasu, and to the Director of the Ethics Office, Ms. Joan Dubinsky, for their introductions of the relevant reports of the Secretary-General. My delegation also expresses our appreciation to the Chair of the ACABQ, Mr. Collen Kelapile, for introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee, and to Inspector Gerard Biraud of the Joint Inspection Unit for introducing the unit's related reports on this agenda item.

2. At the outset, my delegation would like to associate ourselves fully with the statement made by the distinguished delegate from Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr Chairman,

3. Singapore has always paid special attention to the agenda item on human resources management (HRM). We are a small island state with no natural resources, and human capital is the only resource that we can rely on to generate economic growth and development. We have always made it a priority to develop and invest in our people, as a key foundation to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic development. Similarly, we believe that the workforce of the United Nations is its most valuable resource. As the operations of the United Nations become more complex, the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) has to ensure that this Organisation continues to have competent, committed and professional staff who can deliver the duties and mandates entrusted to it by Member States. Singapore is therefore heartened that the Secretary-General has taken critical steps over the years to reform its outmoded policies and create an improved work environment.

Long-term workforce planning

4. A key issue for my delegation is the need for the United Nations to strengthen its workforce planning and monitoring functions, to enable it to deploy its limited resources optimally. We welcome the efforts made in developing coherence in succession planning, particularly with regard to retirement forecasting and workforce planning in the field. However, we believe that much more can be done to develop a holistic workforce planning strategy to give the Secretary-General a bird's eye view of how human resource requirements are evolving across departments. In this regard, my delegation supports the ACABQ's recommendation for the Organisation to develop better workforce planning for major occupational groups, such as language, administrative, finance, security, and political and economic affairs staff. This has taken on greater urgency in light of the Secretary-General's proposed framework for mobility and career development. Mobility can only be successfully implemented if there is a proper system to help the OHRM make important decisions on where staff members are best placed to serve the needs of the Organisation.

Equitable Geographical Distribution

5. My delegation also notes the positive steps taken for recruitment efforts for unrepresented and underrepresented countries in the Secretariat, with a view to increasing the representation of developing countries and attaining more equitable geographical distribution in the Secretariat. However, it remains to be seen if these outreach efforts can deliver results. In any case, they do not address the root of the problem. My delegation is disappointed that the Secretary-General has once again failed to present his proposals for a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges, as requested by the General Assembly repeatedly in previous sessions. We urge the Secretary-General to make this a priority, as the United Nations can only be a truly international organisation if its staffing reflects the diverse character of its Member States. We also call on the Secretary-General to step up his efforts to achieve greater gender balance in the Secretariat, particularly at the senior levels where significant disparities remains.

Mobility

6. Lastly, my delegation is supportive of the principles that underpin the Secretary-General's proposed Mobility policy, which aims to strengthen the Organisation's capacity to deliver on its mandates by allowing a more strategic

deployment of staff and creating a more global, dynamic and adaptable workforce. A well managed mobility programme will also allow the Organisation to better respond to the career aspirations of its staff and ensure a fairer sharing of the burden of service in difficult duty stations. While these objectives are laudable, we note with concern that the mobility framework presented to us is vague on many important details. For example, several major components of the framework are yet to be defined, such as the list of rotational and non-rotational roles, the exact configuration of the job networks, and full estimates of the direct and indirect cost implications. It also remains far from certain if the framework can resolve some of the priority issues that it seeks to address, such as a fairer burden sharing of difficult duty stations. We urge the Secretary-General to review his proposal more comprehensively and work out the details as necessary, as the cons of implementing an incomplete policy prematurely will outweigh the potential benefits and lead to serious staff issues that may be more difficult to resolve.

Mr Chairman,

7. My delegation accords great importance to the issue of human resources management, and assures you of our commitment to engage constructively and actively in our upcoming discussions. Thank you.