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**Statement By Stephen Lieberman, Minister Counselor,
on
Agenda Item 135:
Human Resources Management
Before the Fifth Committee
November 21, 2012**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States looks forward to discussing the Secretary-General's reports on human resources management and the associated ACABQ, Ethics Office and JIU reports. My delegation would like to thank Mr. Yukio Takasu, Under Secretary-General for Management; Mr. Collen Kelapile, Chairman of the ACABQ; Ms. Joan Dubinsky, Director of the Ethics Office and Mr. Gerard Biraud, Inspector with the JIU, for their respective reports.

My delegation firmly believes that the UN's greatest resource is its people. For this reason, we look forward to considering all of the reports on human resources management and to working with all delegations on the issues under this agenda item in the weeks ahead.

Though many important human resources management issues have been presented to the General Assembly this session, in the interest of time I will limit our comments to two key components—mobility and staff-management relations.

Mr. Chairman, regarding mobility,

The Secretary-General has set forth his framework on mobility with the goal of making the UN staff a truly global, dynamic and adaptable workforce capable of delivering on all the Organization's mandates with excellence. The Secretary-General's report also suggests that the framework will give staff more avenues to achieve their career and development aspirations and equalize opportunities and burden-sharing across the Organization.

The United States fully supports the goals of the Secretary-General's mobility policy and we believe that the proposed policy can be an effective tool in achieving them. The ACABQ highlights that certain key elements of the policy are not well defined. My delegation believes

that we should work together over the coming weeks to achieve the definition that we will need to allow the Secretary-General to move forward with planning a mobility policy for General Assembly consideration that will address the problems identified in his report and to achieve the benefits identified in his report. In particular, we need to examine key issues such as the financial costs of mobility and its impact on recruiting external candidates. Furthermore, we believe that an effective mobility policy that meets the Secretary-General's goals must be part of a broader package of management and human resources reforms, including a performance management system that promotes and rewards high-performance and removes the small percentage of staff who do not perform to expected standards. In other words, the mobility policy must be part of a larger plan to support the recruitment, development, rewarding and promoting of the right number of staff with the right skills to achieve the Organization's mandates.

Mr. Chairman, regarding staff management relations,

While mobility may be the central focus of our deliberations, my delegation remains concerned about perennial challenges related to staff-management relations. We believe that it is crucial for the Secretary-General to consult with staff on matters related to human resources management policies and staff welfare, as set out in Regulations 8.1 and 8.2 of the Staff Regulations. But we strongly believe that management decisions are ultimately the responsibility of management subject to the appropriate oversight and authority of the General Assembly. We expect that the actions taken by the Secretary-General and proposals that he presents to Member States reflect what he believes to be in the best interests of the Organization.

In an Organization where effective management decision-making is already hampered by diffuse authority and political pressure from every direction, we cannot support a framework that further dilutes management authority and further weakens accountability for management decisions. Ongoing and sincere consultations between senior managers and staff representatives are vital, but blurring the accountability of the Chief Administrative Officer or the authority of Member States is neither in the long-term interest of the Organization nor the men and women who work in it.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman,

There are a number of important human resources management issues to consider this fall—including, but not limited to, mobility and staff-management relations—and we look forward to working with our colleagues to make sound decisions on the issues under this agenda item.

Thank you.