

**Statement of the Chairman**

**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)**

**16 November 2016**

**Proposed regional restructuring of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: increasing efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/141**

*(ACABQ report: A/71/584, related report A/71/218 and Corr. 1)*

Madam Chairperson,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report on the Proposed regional restructuring of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: increasing efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/141, which follows an initial proposal put forward last year in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.

Overall, the Advisory Committee sees merit in the Secretary-General's updated proposal.

In particular, the Secretary-General proposes that the established six regional offices would remain and that an additional two new regional office would be added. The Advisory Committee does not object to the selection of Istanbul as the new Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. However, the Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General does not demonstrate a compelling operational need to establish a regional office in Washington, D.C. and believes consideration should instead be given to establishing the envisaged Regional Office for North America and the Caribbean in Barbados. Any related liaison functions in this connection could be undertaken by the OHCHR office in New York, subject to the completion of a more thorough assessment of the existing capacity of that office. Here, the Advisory Committee would like to stress that each of the regional offices operate under differing operational environments and that their needs, including staffing, should not be uniform but should be adjusted to allow for operational flexibility, based on actual workload considerations.

Madam Chairperson,

The Advisory Committee recognizes the need for the regional offices to be led at the D-1 level to be supported by senior staff at the P-5 level and recommends approval of the related proposed staffing changes. With respect to the proposed redeployments of posts at the P-4 and P-3 levels, until the specific needs of each regional office become clearer and actual workloads can be assessed, the Advisory Committee recommends the provision of general temporary assistance positions. The Committee is of the view that the ongoing need for all existing posts within the regional offices should also be kept under review.

Madam Chairperson,

The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to report on the overall experience gained from the restructuring, including actual cost implications, for consideration by the General Assembly no later than during the main part of its seventy-fourth session.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.