



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union: Human Resources Management at the UN

Delivered by

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New York

28 October 2016

Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country of Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Madam Chair,

I would like to thank Mr Yukio Takasu, Under-Secretary-General for Management, for introducing the Secretary General's reports on Human Resources Management. I would also like to thank Ms. Elia Yi Armstrong, Director of the Ethics Office, Mr.

* *The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Mr. Rajab Sukayri, Inspector, Joint Inspection Unit and Mr. Kenneth Herman, Senior Adviser on Information Management and Policy Coordination, Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

Madam Chair,

The Member States of the EU have supported progressive human resources policies and HRM reform at the UN for many years. They continue to do so. The UN's staff are at the core of its effectiveness and the delivery of its mandates.

We regret that we in the Fifth have been unable to reach consensus on HRM reform in the recent past. The Member States of the European Union pledge to work constructively with all parties to achieve a resolution this session.

The UN Charter makes explicit that the billions of people around the world who benefit from the UN deserve a UN workforce that embodies high standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, as set out in Article 101 of the Charter. The actions of the UN's personnel must reflect the Organisation's values. In turn, UN staff need an organisational culture that enables them to contribute to their greatest potential.

Against this backdrop, we recognise and applaud the Secretariat's progress towards an integrated approach to human resource management, or indeed, in the title of the Overview, towards a global, dynamic, adaptable and engaged workforce. This holistic approach is most welcome and addresses some of the findings of the Board of Auditors in the last HRM session around the need for strategic HR.

We note also that Umoja roll-out is also enhancing the UN's oversight of human resources, enabling better data collection, more accurate performance monitoring and workforce planning. In this regard, we look forward to understanding better

the capabilities of Umoja and the benefits for the Organisation, staff, and Member States we can expect to see flowing from its continued implementation.

Madam Chair,

We believe that the direction of travel is the right one. But there is scope for greater ambition in a few key areas:

- Firstly, performance management: We recognise that progress has been made in making performance management procedures easier to understand and follow. However, the Secretariat's figures indicate an ongoing reluctance by managers to identify and address poor performance. Underperformance should be addressed promptly and honestly and at all levels in the organisation. We would welcome more discussion with the Secretariat on how it is pursuing the needed cultural shift in this area, and on how it defines and measures success.
- Ensuring the ethical conduct throughout the Organisation is fundamental. We commend the efforts invested so far towards this aim and we encourage the Secretariat in its ongoing outreach efforts to promote the highest of ethical standards throughout the UN.
- We applaud the Secretariat's perseverance in completing the voluntary first phase of the staff mobility programme. Mobility offers many benefits and opportunities, including career development for individuals, a richer base of experience in the organisation and rejuvenation of the workforce. We look forward to discussing with the Secretariat how lessons learned from the first phase will be used to enhance roll-out to larger numbers of staff in the next phase.

- Linked to this, we support the Secretariat's efforts to improve workforce planning, and look forward to exploring further how the various proposals contained in the overview report will contribute to a more holistic approach to this complex issue.
- It is unacceptable that gender imbalance remains a persistent issue in the UN workforce. We draw attention in particular to the significant gap at the senior leadership level.

We note that the Secretary-General is working on a detailed road map of an HRM strategy in two years' time. We welcome this and expect it to be ambitious in proposing more modern, best-practice human resources policies and procedures in pursuit of the priorities identified today, which maximise efficiency in the use of existing resources. At the same time, we encourage the Secretariat, with the prospect of this new strategy in two years, to maintain its resolve to pursue existing mandates with energy and determination.

Finally, Madam Chair, allow me to reaffirm the willingness of EU Member States to engage constructively on this issues, as on others, to support HRM reform that meets the needs of both the Organisation and its staff.

Thank you.