



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS BY MS DIANA LEE, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 141: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE, MAIN PART OF THE 73rd SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON 15 NOVEMBER 2018

Thank you, Madam Chair.

1 I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 Member States of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), on agenda item 141: Human Resources Management (HRM).

2 ASEAN thanks Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, Ms Martha Helena Lopez, and Mr Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing their respective reports.

3 ASEAN aligns ourselves with the statement made by Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Madam Chair,

4 Every two years, the Fifth Committee engages in a comprehensive review of human resources management across the United Nations. This year, our review takes place against a tide of change sweeping across the UN – not only within the three pillars of the UN's work, but also in the management structures that support them all. Therefore, our work in this Committee must proceed with the awareness that the United Nations is a living Organisation, built upon and comprised of its people.

5 In this regard, ASEAN believes that first, efforts must continue across the United Nations and at every level to improve gender parity and equitable geographical representation in the UN's workforce. We reiterate once again that gender and geography must go hand in hand. We are encouraged by the progress made thus far. But more needs to be done. ASEAN urges the Secretary-General to redouble efforts towards achieving equitable geographical representation, especially at senior levels. In this, we should also give serious consideration to how demographic information is measured and reported. The General Assembly needs better, more accurate, and more easily understandable

information on how gender parity, geographical representation, and seniority are reflected in the 38,000 posts across the UN system. ASEAN will therefore pay close attention to our discussions on the system of desirable ranges and how we can achieve true representation during informal consultations.

6 Second, ASEAN is encouraged that the recruitment and management of UN staff remains a key focus in our review of HRM. We commend the Secretary-General's initiatives to accelerate the recruitment process, and his commitment to improving the performance management system. ASEAN looks forward to examining the impact of these changes, especially with a view to how they will improve the recruitment of staff from developing countries, and institute objective, transparent, and consistent benchmarks system-wide.

7 Third, ASEAN notes that the results of the December 2017 staff survey indicated the need to focus on continuous staff learning and development. At a time of fiscal austerity, we should not lose sight of this critical element, robbing tomorrow to pay for today. If we expect the UN to be more effective, efficient, nimble, and innovative, we must invest in its people. Adding more adjectives to an already long list of requirements will not magically create better staff. Member States who demand more from the UN and its staff must also be prepared to commit concrete resources towards our common goals. ASEAN urges the Secretary-General to continue focusing on staff learning and development as a key element of reform.

8 In closing, Madam Chair, let me reassure you of ASEAN's readiness to engage constructively with all delegations towards a productive outcome on this important agenda item.

Thank you.

.