

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**Agenda item 138**

**Programme budget for 2022**

**Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat**

**(A/76/771)**

Statement by

Ms. Catherine Pollard

Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance

17 May 2022

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to introduce the Secretary-General's revised estimates report A/76/771 for additional resources to address all forms of discrimination, including racial discrimination, in the Organization.

The report before you is based on the recommendations of the Secretary-General's Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat.

In 2020, the Secretary-General launched a campaign of dialogue and action against racism and established a task force to oversee the campaign's activities and to assess staff perceptions on the extent of racism and racial discrimination in the Secretariat, guide the awareness and action initiative, propose measures to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, and develop a strategic action plan for long-term organizational transformation.

The task force recommendations, by extension, aim to address discrimination in all its forms in the Secretariat and bring about cultural change that will transform the Organization into a workplace where discrimination is actively addressed, where there is accountability, and where we provide a dignified workplace for all and ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in the work of the Organization, and the Organization fully benefits from the diverse perspectives, skills and life experiences of its personnel.

Over the years, we have made progress in addressing prohibited conduct and placed the issues of equitable geographical representation and diversity at the heart of the Organization's management reform agenda. We have implemented the strategies on geographical diversity, gender parity and disability inclusion with modest changes that reflect our human diversity.

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished delegates,

As an Organization, we have recognized the prevalence of discrimination in societies and played a leading role in supporting Member States in developing legal instruments to address and mitigate the impact of this abhorrent behaviour. Any form of discrimination, including racism, exclusion and marginalization, goes against the United Nations Charter and human decency itself. Discrimination has long-term negative consequences for staff physiological and psychological health, limits imagination and innovation, undermines solidarity and commitment and ultimately hampers the effective delivery of mandates. Since 2020, institutions with multicultural workforces have been undertaking this very important work to address discrimination in their workplaces. As one of the most multiculturally diverse organizations in the world, charged with promoting a dignified life for all, the UN cannot be left behind in this effort to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion in its global workforce. In fact, we should be a leading force on this issue, and in addressing it in a sustained and deliberate manner.

The action plan lays a solid foundation and provides an opportunity for a coordinated approach over a twenty-four month period that is transparent, deliberate, systematic, progressive, and harmonizes efforts to address discrimination, the attainment of equitable geographical representation and the desired cultural transformation, including multicultural and multilingual representation.

Addressing discrimination, including racial discrimination, in the Organization is not a one-off event. To send a strong message in support of efforts to address racism and racial discrimination, and for meaningful, impactful, and long-term sustainability, it is imperative to establish an Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and provide other post and non-post resources across three budget sections. This will ensure dedicated oversight capacity to coordinate, monitor, advocate, mainstream, implement and sustain long-term efforts to attain and maintain equitable geographical representation, diversity, equity, and inclusion at all categories and levels of personnel and address all forms of discrimination.

The revised estimates report proposes additional appropriations for 2022 of \$2,175,200 (net of staff assessment), and the establishment of 16 new posts effective 1 July 2022.

Additional requirements for 2023 have been included in the respective sections of the proposed programme budget for 2023 for your consideration in the coming main session.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.