



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations

Statement by Richard Croker, Minister-Counsellor of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Mission to the United Nations on the Opening of the Human Resources Management item at the First Resumed Session of the Fifth Committee of the 76th General Assembly

Wednesday, 9 March 2022

Thank you Mr Chair,

Before I address HRM, I want to recall the comments I made at the formal opening of the session on Friday.

The United Kingdom stands firmly with the people of Ukraine, and condemns Russian aggression. We call on Russia to end the violence, withdraw its troops, and stop violating international law and the UN Charter.

Mr Chair,

Turning to HRM issues, I want to start by thanking Martha Helena Lopez, Elia Yi Armstrong, and Abdallah Bachar Bong for their briefings this morning.

The UN requires a workforce that has the capabilities and skills to respond to 21st century challenges in delivering its vital mandates. Modern, fit for purpose human resources management is crucial in providing the foundations for realising that goal.

Mr. Chair,

I'd like to highlight three areas of key importance to my delegation:

Firstly, mobility. A modern and mainstreamed approach, which harnesses experience from the field and different HQs, while allowing staff to rotate out from the toughest duty stations, will benefit the organisation. Career advancement and incentives are an important part of this.

Secondly, diversity. My delegation believes that when the UN workforce reflects the people it serves, it is better able to do so. As such, we encourage the UN to put greater effort into achieving diversity. This includes geography, gender and age. But

we also encourage the UN to be truly representative of the global population, benefitting from the perspectives of diverse staff, including staff with disabilities, different ethnicities, races, religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, sexualities, and other characteristics, and that these staff feel supported, respected and able to thrive.

The future workforce also should not just be hired on years served and or qualifications undertaken, but on the experience and skills they bring as unique individuals, hired first and foremost for their competence, as set out in the charter.

Thirdly, performance. For staff to feel motivated, there must be an effective system of performance management in place at all levels. This means excellence is incentivised and rewarded, and underperformance dealt with. Hearing that 99.6% of staff were rated as exceeding or meeting expectations raises questions about how effective the current system really is.

And there are of course other areas of importance which we will discuss. Clearer, more inclusive and fit for purpose staff regulations and rules will enable better and fairer management of staff and help to reduce disputes. And a robust and independent system of ethics and discipline, and support for victims, helps provide accountability.

Mr Chair,

As others have said, the UN's staff are its most important asset. It is critical the UN has the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time. It is long overdue that this committee provides guidance to the secretariat on human resource matters. We look forward to working constructively to make tangible progress this session.