



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/HRC/4/93
22 February 2007

Original: ENGLISH

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
Fourth session
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

**IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 60/251
OF 15 MARCH 2006 ENTITLED “HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL”**

**Composition of the staff of the Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

Report of the High Commissioner

Introduction

1. The Human Rights Council, in its decision 2/102 of 6 October 2006, requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights to “continue with the fulfilment of her activities, in accordance with all previous decisions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights and to update the relevant reports and studies”. On the current issue of the composition of the staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), a comprehensive annual report (E/CN.4/2006/103) was submitted to the sixty-second session of the Commission on Human Rights pursuant to resolution 2005/72. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights understands decision 2/102 as preserving the previous annual reporting cycle in respect of this issue until otherwise decided by the Council. The current report to the Human Rights Council accordingly addresses developments in respect of the composition of OHCHR staff during the year 2006.

2. In addition, the present report on the composition of the staff of OHCHR is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/159 of 19 December 2006, which requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a comprehensive and updated report, on the basis of paragraph 26 (e) of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/72, to the Human Rights Council at its fourth session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session.

3. Chapter I of this report provides information on the composition of OHCHR. At the request of the Council, it includes data on staff in posts subject to geographical distribution, as well as data on staff in temporary posts funded from extrabudgetary resources or in technical cooperation project posts, neither of which are included in the definition of posts subject to geographical distribution.

4. Chapter II is a description of the measures for improvement taken by the High Commissioner aimed at addressing the geographical composition issues identified by the Commission on Human Rights in resolution 2005/72 and aimed at fully observing United Nations Secretariat human resources policies, in particular, its recruitment and contractual policies.

I. COMPOSITION OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

5. The recruitment of staff to posts subject to geographical distribution is governed by the system of desirable ranges at the global United Nations Secretariat level. For that purpose, Member States are grouped into four categories: unrepresented, underrepresented, within range and overrepresented. A Member State is considered unrepresented when not a single one of its nationals, throughout the entire Secretariat, is serving in a post subject to geographical distribution and having been filled in accordance with the established selection process. It is underrepresented when the number of its nationals appointed to such posts throughout the entire Secretariat is below the lower limit of the desirable range. It is within range when the number of its nationals appointed to such posts is between the upper and lower limits of the desirable range, and it is overrepresented when the number of its nationals appointed to such posts within the entire Secretariat exceeds the upper limit of the desirable range. The representation status of Member States is affected by many factors, notably turnover of staff, changes in the scale of assessments and changes in the total number of Member States.

6. OHCHR is part of the United Nations Secretariat and the breakdown of its geographical composition has to be seen against the breakdown of overall distribution within the Secretariat. In the case of OHCHR, the departmental data shows that developing as well as developed countries are to be found among both over- and underrepresented countries.

7. The official report on the composition of the United Nations Secretariat is submitted annually by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly in accordance with a number of resolutions, the most recent of which are: 57/305 of 15 April 2003; 59/266 of 26 December 2004; and 60/238 of 12 September 2005.

8. The latest report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat is contained in document A/61/257.

9. Table 1 provides a breakdown of OHCHR regular staff in the Professional and above categories by nationality, grade and gender as at 31 December 2006.

10. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the following categories of OHCHR staff in the Professional and above category by nationality, grade and gender as at 31 December 2006:

- (a) Staff holding appointments of less than one year;
- (b) Staff charged to general temporary assistance funds;
- (c) Staff employed in OHCHR field offices;
- (d) Staff employed as technical cooperation project personnel.

11. In accordance with paragraph 4 of section IX of General Assembly resolution 53/221, the practice of showing the representation of staff according to major geographical grouping has been discontinued. The information is provided by country, listed in alphabetical order.

II. EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

12. As stated in the Plan of Action of the High Commissioner, achieving geographical balance in OHCHR staff will remain one of her priorities. In line with this objective, various actions have been introduced to enhance geographical balance.

Proactive approach to recruitment

13. OHCHR is seeking to overcome the chronic shortage of candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented countries by adopting a more proactive approach to recruitment, as reliance on spontaneous applications has proven insufficient.

14. OHCHR continues to put primary importance on expanding the pool of candidates, particularly in unrepresented and underrepresented countries in the United Nations Secretariat and at OHCHR. It has successfully made several efforts to widen the pool of applicants so far. OHCHR draws the attention of potential applicants to OHCHR recruitment procedures - in particular the fact that all core posts are advertised on the United Nations Secretariat Galaxy online application system - as well as to specific OHCHR vacancies. To this end, advertisements have been placed in widely read international periodicals.

15. With a view to ensuring that vacancies are advertised as widely as possible within Member States, OHCHR has constituted mailing lists of over 1,200 governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the area of human rights, national human rights institutions and academic institutions willing to act as information relays by disseminating information locally on vacancies coming from OHCHR, while also bringing the names of interesting candidates from their own rosters to the attention of OHCHR.

16. OHCHR will continue to avail itself of the services of individuals from unrepresented and underrepresented countries through staff exchange mechanisms, such as existing agreements on inter-agency transfers, secondments and loans.

Entry-level recruitment through the system of competitive examinations

17. In an effort to widen the pool of qualified candidates, OHCHR will continue to work with the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) to organize specialized periodic competitive human rights examinations and to conduct recruitment campaigns. Successful candidates from underrepresented countries will be carefully considered. OHCHR is counting on the cooperation of Member States in encouraging wide participation of their nationals in the national competitive recruitment examinations (NCRE) exercise to help ensure the widest possible pool of qualified candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented countries. In order to achieve as wide participation as possible in NCREs, OHCHR is prepared to commit resources of its own to complement OHRM efforts to attract candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented countries.

18. Careful consideration will also be given to geographical balance among associate experts, whose employment has been the subject of scrutiny by Member States. Every effort will be made to encourage Member States sponsoring associate experts to extend their national programmes to nationals from developing countries, which is already being done by a number of Governments. Although the United Nations Secretariat does not have a mechanism for recruiting associate experts upon completion of their service, priority will be given to associate experts from unrepresented and underrepresented countries who might be invited to take part in future NCREs.

19. To date, the impact of the NCREs on OHCHR's geographical balance has proven somewhat disappointing. The second human rights national competitive exam was offered in 2005. Out of 69 countries invited to take part in the exam, only 57 did so. Of these 57 countries, only 10 countries, of which 3 were developing countries, had nationals who reached the interview stage after completion of the written examination administered and corrected by the Office of Human Resources Management.

20. This situation is symptomatic of the difficulties faced by OHCHR in recruiting on a wide geographical basis.

Introducing in-house policies to select staff from unrepresented and underrepresented countries

21. Expanding the pool of potential candidates alone cannot be expected to yield results unless their expressions of interest and applications are matched with OHCHR openings. To this end, the High Commissioner released both internal procedures and a framework for improving geographic diversity. This included a mechanism to review the recruitment process for each vacancy prior to final selection, to ensure that every effort has been made to identify and select qualified candidates from regions requiring improvement, in full consideration of and adherence to the staff regulations and rules. It is important to understand that the goal of this exercise is to maximize the number of additional qualified candidates from desirable geographic regions, not to exclude candidates from other regions, in order to have the broadest possible pool of recommended candidates for every post.

22. Each branch/office is provided with the overall geographical composition of OHCHR, which clearly identifies the regions requiring improvement. All chiefs of branch are required to include among their goals geographical distribution targets for the branches under their supervision. Senior managers are held responsible for their efforts and success in improving geographical diversity in their divisions. Achievements are regularly monitored by the Programme Support and Management Services of OHCHR, which produces periodic reports for review by senior management.

23. All staff members involved in recruitment activities have been informed of the OHCHR objectives and have received professional advice and training, as required, on how to improve geographical distribution.

24. The above efforts have begun to show positive results. Of the 25 selection decisions made for Professional posts since the procedures were instituted, 17 (68 per cent) were of nationals from regions requiring improved representation within OHCHR. It is worth noting that five of the eight selections of nationals from the region already well-represented in OHCHR were internal promotions of staff members.

25. The issue of the geographical composition of OHCHR was brought to the attention of the Member States in the Third Committee and the Plenary, which adopted 61/159 on 19 December 2006. In resolution 61/159, the General Assembly decided to allow the establishment of a temporary mechanism whereby recruitment in OHCHR at the P-2 level would not be restricted to successful candidates from the national competitive examinations. The Fifth Committee, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, then took up the matter which resulted in resolution 61/244 of 22 December 2006 requesting that the Secretary-General present, in consultation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, proposals to address the imbalance in the geographical distribution of the staff in that Office. Accordingly, OHCHR is now consulting with the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) to develop these proposals. The current focus is on obtaining a limited exemption from the national competitive recruitment examinations (NCRE) process as well as more selected targeting of countries for inclusion in the 2008 NCRE exercise.

26. While seeking to achieve a more equitable geographical distribution, OHCHR will continue to pay special attention to the issue of gender balance, an area in which determination and concerted effort have already brought success, as demonstrated by the fact that as at 31 December 2006 women represented 51.7 per cent of regular OHCHR staff and 53.7 per cent of temporary OHCHR staff, equivalent to an overall ratio of 52.7 per cent.

III. CONCLUSION

27. **The action plan contained in document E/CN.4/2006/103 and its implementation to date reflect the high priority that the High Commissioner is giving to the improvement of geographical diversity in OHCHR. Additional measures being developed by OHRM pursuant to General Assembly resolutions will further strengthen these efforts.**

Table 1
OHCHR Regular Staff in the Professional and Higher Categories, by Nationality, Grade and Gender
(As at 31 December 2006)

Country of nationality	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1	
	All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Algeria	3	2											1			1		1		
Argentina	3	2											1	1		1				
Australia	8	4										3	3		1	1				
Austria	6	2									1				2		1	2		
Belgium	3	2											1	1		1				
Benin	2	0									1				1					
Bolivia	1	0													1					
Bulgaria	2	0											1		1					
Burundi	1	1														1				
Cambodia	1	1												1						
Cameroon	4	2										1	1		1	1				
Canada	14	7		1							1		4	2	2	4				
Chile	2	0							1						1					
China	2	2												1		1				
Colombia	1	1														1				
Costa Rica	2	0											1		1					
Côte d'Ivoire	4	0											1		3					
Croatia	2	1												1	1					
Czech Republic	1	1												1						
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2	1													1	1				
Denmark	6	2									1		1	2	2					
Dominican Republic	1	0											1							
Ecuador	1	0													1					

Table 1 (continued)

Country of nationality	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1	
	All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Equatorial Guinea	1	0									1									
Eritrea	1	1													1					
Finland	3	1									1	1		1						
France	20	12									1	1	2	1	5	9		1		
Germany	19	9									1		2	3	3	4	4	2		
Guatemala	1	1												1						
Guyana	1	1											1							
Haiti	2	1													1	1				
Hungary	1	1														1				
Indonesia	1	1														1				
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	3	2							1							1	1			
Ireland	3	1													2	1				
Italy	20	11									3	2	1	2	5	7				
Japan	5	1											3		1			1		
Jordan	3	2										1			1	1				
Kenya	2	1											1			1				
Lebanon	1	1														1				
Madagascar	1	1																1		
Maldives	1	0													1					
Mali	2	0											2							
Malta	1	1																1		
Mauritius	1	0													1					
Mexico	4	3						1							1	1		1		
Mongolia	2	1											1	1						
Netherlands	7	3									1		1	2	1		1	1		
New Zealand	1	0													1					
Norway	1	0									1									
Paraguay	1	0													1					

Table 1 (continued)

Country of nationality	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1	
	All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Peru	3	2										1	1		1					
Portugal	1	1																1		
Republic of Korea	4	2												1	2	1				
Saudi Arabia	1	1												1						
Senegal	2	0					1								1					
Serbia	2	2														2				
Singapore	1	1														1				
Spain	17	10											1	4	6	5		1		
Sweden	5	5												1		1		3		
Switzerland	7	5												1	2	2		2		
Thailand	1	0													1					
Tunisia	1	1														1				
Turkey	1	1												1						
Ukraine	1	0											1							
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	14	8									1	4	3	1	2	3				
United States of America	17	8							2		4	1	2	3			1	4		
Uruguay	2	1													1	1				
Total	261	135	0	1	0	0	1	1	3	1	17	15	38	34	59	61	8	22	0	0

Table 2

OHCHR Non-Regular Staff in the Professional and Higher Categories, by Nationality, Grade and Gender

(As at 31 December 2006)

Country of nationality	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2/L-7		D-1/L-6		P-5/L-5		P-4/L-4		P-3/L-3		P-2/L-2		P-1/L-1	
	All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Argentina	2	1													1	1				
Australia	2	1											1			1				
Bangladesh	3	1													2			1		
Benin	1	0													1					
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	1																1		
Brazil	2	0													1		1			
Bulgaria	1	1																1		
Canada	10	8											2			5		1		2
Colombia	1	1																1		
Costa Rica	1	0															1			
Cyprus	1	1														1				
Democratic Republic of the Congo	5	3													1		1	2		1
Denmark	4	4												1		2		1		
Ethiopia	2	0													2					
France	13	9									1			2	1	1	1	5	1	1
Germany	4	3														1	1	1		1
Ghana	1	0																	1	
Haiti	1	1														1				
India	4	2											1	2	1					
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1	1														1				
Ireland	2	1											1							1
Italy	7	3									1		2		1	3				

Table 2 (continued)

Country of nationality	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2/L-7		D-1/L-6		P-5/L-5		P-4/L-4		P-3/L-3		P-2/L-2		P-1/L-1		
	All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Japan	2	2											1		1						
Liberia	2	1													1	1					
Madagascar	1	0													1						
Malaysia	2	2													1		1				
Mauritius	1	0															1				
Moldova	1	0													1						
Mongolia	2	1										1			1						
Morocco	1	1																1			
Netherlands	2	1													1	1					
New Zealand	1	0																		1	
Nigeria	1	1														1					
Norway	1	1														1					
Pakistan	1	0													1						
Peru	2	0											1				1				
Portugal	2	0													2						
Serbia	1	0											1								
Sierra Leone	1	0													1						
Spain	7	5													2	1		2			2
Sri Lanka	1	0										1									
Sweden	6	1						1	1	1					1		1		1		
Switzerland	3	2															1	1			1
Thailand	1	0															1				
Tunisia	1	0											1								
Uganda	1	1																1			

Table 2 (continued)

Country of nationality	Total staff		USG		ASG		D-2/L-7		D-1/L-6		P-5/L-5		P-4/L-4		P-3/L-3		P-2/L-2		P-1/L-1	
	All	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	6	3										1	1		2	1		1		
United States of America	8	6											4	2	2					
Uruguay	4	0							1				1		2					
Uzbekistan	1	1																1		
Viet Nam	1	1							1									1		
Subtotal	133	72																		
Palestine	1	0													1					
Subtotal	1	0																		
Total	134	72	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	4	2	11	9	30	28	11	23	4	9
