



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Twenty-second session

Agenda item 2

### Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

#### Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council\*

**22/2.**

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

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Recalling* paragraph 5 (g) of General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, in which the Assembly decided that the Human Rights Council should assume the role and responsibilities of the Commission on Human Rights relating to the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as decided by the Assembly in its resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993,

*Taking note* of all relevant resolutions on this issue adopted by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council,

*Taking note also* of the report of the High Commissioner on the composition of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner,<sup>1</sup>

*Recalling* the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on the follow-up to the management review of the Office of the High Commissioner<sup>2</sup> and on the funding and staffing of the Office,<sup>3</sup>

*Bearing in mind* that an imbalance in the composition of the staff could diminish the effectiveness of the work of the Office of the High Commissioner if it is perceived to be culturally biased and unrepresentative of the United Nations as a whole,

*Reiterating its concern* that, in spite of stated efforts by the Office of the High Commissioner, the situation whereby one region accounts for 47.3 per cent remains,

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\* The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its twenty-second session (A/HRC/22/2), chap. I.

<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/22/69.

<sup>2</sup> A/59/65-E/2004/48 and Add.1.

<sup>3</sup> JIU/REP/2007/8.

*Reaffirming* the importance of continuing ongoing efforts to address the imbalance regarding the regional representation of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner, most notably in senior management positions,

*Underlining* that the paramount consideration for employing staff at every level is the need for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and taking into account Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, expressing its conviction that this objective is compatible with the principle of equitable geographical distribution,

*Recognizing* that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters,

1. *Expresses serious concern* at the fact that, despite the measures reported by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the imbalance in the geographical representation of its composition continues to be prominent, and that a single region occupies almost half of the posts in the Office of the High Commissioner;

2. *Notes with concern* the fact that, in 2012, only two out of four regions increased their representation in the percentage of staff, and that no change was recorded in the overrepresentation status of one region;

3. *Welcomes* the statement made by the High Commissioner in her report<sup>1</sup> that enhancing the geographical diversity of the staff of her Office remains one of her priorities, and requests her to redouble her efforts with a view to redressing the current imbalance in geographical distribution of the staff of the Office, despite the budgetary contingency;

4. *Requests* the High Commissioner, in this regard, to establish specific and public targets and deadlines to be achieved;

5. *Also requests* the High Commissioner to work on the broadest geographical diversity of her staff by strengthening the measures aimed at achieving a better representation of countries and regions that are unrepresented or underrepresented, particularly from the developing world, while considering applying a cap on the representation of countries and regions already overrepresented in the Office of the High Commissioner;

6. *Takes note* of the commitment of the High Commissioner to remain attentive to the need to maintain the emphasis on the broadest possible geographic diversity of her Office, as stated in the conclusion of her report;

7. *Welcomes* the efforts made towards the achievement of a gender balance in the composition of the staff and the decision to continue to pay special attention to this issue;

8. *Requests* future High Commissioners to continue to enhance the ongoing efforts made in the fulfilment of the goal of a geographical balance in the composition of the staff of the Office;

9. *Underlines* the importance of continuing to promote geographical diversity in recruitment and promotion at the Professional level and, in particular, in senior management positions, as a principle of the staffing policies of the Office of the High Commissioner;

10. *Reaffirms* the vital importance of geographical balance in the composition of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner, taking into account the significance of national and regional specificities and various historic, cultural and religious backgrounds, as well as of different political, economic and legal systems, to the promotion and protection of the universality of human rights;

11. *Recalls* the provisions contained in section X, paragraph 3, of General Assembly resolution 55/258 of 14 June 2001, on human resources management, in which the Assembly reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to increase further his efforts to improve the composition of the Secretariat by ensuring a wide and equitable geographical distribution of staff in each and every department, and also recalls the request that he submit to the Assembly proposals for a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges with a view to establishing a more effective tool to ensure equitable geographical distribution in relation to the total number of staff of the Secretariat;

12. *Encourages* the General Assembly to consider further measures to promote desirable ranges of geographical balance in the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner, as requested in the present resolution

13. *Recognizes* the importance of the follow-up to and implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/159 of 19 December 2006, and underlines the priority importance that the Assembly continue to provide support and guidance to the High Commissioner in the ongoing process of improvement of the geographical balance in the composition of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner;

14. *Requests* the Joint Inspection Unit to undertake a comprehensive follow-up review of the management and administration of the Office of the High Commissioner, in particular with regard to its impact on the recruitment policies and the composition of the staff, and to submit a report thereon and containing concrete proposals for the implementation of the present resolution to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-seventh session;

15. *Requests* the High Commissioner to submit a comprehensive and updated report to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-seventh session following the structure and scope of her report and with a special focus on further measures taken to correct the imbalance in the geographical composition of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner.

*47th meeting  
21 March 2013*

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 31 to 15, with one abstention. The voting was as follows:

*In favour:*

Angola, Argentina, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

*Against:*

Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Montenegro, Poland, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Chile]