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Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/69 of 4 December 2000, the present report provides information on the representation of women in the Secretariat and in other organizations of the United Nations system. As of 30 June 2001, 40.2 per cent of Professional and higher-level staff on geographical appointments in the Secretariat were women. Women constituted 34.6 per cent of Professional and higher-level staff in the larger population of staff with appointments of one year or more. Within the United Nations system as a whole, as of 1 January 2000, 33.5 per cent of Professional and higher-level staff were women. The United Nations Population Fund had the highest representation of women (50.4 per cent), followed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (45.5 per cent) and the United Nations Children's Fund (45.1 per cent).

* The late submission of the present report was a result of delayed processing of human resources data.



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Abbreviations

DDA	Department for Disarmament Affairs
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DGAACS	Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services
DM	Department of Management
DM/OCSS	Department of Management/Office of Central Support Services
DM/OHRM	Department of Management/Office of Human Resources Management
DM/OPPBA	Department of Management/Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPI	Department of Public Information
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DPKO/FALD ¹	Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Field Administration and Logistics Division
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
INTERORG	Interorganizational bodies Joint Inspection Unit ACC secretariat International Computing Centre Information Systems Coordination Committee
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODCCP	United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
OSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
OSRGCAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

REGCOM	Regional commissions Liaison Office
UNCC	United Nations Compensation Commission
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFIP	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva
UNOIP	Office of the Iraq Programme
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi
UNOV	United Nations Office at Vienna
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission

¹ All staff with appointments of one year or more assigned to peacekeeping and other special missions.

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted in response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 55/69 of 4 December 2000, is divided into an introduction and three other sections, containing: an overview of the representation of women in the Secretariat and the United Nations system; a review of developments since the submission of the last report of the Secretary-General to the Assembly (A/55/399 and Corr.1); and conclusions and strategies for improving the representation of women in the year ahead.

2. Looking at the performance over the past year, the record has been mixed. Measured progress continues to be made in improving women's representation on geographical appointments where, for the first time, women account for over 40 per cent of Professional and higher-level staff. In the larger population of Professional and higher-level staff with appointments of one year or more, however, the representation of women has declined by nearly two percentage points to 34.6 per cent. This decline is due principally to the increase in the number of staff with appointments of one year or more assigned to peacekeeping and other special missions. Men continue to dominate this segment of the staff, accounting for approximately 75 per cent of mission staff, although the number of women on peacekeeping missions with such appointments has nearly tripled since June 2000, owing in part to the special efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat and some Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. When the number of staff serving with peacekeeping missions are excluded from the population of staff with appointments of one year or more, the representation of women over the past year shows a slight improvement from 37.7 to 38.0 per cent.

3. Within the United Nations system as a whole, modest progress has also been made in improving women's representation, with the proportion of women at the Professional and higher levels having risen from 32.4 per cent in December 1998 to 33.5 per cent in January 2000. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continues in the lead (50.4 per cent), having met the goal of 50/50 gender distribution in 1999. Organizations that have met or passed the watershed mark of 40 per cent include the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (45.1 per cent), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) (44.9 per cent),

the World Food Programme (WFP) (42.9 per cent), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (41.6 per cent) and the Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) (UNAIDS) (40.9 per cent).

4. Since the submission of the last report to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General has appointed women to the following four high-level posts: Executive Director, UNFPA; Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA; Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (the second woman to head a United Nations regional commission); and Deputy Executive Director, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Women have also been appointed to the following senior-level posts: Deputy United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); Deputy Director-General, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa, International Labour Organization (ILO); Special Representative of the Director-General and Assistant Director-General for United Nations Affairs, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); and Assistant Executive Director, WFP. A woman has also been appointed as Deputy Head of Mission of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA).

II. Overview of current status

A. Gender distribution of staff at the Professional and higher levels in the Secretariat

5. The gender distribution of all staff in the Professional and higher categories with appointments of one year or more is provided in table 1. The table includes staff on appointments subject to geographical distribution, staff with special language requirements, and staff on appointments limited to service with a particular office, mission, fund or programme. The latter two groups of staff are not subject to the system of desirable ranges used as a guideline for estimating the comparative representation of the nationals of each

Member State. The gender distribution of Professional and higher-level staff in the smaller population of staff on geographical appointments is provided in table 2. Further information on the composition of the staff is contained in the annual report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat.

Staff on appointments subject to geographical distribution

6. Table 3 shows that there were 983 women (40.2 per cent) out of a total of 2,445 staff on appointments subject to geographical distribution as of 30 June 2001, compared with 936 women (39.2 per cent) out of a total of 2,389 staff on such appointments as of 30 June 2000. The increase is consistent with the average annual rate of 1 per cent at which women's representation has increased since 1989.

7. Although the overall increase in women's representation has been small, tangible progress continues to be made in improving women's representation at the D-1 level. The number of women at that level increased from 73 in June 2000 to 82 in June 2001, or from 35.8 to 38.3 per cent. During this period, the proportion of women at the senior and policy-making levels (D-1 and above) on geographical appointments increased from 30.9 to 32.7 per cent.

Staff on appointments of one year or more

8. In the larger population of staff with appointments of one year or more, the proportion of women declined from 36.5 per cent in June 2000 to 34.6 per cent as of 30 June 2001 (see table 4). The decline is attributable principally to the significant increase in the number of staff with appointments of one year or more assigned to peacekeeping operations as mentioned in paragraph 2 above. During the period 1 July 2000-30 June 2001, the number of staff with appointments of one year or more assigned to peacekeeping and other special missions increased from 471 to 1,415.¹ Of the total of 944 additional personnel in this category, the distribution was as follows: 718 (76.1 per cent) men compared with 226 (23.9 per cent) women.

9. Despite the decrease in the overall percentage of women with appointments of one year or more over the past year, the representation of women in that group has also improved at the D-1 level. The number of women at that level increased from 81 (29.3 per cent)

as at 30 June 2000 to 97 (30.1 per cent) as at 30 June 2001. While the percentage of women at the D-1 level has reached a critical mass, the overall increase in the proportion of women at the senior and policy-making levels (D-1 and above) — from 24.7 to 24.8 per cent — has been negligible.

10. Of particular note is the decrease in the representation of women at the P-5 and P-3 levels. Table 4 shows that the percentage of women at the P-5 level declined from 32.6 per cent in June 2000 to 29.5 per cent as at 30 June 2001. The proportion of women at the P-3 level declined from 40.2 to 36.9 per cent. The decline is due to the marked increase in the number of men at these levels.

Representation of women in departments and offices of the Secretariat

11. The gender composition of staff with appointments of one year or more, by department and office, is provided in table 1 below. Since the submission of the last report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, gender balance has been maintained in three departments and offices with 20 or more personnel: the Department of Management² (51.4 per cent), the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts (51.0 per cent), and the Department of Public Information (50.9 per cent). Women's representation in the Office of Human Resources Management, however, has declined from 54.3 to 49.3 per cent. Two more bodies (ESCAP and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)) have reached or exceeded the 30 per cent mark for women, while in five others women account for less than 30 per cent of staff. These are: the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (29.9 per cent); the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) (29.3 per cent); the Office of Central Support Services (27.2 per cent); the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (27.1 per cent); and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) (20.0 per cent).

12. As of 30 June 2001, three departments and offices had met or exceeded the goal of gender balance at the D-1 level and above: the Office of Human Resources Management (57.1 per cent), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (50.0 per cent) and the United Nations Office at Vienna (50.0 per cent).

13. The following 12 departments and offices have a critical mass of women (30 per cent or more) at the senior and policy-making levels (D-1 and above):

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (46.2 per cent); ESCWA (44.4 per cent);

Department of Public Information (42.9 per cent);

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (42.9 per cent);

Office of Internal Oversight Services (42.9 per cent);

Executive Office of the Secretary-General (42.9 per cent);

ECE (40.0 per cent);

Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services (36.8 per cent);

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (36.6 per cent);

United Nations Office at Geneva (35.7 per cent);

Office of Legal Affairs (33.3 per cent);

Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts (30.0 per cent).

14. Of the 5 departments and offices with 20 or more personnel at the D-1 level and above (the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Public Information, UNCTAD and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNCTAD has the lowest representation of women at those levels (9.5 per cent), followed by UNEP (14.0 per cent). Within United Nations peacekeeping and other special missions (Field Administration and Logistics Division, Department of Peacekeeping Operations), women account for less than 10 per cent of the staff at the D-1 level and above (7.2 per cent).³

15. Detailed information on the representation of Member States in the staff of the Secretariat by nationality, grade and gender is provided in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat. In June 2001, 44 Member States had no women nationals represented in the Secretariat.⁴ Of these, 13 Member States were unrepresented in the Secretariat. However, in 37 Member States, women

constituted 50 per cent or more of the staff of these countries.⁵

Staff on language posts

16. The gender distribution of staff with special language requirements shows that the proportion of women increased slightly from 37.9 per cent (318 female staff) in June 2000 to 38.4 per cent (330 female staff) in June 2001. At the P-5 level, the proportion of women has remained unchanged at 43.4 per cent (62 women compared with 81 men) since June 2000.

Staff on project posts

17. Over the past year, the proportion of women on project posts (200 series staff) decreased from 30.4 per cent (242 women out of a total of 797 staff) in June 2000 to 29.8 per cent (249 women out of 836 staff) in June 2001. Although the proportion of women at the L-1 level (73.9 per cent) and at the L-2 level (49.4 per cent) remains near or higher than 50 per cent, the representation of women at the higher levels continues to be low, with a critical mass of women having been achieved only at the L-3 level (35.6 per cent). Women at the L-4 level account for only 19.6 per cent (27 women) of the 138 staff at that level. The representation of women at the L-5 level (17 women out of a total of 185 staff) and at the L-6 level (7 women out of a total of 72 staff) remains below 10 per cent, at 9.2 and 9.7 per cent, respectively. At the L-7 level, the proportion of women is 12.5 per cent (one woman out of a total of eight staff).

B. Appointments and promotions of staff in the Professional and higher categories in the Secretariat

Appointments

18. Table 6 and the accompanying graph show the number of women and men appointed during the past two years at the P-1 through the Under-Secretary-General levels, inter alia, through the national competitive and language examinations. Table 7 and the related graph show the number of women and men promoted during the past two years from the P-1 through the Under-Secretary-General levels.

19. Since 1 July 2000, 48 of the 84 staff members (57.1 per cent) recruited through the national

competitive examinations and 29 of the 58 staff (50.0 per cent) recruited through the language examinations were women.

20. Table 6 shows that the proportion of women appointed in the Secretariat during the period 1 July 2000-30 June 2001 remained steady at 40.7 per cent despite a considerable increase in the number of appointments during this period over the previous year (378 appointments compared with 279 appointments between 1 July 1999 and 30 June 2000). The goal of gender balance in the appointment of staff continues to be met at the P-2 level, whereas at all other levels, excluding the P-1 level, significantly more men than women continue to be recruited in the Secretariat. The gender imbalance in appointments is particularly notable at the P-5 level and above owing to the increase in the number of men appointed at these levels.

Promotions

21. As shown in table 7, there was a notable increase in the proportion of women promoted during the period 1 July 2000-30 June 2001 (47.1 per cent), compared with the previous year (43.1 per cent). While the overall proportion of women promoted still falls short of the goal of 50 per cent, this goal has been met at the P-3 level (53.8 per cent) and, for the first time, at the P-4 level (51.3 per cent). The increase in the number and percentage of women appointed and promoted to the P-4 level is particularly welcome, as the P-4 level is the avenue for advancement to the management structure of the Secretariat as well as the grade occupied by the largest number of Professional staff.

22. The goal set out in General Assembly resolution 55/69, namely, that the appointment and promotion of suitably qualified women would not be less than 50 per cent of all appointments and promotions, was met by 14 departments and offices (table 8), representing an increase of 4 offices over the previous year. In some cases, the opportunities for the selection of women candidates were small. The United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP), for example, selected women for its two vacancies (100.0 per cent). In other larger departments, such as the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, which selected women for 47 of 78 vacancies (60.3 per cent), the opportunities were significantly greater. Of the departments and offices that failed to meet the target of 50 per cent in the selection of staff for vacant

posts, women accounted for less than 30 per cent of the staff selected in the following five offices: the Office of Central Support Services, UNMOVIC, ECA, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Mobility

23. Mobility among staff in the Professional and higher categories remains low. Of 331 promotion cases, 34 entailed the transfer of staff between departments and offices (10.3 per cent). More women (24 staff) than men (10 staff) moved between departments on promotion. During the period under review, there were 55 cases of lateral transfer of staff. Of these, 29 were women (52.7 per cent). More women than men also changed duty station: 29 (58.0 per cent) of the 50 staff who moved between duty stations were women.

C. Women in the General Service and related categories

24. The majority of staff in the General Service and related categories are women (4,169 women compared with 2,807 men). However, while women constitute 63.0 per cent of staff in the General Service category (4,129 women out of a total of 6,558 staff), women are underrepresented in both the Security and the Trades and Crafts categories, where they account for 9.2 per cent (19 out of 206 staff) and 3.1 per cent of staff (6 out of 193 staff), respectively. In the Field Service category, women account for 21.1 per cent (312 out of 1,480 staff).

25. During the period under review, a total of only 94 General Service staff (73 women and 21 men) moved between departments and offices in the Secretariat. Of the total of 519 promotion cases at levels G-2 to G-7, only 25 staff members (19 women and 6 men) moved between departments and offices.

D. Gender distribution of staff at the Professional and higher levels in organizations of the United Nations common system

26. Statistics on the gender distribution of Professional and higher-level staff in all organizations of the United Nations common system, as at 1 January 2000 (the most recent reference point for system-wide

data), are provided in table 9. The statistics were derived from the tables issued annually by the secretariat of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). Since 31 December 1998, the proportion of women with appointments of one year or more at Headquarters and other established offices of the United Nations common system of organizations has risen from 32.4 to 33.5 per cent. At the senior and policy-making levels (D-1 and above), the proportion of women has increased from 17.8 to 20.1 per cent as of 1 January 2000. Among organizations with 100 or more staff, UNFPA had the highest representation of women (50.4 per cent), followed by UNICEF (45.1 per cent).

27. Of the 18 organizations with 20 or more personnel at the D-1 level and above, only 3 have a critical mass of women at these levels: WFP (37.0 per cent), UNFPA (34.6 per cent) and UNICEF (34.1 per cent).

III. Developments since September 2000

A. Implementation of action plans to achieve gender balance in departments and offices

28. The initial series of action plans to achieve gender balance in individual departments and offices of the Secretariat were implemented for the period 1 July 2000-31 December 2000. These plans elaborated upon the gender component of the departmental Human Resources Action Plans for 1999-2000 agreed upon by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and heads of departments in 1999. The latter plans had addressed, in addition to gender balance, other aspects of human resources management such as improved geographical representation, reduction of vacancy rates, career and staff development, staff mobility and performance management.

29. Fourteen departments and offices participated in the initial series of action plans to achieve gender balance. Under the plans, heads of departments set targets for the selection of women candidates based upon the review of their current and projected vacancies over the plan period. In line with General Assembly resolutions on the improvement of the status

of women, department heads were urged to set targets that would not be less than 50 per cent of all vacancies.

30. Heads of departments and offices reported on their performance under the action plans in May 2001 to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and to the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. The following five departments and offices met or exceeded the target of selecting women for 50 per cent or more of the vacancies filled under the plans: the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, the Department of Political Affairs, ESCWA, the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention.

31. The performance of departments and offices under both the action plans to achieve gender balance and the Human Resources Action Plans has formed the basis for discussions between the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and heads of departments on the second series of Human Resources Action Plans for the period 2001-2002. These meetings seek to strengthen partnerships between departments/offices and the Office of Human Resources Management in human resources management, including joint responsibility for achieving institutional mandates, such as improved gender balance and geographical distribution. Further to the implementation of the first series of action plans to achieve gender balance, these plans have now been fully integrated within the broader framework of the Human Resources Action Plans for 2001-2002. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women participates in the human resources planning meetings convened by the Office of Human Resources Management with departments to review performance and formulate succeeding plans.

B. Gender sensitivity and gender mainstreaming training

32. In order to develop greater competencies of United Nations staff members in the area of gender equality issues, two specifically tailored types of programmes are offered: one deals with gender issues in the workplace, the other with gender mainstreaming. The purpose of the first programme is to promote greater understanding between men and women and to maximize the contributions of both men and women to the work of the Organization. Men and women

examine their experiences, assumptions and perceptions about themselves and the opposite sex with a view towards gaining insight into how to work more productively together in the workplace. Further information on gender mainstreaming training is provided in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly" (A/56/319 and Add.1).

33. The United Nations Office at Nairobi offers training on gender issues in the workplace on a regular basis. Since July 2000, several workshops on gender issues in the workplace have been offered.

34. In addition, as part of its ongoing staff development programme, the Office of Human Resources Management offers workshops on career development and will pilot a mentoring programme in autumn 2001. These programmes also support an inclusive, gender-sensitive work environment.

35. The Training and Evaluation Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has developed an in-mission training package on "Gender and Peacekeeping". The objectives of the training programme, which is geared to both civilian and military/civilian police components, is to (a) inform peacekeepers of how the relationships between men and women and their gender roles and responsibilities are changed by the experience of conflict; (b) develop basic skills that will help peacekeepers recognize the different needs, capacities and expectations of women and men in the host population; and (c) make peacekeepers aware of the gender implications of their actions. During the first half of 2001, the training package was piloted in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and in the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). Training in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and in the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) is scheduled for the last quarter of 2001.

C. Work/family agenda

36. Over the past year, increasing attention has been paid to the issue of spouse employment. The Joint

Inspection Unit (JIU) in its report entitled "Young professionals in selected organizations of the United Nations system: recruitment, management, and retention" (see A/55/798) identified spouse employment as perhaps the most critical of family support issues, as it has a direct impact on organizations' abilities to attract and retain highly qualified staff (see paras. 70-76). The issue has been the subject of extensive review and discussion in the Inter-Agency Quality of Work/Life Group chaired by the Office of Human Resources Management in the Secretariat. Results of these discussions have been shared with the Inter-Agency Task Force on Mobility established by the United Nations Development Group which has emphasized the need for strong inter-agency cooperation on this issue.

37. On the recommendation of the Inter-Agency Quality of Work/Life Group, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, in February 2001, requested Chiefs of Administration and Personnel at Offices away from Headquarters to take practical steps to facilitate spouse employment at their duty stations. These include: providing information to newly selected staff on spouse employment opportunities; making available local employment rules to all staff; establishing a roster of spouses seeking employment and sharing curricula vitae of spouses with other United Nations agencies; establishing contacts with local non-governmental organizations, international firms, and the diplomatic community with the aim of identifying employment opportunities; and giving full consideration to suitably qualified spouses for vacancies. In May 2001, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management further requested heads of offices at major overseas duty stations to informally open discussions with the relevant ministries of host Governments to explore possibilities for facilitating spouse employment at their respective duty stations.

38. The members of ACC have pledged to take steps and develop common policies on retaining women, inter alia, through effective spousal employment assistance and through inter-agency mobility. One of the initiatives undertaken by the former Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions) (CCAQ (PER)), at the request of ACC, was the introduction of the Participating Agencies Mobility System (PAMS) in January 2000. The system, which was developed by

CCAQ in cooperation with the Information Systems Coordination Committee (ISCC) of ACC, provides staff members of participating organizations and their partners with a simple electronic means over the Internet of submitting their curricula vitae to agencies of their choice. A feasibility study to extend the PAMS system to include a searchable database of résumés for access by United Nations system recruiters will be undertaken in the last quarter of 2001.

39. A central goal of the Secretary-General's human resources management reform proposals is to promote the mobility of staff between functions, departments and duty stations. Enhancing the mobility of staff between duty stations is seen as especially important. However, factors such as the availability and quality of schooling and childcare arrangements, the prevailing security situation and opportunities for spouse employment may limit the willingness and capacity of staff to move between duty stations. The Office of Human Resources Management will be undertaking, in the last quarter of 2001, a worldwide survey of international staff to obtain information on the work/life conditions that are of the greatest concern to staff and that may impede staff mobility. The results of this survey will be used to propose practical, costed improvements in work/life conditions.

40. Other issues addressed by the Inter-Agency Quality of Work/Life Group over the past year include flexible working arrangements, such as alternative work schedules and home-based work, and enhanced childcare arrangements. A pilot scheme on flexible working arrangements will be introduced in the Department for Disarmament Affairs in early 2002.

41. Further to the endorsement by the former CCAQ (PER) of the concept of paternity leave in 2000 (see ACC/2000/13), a number of United Nations organizations (UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR and UNDP) introduced a paternity leave entitlement in 2001.

D. Policies and procedures governing harassment, including sexual harassment

42. In June 2001, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women formed an inter-agency working group to review and propose needed improvements in United Nations policies to prevent and handle harassment, including sexual harassment

complaints. The membership of the group includes representatives of the Office of Human Resources Management, the secretariat of the Joint Appeals Board and Joint Disciplinary Committee and the Group on Equal Rights for Women, as well as representatives of UNDP and UNICEF.

43. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, in consultation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, has also prepared a model statement on the Organization's policy on gender equality and respect for diversity which can be issued by heads of missions to all members of peacekeeping operations. The statement aims to inform all mission personnel, many of whom are new to the United Nations, of the standards of behaviour expected of members of the United Nations community and of the need to foster a positive and inclusive working climate.

E. Women in peace-building and peacekeeping

44. Over the past year, the role of women in peace-building and conflict resolution has received growing attention. The Security Council, in its landmark resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000, emphasized the importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security, and the need to increase women's role in conflict prevention and resolution activities, especially at decision-making levels. The Secretary-General, in turn, has stressed that greater attention must be paid to gender issues in various aspects of peacekeeping, inter alia, in the selection of mission leadership and in the staffing of different mission components (see the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/502) on the implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, para. 70). Members of the External Review Board that reviewed the Secretary-General's comprehensive report on the management of peacekeeping operations also underscored the need for any field recruitment and training capacity to pay due regard to gender issues (see the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/977) on the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, sect. IV.G).

45. Steps are being taken to ensure that more systematic attention is paid to gender issues in the staffing and management of peacekeeping operations. The Secretary-General has formed a Senior Appointments Group, comprising representatives of the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNDP, the Office of Human Resources Management, and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, to advise him on the selection of personnel for mission leadership positions. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations maintains a central roster of candidates for leadership appointments to field missions. In May 2001, Member States were invited by the Deputy Secretary-General to submit names for inclusion in the roster, including as many qualified women candidates as possible.

46. Within the framework of the implementation of the recommendation of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (see the report of the Panel as contained in document A/55/305-S/2000/809) to develop a global staffing strategy for peacekeeping operations, the design of the new Intranet/Internet-based roster for civilian candidates will allow for the easy identification of qualified women candidates at all levels and in all occupational groups. Policy guidelines, written procedures and monitoring mechanisms will also be developed to ensure that the Organization's goals of improved gender balance and geographical distribution are fully and effectively taken into account in recruitment strategies and in the management of the staffing function.

47. The departments of the Secretariat involved in peace support operations, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, will play leading roles in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Many other entities of the United Nations, however, are also involved in peace support operations and humanitarian assistance. In order to ensure coordination and collaboration throughout the United Nations in the implementation of the Council resolution, the Inter-Agency Meeting on Women and Gender Equality, chaired by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, has established a Task Force on Women, Peace and Security. The Task Force, which comprises representatives of 16 United Nations entities,⁶ has

developed an Action Plan on the implementation of the Council resolution.

48. At the invitation of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women visited the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) in May 2001. The purpose of the mission was to assess the degree to which a gender perspective had been incorporated within UNMIBH's programme of work, particularly in light of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); to review women's representation in the staffing of various components of the mission; to gauge whether the work environment was supportive of women's full participation in the work of the mission; and to inquire into the situation of trafficking in women.

IV. Conclusions

49. Since the submission of the Secretary-General's last report to the General Assembly on the improvement of the status of women (A/55/399 and Corr.1), continued progress has been made in improving the representation of women on geographical appointments. In the larger population of staff with appointments of one year or more, women now constitute a critical mass (30.1 per cent) at the D-1 level. Although the General Assembly goal of gender balance in the appointment and promotion of Professional and higher-level staff has not yet been met, there are signs of progress. Fourteen departments and offices met this goal in the past year and some, including the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Office at Geneva, used appointment and promotion opportunities presented by a high number of vacancies to improve women's representation.

50. Under the Human Resources Action Plans for 2001-2002, heads of departments and offices have set targets for the selection of women candidates over the plan period. The performance of departments in meeting these targets will be monitored and evaluated by the Office of Human Resources Management and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. Reports on the performance of individual departments will be included in future reports of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women and to the General Assembly.

51. The endorsement by the General Assembly, in its resolution 55/258 of 14 June 2001, of the Secretary-General's human resources management reform programme will require the introduction of a new recruitment, promotion and placement system. In the coming year, priority will be assigned to the development of strategies to expand the supply of women candidates for vacancies to be filled under the new system. Particular attention will be paid to the identification of sources of women candidates in Member States that are unrepresented or under-represented in the Secretariat. The special measures for women will also be reviewed to determine how these might be enhanced and made more effective under the new selection system.

Notes

¹ In presenting statistics on the representation of staff assigned to peacekeeping and other special missions, it is important to point out that the number of staff with appointments of one year or more represents only a segment of the total population of staff on mission. As of 30 June 2001, a total of 1,893 Professional and higher-level staff were serving with peacekeeping and other special missions. Of this total, 478 staff (25.3 per cent) had appointments of less than one year. Of the total number of staff with appointments of less than one year, 130 (27.2 per cent) were women. Women accounted for 25.4 per cent of the total population of Professional and higher-level staff on mission.

² Including the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, the Contributions Service, the Treasury, the Management Policy Office, the Oversight Support Unit, the Executive Office, the secretariat of the Fifth Committee and the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the secretariat of the Joint Appeals Board and Joint Disciplinary Committee. Excluding the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, the Office of Central Support Services, and the Office of Human Resources Management.

³ Includes 20 staff serving with United Nations peacekeeping and other special missions who have appointments of less than one year.

⁴ Afghanistan, Andorra (unrepresented), Angola, Bahrain, Benin, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam (unrepresented), Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Gabon, Georgia, Grenada, Honduras, Kiribati (unrepresented), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Maldives, Marshall Islands (unrepresented), Mauritania, Micronesia (Federal States of), Monaco (unrepresented), Nauru (unrepresented),

Nepal, Palau (unrepresented), Papua New Guinea, Qatar (unrepresented), Republic of Moldova (unrepresented), Samoa (unrepresented), Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, Tonga (unrepresented), Turkmenistan (unrepresented), Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates (unrepresented), Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and Yemen.

⁵ Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Estonia, Fiji, France, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, Japan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Paraguay, Philippines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Thailand and Trinidad and Tobago.

⁶ DDA, DPKO, DPA, DPI, OCHA, OHCHR, OHRM, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women/Division for the Advancement of Women, ILO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and WFP.

t.1

t.2

t.3 & 4

t.5

t.6

t.7

Table 8
Departments and offices that met or exceeded the goal of gender balance in the selection of staff for vacant posts during the period 1 July 2000-30 June 2001

Source: Personnel Statistics (ACC/2001/HLCM/4, 24 April 2001).

^a UG stands for “ungraded” — e.g., USG, ASG, DDG, ADG, DG, SG, depending on the nomenclature used in the given organization.

^b Including 16 men and 6 women whose actual grade levels were not indicated.

