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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND REPORTS OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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 resolution 7/2 requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to “submit a comprehensive and updated report to the Council in 2009 in accordance with its annual programme of work, following the structure and scope of her report¹ and with a special focus on further measures to correct the imbalance in geographical composition of the staff of the Office”. The present report addresses developments in the composition of the staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in 2008.

2. In chapter I of the present report, information is provided on the composition of OHCHR as at 31 December 2008. It includes data on staff members in posts subject to geographic 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 geographic distribution.

* The present report was submitted after the deadline to ensure incorporation of human resources data up to and including 31 December 2008.

¹ A/HRC/7/57, see also A/63/290*.

3. Chapter II contains a description of the measures for improvement taken by the High Commissioner aimed at addressing the geographical composition issues identified by the Human Rights Council in resolution 7/2, while fully observing 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

4. The recruitment of staff members to posts subject to geographical distribution is governed by the system of desirable ranges at the 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 none of its nationals, throughout the entire Secretariat, is serving in a post subject to geographical distribution and 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 and changes in the scale of assessments.

5. The official report on the composition of the 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 resolutions 57/305, 59/266, 60/238 and 61/244.

6. The latest report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat was issued in 2008 (A/63/310). OHCHR is part of the Secretariat and the breakdown of its geographical composition has to be seen against the breakdown of the overall distribution within the Secretariat.

7. Table A1 (annex I) provides a breakdown of all OHCHR staff members in the Professional category and above who have been selected through the established recruitment process against both regular budget and extrabudgetary posts by nationality, grade and gender as at 31 December 2008.

8. Table A2 (annex II) provides a breakdown of the following categories of additional OHCHR staff in the Professional category and above not included in table A1 by nationality, grade and gender as at 31 December 2008:

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

9. Paragraph 14 of section IX of General Assembly resolution 63/250, re-emphasizes that the system of geographic ranges is designed to apply to countries rather than to regions or groups. Therefore, the data in this report are provided by country, listed in alphabetical order.

10. OHCHR had at 31 December 2008 a total of 460 staff in the Professional category and above, of which 317 are considered regular staff. Of the professional staff members, 310 work in Geneva, 13 work in the New York office, while 137 work in 38 different locations in the field.²

11. Nationals from 98 countries are represented in the Professional and above workforce; one staff member is from Palestine. Of these 98 nationalities, 10 are underrepresented in the Secretariat,³ 70 are considered within range (38 below mid-point⁴ and 32 above mid-point⁵), while 18 nationalities are overrepresented⁶ in the Secretariat.

II. RESULTS OF EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

12. Despite the decision of the General Assembly referenced above to discontinue references to regions in reporting on staff representation, the Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council and the Joint Inspection Unit have made use of the concept of geographic diversity by regional grouping when assessing the composition of the staff of OHCHR.⁷ This

² Country offices, regional offices and human rights advisers located in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nicaragua, Niger, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Moldova, Republic of Nepal, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Uganda and Palestine.

³ Underrepresented (at 30 November 2008): Angola, Cambodia, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

⁴ Within range, below mid-point (at 30 November 2008): Algeria, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, Gambia, Guatemala, Haiti, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liberia, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Paraguay, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Viet Nam.

⁵ Within range, above mid-point (at 30 November 2008): Albania, Armenia, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Burundi, Canada, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, France, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Mali, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay, Uzbekistan.

⁶ Overrepresented (status at 30 November 2008): Australia, Austria, Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, Egypt, Ethiopia, Italy, Kenya, Nigeria, Philippines, Russian Federation, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukraine.

⁷ A/59/65-E/2004/48; A/59/65/Add.1-E/2004/48/Add.1, A/61/115, A/61/115/Add.1, A/62/845, A/62/845/Add.1.

difference in approach, terminology and methodology from the report of the Secretary-General (A/63/310) has made comparison of data problematic. While being bound by the resolution of the General Assembly on this matter, the High Commissioner has, in order to facilitate a consistent and coherent discussion in the present report, continued to make occasional reference to the regional methodology used by the Human Rights Council and the Joint Inspection Unit in the analysis of the geographic diversity of OHCHR.

13. As stated in the plan of action of the High Commissioner (A/59/2005/Add.3, annex), achieving geographic diversity in OHCHR staff will remain one of her priorities. In line with that objective, OHCHR has continued to vigorously implement the High Commissioner's procedures and framework for improving geographic diversity, which were explained in detail in the report of the High Commissioner on the composition of the staff of OHCHR, submitted to the Commission on Human Rights in February 2006 (E/CN.4/2006/103).

14. The impact of the implementation of the above can be seen clearly in the overall geographic diversity of OHCHR. An analysis of the data contained in the table below, using the methodology employed by the Joint Inspection Unit, shows that OHCHR has significantly increased the percentage of staff from regions identified as requiring better representation within OHCHR over the previous two years.

**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for
Human Rights by region**

	OHCHR All 31 December 2006		OHCHR All 31 December 2007		OHCHR All 31 December 2008	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Africa	44	11.1	55	13.1	64	13.9
Asia	47	11.9	53	12.6	61	13.3
Latin America and Caribbean	38	9.6	50	11.9	53	11.5
Eastern Europe	13	3.3	20	4.8	23	5.0
Western Europe and other	253	64.1	241	57.5	259	56.3
	395	100	419	100	460	100

15. This underlines the issue of what constitutes a successful geographical balance for the OHCHR. It is important to note that, while being criticized for its geographical imbalance, OHCHR has yet to receive any indication of what would be considered an appropriate level of representation for each region, apart from the General Assembly mandated system of desirable ranges.

16. OHCHR will continue to vigorously implement the High Commissioner's procedures and framework for improving geographic diversity (E/CN.4/2006/103), which have, to date, proven effective. It is anticipated that the current positive geographic trends will continue during the current biennium as OHCHR will endeavour to maximize the opportunity afforded by its continued growth to further increase geographic diversity.

17. OHCHR is confident that a number of other initiatives will continue to enhance its geographic diversity.

18. A human rights national competitive examination was held in February 2008 and the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) focused on inviting participation in the examination from eligible countries in regions deemed to require improved representation in OHCHR. Of the 49 Member States invited to participate, 41 responded with applications and a total of 236 candidates sat the examination. A number of OHCHR staff members served on the board of examiners. The actual impact of this process on the geographic diversity of OHCHR will be only known once OHRM releases the list of successful candidates in early 2009.

19. OHCHR has also received support at the legislative level. In 2006, the General Assembly, on the basis of a report of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 61/159, in which it proposed a number of concrete measures to redress the geographical imbalance of the staff of OHCHR, including the establishment of a temporary mechanism whereby recruitment for extrabudgetary posts at the P-2 level would not be restricted to successful candidates from the national competitive examination. In its resolution 61/244, the General Assembly, on the basis of a report of the Fifth Committee on human resources management, subsequently made specific reference to OHCHR requesting the Secretary-General to present, in consultation with OHCHR, proposals to address the imbalance in the geographical distribution of the staff. Following extensive consultations between OHCHR and the Office of Human Resources Management, the Secretary-General submitted a report (A/61/823) to the Fifth Committee, in which several concrete measures were laid out, such as requesting an exemption from the national competitive recruitment examination process for posts at the P-2 and P-3 levels. Although the report was not taken up by the General Assembly at that time, OHCHR worked closely with OHRM to proceed with some of the recommendations coming from both the Third and Fifth Committees pending their review by the General Assembly.

20. The General Assembly (Fifth Committee) considered the above report, as well as a follow-up report (A/63/204) and related reports from the Joint Inspection Unit during its sixty-third session. In its resolution 63/250 on human resources management, the Assembly took note of report A/61/823 and the related changes to the staff rules that were proposed therein.

21. While seeking to further improve its 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 2008, women represented 50.5 per cent of regular OHCHR staff and 50.3 per cent of temporary OHCHR staff at the professional level, equivalent to an overall percentage of 50.4 per cent.

22. Similarly OHCHR will continue its commitment to meeting the goals and obligations placed upon it under the General Assembly mandated system of desirable ranges. In this regard, it is worth noting that during the current biennium OHCHR exceeded the departmental target relating to the recruitment of nationals from un- and underrepresented Member States established in the secretariat Human Resources Action Plan and the High Commissioner's Compact with the Secretary-General.

III. CONCLUSION

23. The implementation and results to date of the High Commissioner's procedures and framework to improve geographic diversity reflect the priority that the High Commissioner continues to give this issue in OHCHR. Noticeable progress has been achieved towards improved geographic diversity of its staff through these measures. Nevertheless, OHCHR remains attentive to the need to maintain the emphasis on the broadest possible geographic diversity of its staff, and will continue the implementation of these measures.

Annex I

Table A1

**OHCHR regular staff in the Professional and higher categories, by nationality, grade and gender
(as at 31 December 2008)**

[ENGLISH ONLY]

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
Albania	1	1														1				
Algeria	2	1									1					1				
Angola	1	0											1							
Argentina	6	3										1	2	1	1	1				
Armenia	1	0													1					
Australia	9	4									2	3	1		2	1				
Austria	5	2									1				1	2	1			
Belgium	4	3											1	3						
Benin	2	0									1				1					
Bolivia	1	0													1					
Brazil	3	1													1		1	1		
Bulgaria	4	1									1		1		1	1				
Burundi	1	1														1				
Cambodia	1	1												1						
Cameroon	3	1											2			1				
Canada	13	5									3	1	3		2	4				
Chad	1	0					1													
Chile	2	0							1						1					
China	5	5												2		2		1		
Colombia	3	2											1	1		1				
Costa Rica	1	0											1							

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
Côte d'Ivoire	3	0											2		1					
Croatia	2	1												1	1					
Czech Republic	2	2												1				1		
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2	1											1			1				
Denmark	6	2									1		1	2	2					
Ecuador	2	1													1	1				
Egypt	1	0						1												
Equatorial Guinea	1	0									1									
Eritrea	1	1														1				
Estonia	1	0													1					
Finland	3	1										1	2							
France	25	14						1			1	1	3	2	6	11				
Gambia	1	0									1									
Germany	23	13									2		2	7	3	2	3	4		
Ghana	1	1												1						
Guatemala	1	1												1						
Guyana	1	1												1						
Haiti	2	2														2				
India	2	0													2					
Indonesia	1	1														1				
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	2	2							1							1				
Ireland	3	1													2	1				
Italy	19	10									3	2	1	6	5	2				
Japan	7	4									1		1	1	1	3				
Jordan	2	2										1				1				
Kenya	3	2											1			2				
Malaysia	1	1														1				
Maldives	1	0													1					
Mali	2	0									1		1							

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
Malta	1	1														1				
Mauritania	1	0													1					
Mauritius	1	1																1		
Mexico	6	4											1			1	1	3		
Mongolia	3	1											1	1	1					
Morocco	1	1														1				
Netherlands	5	2									1			1	1		1	1		
Nigeria	3	1										1			2					
Norway	1	1																1		
Paraguay	2	0													1		1			
Peru	5	2									2	1	1			1				
Portugal	3	2														2	1			
Republic of Korea	6	4				1								1	2	2				
Russian Federation	1	0											1							
Saudi Arabia	1	1												1						
Senegal	4	1					1			1	1				1					
Serbia	1	1														1				
Singapore	1	1														1				
Solomon Islands	1	0													1					
South Africa	3	2		1									1					1		
Spain	20	12										2	5	3	3	7				
Sudan	2	0									2									
Sweden	7	6							1					2		3		1		
Switzerland	9	6												1	3	3		2		
Thailand	1	0													1					
Trinidad and Tobago	1	0									1									
Tunisia	2	1									1			1						
Uganda	1	1														1				

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
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	10	4							1		2	2	2		1	2				
United Republic of Tanzania	1	1												1						
United States of America	15	6							2		4	1	3	2		1		2		
Uruguay	6	1									1		1		3	1				
Uzbekistan	2	1													1	1				
Total	317	160	0	1	0	1	2	0	7	2	35	17	44	45	60	75	9	19	0	0

Annex II

Table A2

**OHCHR non-regular staff in the Professional and higher categories, by nationality, grade and gender
(as at 31 December 2008)**

[ENGLISH ONLY]

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	3	1													1		1			1
Australia	4	3											1	1	2					
Austria	1	1															1			
Bangladesh	1	0											1							
Belgium	1	0															1			
Benin	1	0													1					
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	1															1			
Brazil	4	1												1		2	1			
Bulgaria	4	4											2		1		1			
Cambodia	1	0															1			
Cameroon	2	0												1		1				
Canada	8	5											3			4		1		
Colombia	1	1															1			
Cyprus	1	1													1					
Democratic Republic of the Congo	3	1												1		1	1			
Denmark	1	1															1			
Ecuador	1	1															1			
Ethiopia	2	0													2					
France	10	4											1	1	2	1	3	2		

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
Germany	3	3														2		1		
Ghana	1	0															1			
Hungary	1	1														1				
India	7	3									1			2	2	1	1			
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1	1											1							
Ireland	2	1											1					1		
Italy	9	5									1		2	4	1	1				
Japan	1	1														1				
Kyrgyzstan	1	1																1		
Lesotho	1	1																1		
Liberia	2	1														1	1			
Malaysia	2	2														1		1		
Mauritania	1	0											1							
Mauritius	1	0															1			
Morocco	1	0											1							
Netherlands	1	0													1					
New Zealand	2	1												1	1					
Nigeria	2	1													1	1				
Pakistan	3	1											1		1			1		
Peru	1	0															1			
Philippines	1	1														1				
Portugal	3	1													2	1				
Russian Federation	2	1											1					1		
Serbia	1	0															1			
Sierra Leone	1	0													1					
Singapore	1	1														1				
Spain	2	1													1			1		
Sweden	4	1									1		1	1	1					

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
Switzerland	5	3											1	1			1	2		
Thailand	1	0															1			
Togo	1	0									1									
Uganda	1	1																1		
Ukraine	1	0									1									
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	11	7											3	3	1	3		1		
United States of America	11	5											1	2	4	2	1	1		
Uruguay	1	0											1							
Uzbekistan	1	1													1					
Viet Nam	1	1																1		
Subtotal	142	72																		
Palestine	1	0											1							
Subtotal	1	0																		
Total	143	72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	19	19	28	27	19	25	0	1