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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*

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its decision 2/102, the Human Rights Council, 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. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) understands that decision as preserving the previous annual reporting cycles in respect of the present issue, until otherwise decided by the Council. Pursuant to resolution 2005/72 of the Commission on Human Rights, a comprehensive annual report on the composition of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (E/CN.4/2006/103) was submitted to the Commission at its sixty-second session. The High Commissioner therefore submitted her report (A/HRC/4/93) to the Human Rights Council at its fourth session. The current issue of the composition of the staff of OHCHR addresses developments in the composition of OHCHR staff in 2007.

* The present report was submitted after the deadline to ensure incorporation of human resources data up to and including 31 December 2007.

2. In section I of the present report, information is provided on the composition of OHCHR as at 31 December 2007. It includes data on staff members in posts subject to geographical distribution, as well as data on staff members 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.

3. Section II contains a description of the measures for improvement taken by the High Commissioner aimed at addressing the geographical composition issues identified by the Commission in its resolution 2005/72, while fully observing Secretariat human resources policies, in particular, its recruitment and contractual policies.

II. 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 over-represented. 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 over-represented 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.

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 57/305 of 15 April 2003; 59/266 of 26 December 2004; 60/238 of 23 December 2005 and 61/244 of 22 December 2006.

6. The latest report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/62/315) was issued in 2007. 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 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 2007.

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 1 by nationality, grade and gender as at 31 December 2007:

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

10. OHCHR has 419 staff members in the Professional category and above, of which 304 are considered regular staff. Of the 419 staff members, 49.4 per cent are female. One staff member is an Under-Secretary-General, one is an Assistant Secretary-General, three staff members are at the D-2 level and eight staff members are at the D-1 level. A total of 13 per cent of staff fall into the P/L-5 category, 23 per cent in the P/L-4 category, 46 per cent are P/L-3, 14 per cent are P/L-2 and 1 per cent are P/L-1 staff.

11. Nationals from 93 countries are represented in the Professional and above category; one more staff member is from Palestine. Of these 93 nationalities, 15 are underrepresented in the Secretariat,¹ 64 are considered within range (36 below midpoint² and 28 above midpoint³), while 14 nationalities are overrepresented⁴ in the Secretariat.

¹ Underrepresented (at 30 November 2007): Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Chad, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

² Within range, below midpoint (at 30 November 2007): Algeria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Guatemala, Haiti, Indonesia, Ireland, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Turkey, Viet Nam.

³ Within range, above midpoint (at 30 November 2007): Albania, Austria, Benin, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Mali, New Zealand, Pakistan, Senegal, Serbia, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan.

⁴ Over-represented (at 30 November 2007): Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, Egypt, Ethiopia, Italy, Kenya, Nigeria, Philippines, South Africa, Uganda.

12. Of the 419 staff members, 268 come from the more developed regions, while 151 come from the less developed regions.⁵ Thirty-four staff members come from least developed countries.

13. Of OHCHR Professional staff members, 278 work in Geneva, 9 work in the New York office, while 132 work in 31 different locations⁶ in the field.

III. RESULTS OF EFFORTS MADE TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

14. Despite the decision of the General Assembly to discontinue references to regions in reporting on staff representation referenced above, both the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 2005/72, and the Joint Inspection Unit⁷ have made use of the concept of geographic diversity by regional grouping when assessing the composition of the staff of OHCHR. This difference in approach, terminology and methodology from the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/315) has caused confusion and made comparison of data problematic. In order to facilitate a consistent and coherent discussion in the present report, the High Commissioner has therefore adopted, to the extent possible, the regional methodology used by the Human Rights Council and the Joint Inspection Unit when analysing the Office's geographic diversity.

15. As stated in the plan of action of the High Commissioner (A/59/2005/Add.3, annex), achieving geographical balance in OHCHR staff will remain one of her priorities. In line with that objective, the Office 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 Council in February 2006 (E/CN.4/2006/103).

16. The results of the above are now being seen clearly in the Office's selection data. Since the procedures were introduced, 122 selection decisions have been made for Professional posts. Of these, 72 (60 per cent) were from regions requiring improved representation within

⁵ *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision*, United Nations publication, Sales No. 07.XIII.8.

⁶ Country offices, regional offices and human rights advisers located in Afghanistan, Angola, Bolivia, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Guatemala, Guyana, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Maldives, Mexico, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Rwanda, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Togo, Uganda and Palestine.

⁷ See the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the management review of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/59/65-E/2004/48 and Add.1), the follow-up to the management review (A/61/115 and Add.1) and the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the funding and staffing of the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights.

OHCHR. This is clearly an improvement, particularly when noting that of the 50 selections from the regions well represented within OHCHR, 32 were internal staff members who had been transferred or promoted, thus having no net impact on the geographic balance of the Office. There has been similar progress with regard to senior (P-5 and above) posts. A total of 28 selection decisions have been made for senior posts since the procedures were introduced. Of these, 16 (58 per cent) were from regions requiring improved representation within OHCHR.

17. These improved selection figures have resulted in significant progress in the overall geographic diversity of the Office. An analysis of the data contained in table 1 below using the methodology employed by the Joint Inspection Unit clearly shows that the Office has significantly increased the percentage of staff from regions identified as requiring better representation within OHCHR.

Table 1

	31 December 2006		OHCHR All		OHCHR All	
			30 June 2007		31 December 2007	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Africa	44	11.1	51	12.3	55	13.1
Asia	47	11.9	52	12.6	53	12.6
Latin America and Caribbean	38	9.6	45	10.9	50	11.9
Eastern Europe	13	3.3	17	4.1	20	4.8
Western Europe and Other	253	64.1	248	60	241	57.5
	395	100	413	100	419	100

18. This underlines the issue, of what constitutes geographic balance for the Office. It is important to note that the Office, while being criticized for its geographic imbalance, has yet to receive any indication of what would be considered an appropriate level of representation for each region, apart from the system of desirable ranges mandated by the General Assembly. In the absence of any such recommendation and in order to establish indicative goals, the Office analysed the current desirable ranges approved by the Assembly and extrapolated the levels of representation by region that this would entail, to allow comparison with the statistics presented in the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.

19. Reviewing the composition of the Office on this basis reveals a different picture to that presented in the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, which cast OHCHR as a United Nations office with a particularly serious geographic imbalance. Table 2 below indicates that OHCHR has higher representation from three regions (Africa, Latin America and Western Europe) than is targeted by the system approved by the Assembly. It is also worth noting that OHCHR draws a higher proportion of its staffing from Latin America and the Caribbean than the Secretariat itself.

Table 2

	OHCHR All 31 December 2007		Midpoint Secretariat 31 July 2007	Actual Secretariat 31 July 2007
	No.	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
Africa	55	13.1	12	13.2
Asia	53	12.6	27.86	19
Latin America and Caribbean	50	11.9	9.68	11.2
Eastern Europe	20	4.8	6.54	9.3
Western Europe and Other	241	57.5	43.72	47.4
	419	100	100	100

20. The Office will continue to vigorously implement the High Commissioner's procedures and framework for improving geographic diversity (A/HRC/4/93), which have, to date, proven extremely effective. It is anticipated that the current positive geographic trends will continue throughout the current biennium; for its part, the Office will endeavour to maximize the opportunity afforded by its continued growth to further increase geographic diversity.

21. The Office is confident that a number of other initiatives will further enhance its geographic diversity.

22. A human rights national competitive examination will be held in 2008. The Office of Human Resources Management has focused on inviting participation in the examination from eligible countries in regions deemed requiring improved representation in OHCHR. This is a unique opportunity to improve the long-term geographic balance of the Office and it is hoped that those Member States invited to participate do so.

23. The Office 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; and encouraged participation from a broader range of Member States in the associate experts programme and the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/61/115). The Assembly reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Committee to look into such administrative matters. In its resolution 61/244, the Assembly, on the basis of a report of the Fifth Committee on human resources management, subsequently made specific reference to OHCHR. The Assembly requested that the Secretary-General present, in consultation with OHCHR, proposals to address the imbalance in the geographical distribution of the staff in that Office. 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, and a commitment to more selectively targeting countries for inclusion in the examinations scheduled for 2008.

24. Pending the review of the report to the Assembly, OHCHR is working closely with the Office of Human Resources Management to proceed with some of the recommendations made by the Third and Fifth Committees.

25. While seeking to improve the geographical distribution of its staff members, 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 2007, 49.7 per cent of regular OHCHR staff and 48.7 per cent of temporary OHCHR staff at the Professional level were women, equivalent to an overall percentage of 49.4.

III. CONCLUSION

26. **The implementation and results to date of the High Commissioner's framework to improve geographic diversity reflect the high priority that the High Commissioner is giving to this issue in OHCHR. The success of the Office's efforts is now clearly apparent in the improved geographical diversity of its staff. Additional measures developed in consultation with OHRM pursuant to General Assembly resolutions will further strengthen those efforts.**

Annex I

Table A1

**OHCHR regular staff in the Professional and higher categories, by nationality, grade and gender
(as at 31 December 2007)**

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	3	2									1				1		1			
Angola	1	0											1							
Argentina	5	3										1	1	1	1	1				
Australia	10	4									2	3	2		2	1				
Austria	5	2									1				2	1		1		
Belgium	3	2							1				1	1		1				
Benin	2	0									1				1					
Bolivia	1	0													1					
Brazil	2	0													1		1			
Bulgaria	4	1									1		1		1	1				
Burundi	1	1														1				
Cameroon	4	2										1	1		1	1				
Canada	12	6		1							1		3	1	2	4				
Chad	1	0					1													
Chile	2	0							1						1					
China	4	4											2			2				
Colombia	2	1											1			1				
Costa Rica	1	0											1							
Côte d'Ivoire	4	0											1		3					
Croatia	2	1												1	1					
Czech Republic	2	2												1				1		

Table A1 (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
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2	1													1	1				
Denmark	6	2									1		1	1	2	1				
Ecuador	2	1													1	1				
Egypt	1	0							1											
El Salvador	1	1												1						
Equatorial Guinea	1	0									1									
Estonia	1	0													1					
Finland	3	1										1	1		1					
France	23	12									2	1	3	1	6	9		1		
Germany	19	11									1		2	4	3	3	2	4		
Guatemala	1	1												1						
Guyana	1	1												1						
Haiti	3	2													1	2				
India	1	0													1					
Indonesia	1	1														1				
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	3	2								1						1	1			
Ireland	3	1													2	1				
Italy	21	11									4	2	1	4	5	5				
Japan	7	3									1		2	1	1	2				
Jordan	3	2										1			1	1				
Kenya	2	1											1			1				
Lebanon	1	1														1				
Madagascar	1	1																1		
Malaysia	1	1														1				
Maldives	1	0													1					
Mali	2	0											2							
Malta	1	1																1		

Table A1 (continued)

[illegible]

Table A1 (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
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	12	6							1		2	3	2	1	1	2				
United States of America	14	6							2		4	1	2	2				3		
Uruguay	6	1									1		1		3	1				
Uzbekistan	2	1													1	1				
Total	304	151	0	1	0	1	2	1	6	2	33	16	38	38	66	69	8	23	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 2007)**

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	1	0													1					
Australia	2	1													1	1				
Bangladesh	2	0													2					
Benin	1	0													1					
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	1													1			1		
Bulgaria	1	1																1		
Cambodia	1	0															1			
Cameroon	1	0													1					
Canada	7	4											3			3				1
Chile	1	1														1				
Colombia	2	2														1		1		
Costa Rica	1	0															1			
Croatia	1	0											1							
Cyprus	1	1														1				
Democratic Republic of the Congo	5	3													1		1	2		1
Denmark	2	2														1		1		
El Salvador	1	0													1					
Ethiopia	2	0													2					
France	9	5											1		2	1	1	3		1
Germany	4	4														3				1
Ghana	1	0																	1	
India	3	2												2	1					

Table A2 (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
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1	1													1					
Ireland	1	0											1							
Italy	6	3									1		1	1	1	2				
Japan	3	2												1	1	1				
Liberia	2	1														1	1			
Malaysia	2	2														1		1		
Mauritania	1	0											1							
Mauritius	1	0															1			
Morocco	1	1																1		
Netherlands	1	0													1					
New Zealand	1	0													1					
Nigeria	2	1													1	1				
Norway	1	1														1				
Pakistan	2	1													1			1		
Peru	2	0													1		1			
Philippines	1	0													1					
Portugal	3	1													2	1				
Serbia	1	1																1		
Sierra Leone	1	0													1					
Spain	5	3													2			2		1
Sri Lanka	1	0									1									
Sweden	5	1									1		1	1	2					
Switzerland	3	2													1			1		1
Thailand	1	0															1			
Uganda	1	1																1		

Table A2 (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	1	2	1				
United States of America	7	3											1	2	3	1				
Viet Nam	1	1																1		
Subtotal	114	56																		
Palestine	1	0											1							
Subtotal	1	0																		
Total	115	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	12	8	35	23	8	18	1	6
