

Application of the Principle of Equitable Geographical Distribution of the Staff of the United Nations Secretariat (Addendum)

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APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUITABLE
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE STAFF OF THE
UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT
(ADDENDUM)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The report on the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the United Nations Secretariat (A/36/407) submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) to the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly has been discussed in depth by Member States at the Fifth Committee. At the end of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly the Secretary-General issued his comments on the JIU report (A/36/407/Add.1, dated 24 November 1981).

2. In its decision 36/456 of 18 December 1981, the General Assembly took note of the JIU report on the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the United Nations Secretariat and the comments of the Secretary-General on that report, and decided to continue discussion of this subject at its thirty-seventh session.

3. In order to up-date factual information and give their comments on document A/36/407/Add.1, which might be useful for Member States in the course of their deliberations on personnel questions at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Inspectors have felt it necessary to prepare this Addendum to the report on the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the United Nations Secretariat. Since the Addendum is a supplement to JIU report A/36/407, for a clearer understanding both these documents have to be considered together.

II. VALIDITY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN THE JIU REPORT ON THE APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE STAFF OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT (A/36/407)

A. Necessity of applying the principle of equitable geographical distribution not only in regard to the Secretariat as a whole but also in regard to each entity of the Organization - Recommendation 1

4. An attempt has already been made in the first report (A/36/407) to show that in spite of the very clear provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the numerous resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the necessity of observing the principle of equitable geographical distribution the composition of the Secretariat has since the inception of the Organization been insufficiently equitable.

5. With this in mind, the Inspectors recommended in their first report that the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be applied not only to the Secretariat as a whole, but also in regard to each entity of the Organization except in the case of the regional commissions where a maximum of 75 per cent of the staff may be from the region.

6. In the Secretary-General's comments on this recommendation it was stated that: "While the Secretary-General continues to believe that the equitable geographical distribution of the staff in posts subject to geographical distribution should in principle apply to the Secretariat as a whole, he considers that care must be taken to see that no one country or group of countries predominates in any major organizational unit except in the case of the regional commissions in which a maximum of 75 per cent of the staff may be from the region. The Secretary-General considers it his responsibility, within the directives of the General Assembly with regard to the equitable geographical distribution of the Secretariat as a whole, to watch over the distribution of the staff in each of the 43 main departments and offices of the Secretariat by region, sex and age, and between the developing and developed countries." (A/36/407/Add.1, para. 8).

7. The Inspectors acknowledge that the pattern of the distribution of staff within the Secretariat itself has been improved with time but there is little evidence to suggest that there has been a measurable improvement or that the predominance of nationals from a certain group of developed countries which has continued since the creation of the United Nations in a number of instances has been completely eliminated.

8. The following table shows the number of professional and above staff and the number of staff who are heads of organizational sections in some departments and offices of the Secretariat as of 30 June 1981. ^{1/}

DISTRIBUTION OF PROFESSIONAL AND ABOVE STAFF IN POSTS SUBJECT TO GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND NUMBER OF SUPERVISORS IN SOME DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICES OF THE SECRETARIAT (AS AT 30 JUNE 1981)

| DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICES | | TOTAL STAFF | NUMBER OF STAFF MEMBERS | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | NUMBER OF DIVISIONS SECTIONS UNITS, ETC. | NUMBER OF SUPERVISORS from: | | |
| | | | DEVELOPED C.*/ (Group B) | DEVELOPING C.*/ (Groups A & C) | C. OF E EUROPE*/ (Group D) |
| Percentage share based on the mid-point of desirable ranges No. of Member States = 154 Total staff = 2 894 (100%) | | | 1 394 (48.2%) | 1 131 (39.1%) | 369 (12.7%) |
| 1. | Office of USG for P and GA affairs | $\frac{19}{3}$ | $\frac{13}{2}$ (68.4%) | $\frac{6}{1}$ (31.6%) | $\frac{-}{-}$ (0%) |
| 2. | D I E S A | $\frac{270}{58}$ | $\frac{149}{37}$ (55.2%) | $\frac{95}{18}$ (35.2%) | $\frac{26}{3}$ (9.6%) |
| 3. | D T C D | $\frac{195}{61}$ | $\frac{110}{31}$ (56.4%) | $\frac{69}{27}$ (35.4%) | $\frac{16}{3}$ (8.2%) |
| 4. | D P I | $\frac{138}{40}$ | $\frac{87}{24}$ (63%) | $\frac{37}{12}$ (26.8%) | $\frac{14}{4}$ (10.2%) |
| 5. | Office of Per- sonnel Services | $\frac{83}{19}$ | $\frac{50}{12}$ (60.3%) | $\frac{26}{6}$ (31.3%) | $\frac{7}{1}$ (8.4%) |
| 6. | Office of Finan- cial Services | $\frac{98}{26}$ | $\frac{54}{16}$ (55.1%) | $\frac{38}{8}$ (38.8%) | $\frac{6}{2}$ (6.1%) |
| 7. | A M S | $\frac{11}{1}$ | $\frac{7}{1}$ (63.6%) | $\frac{3}{-}$ (27.3%) | $\frac{1}{-}$ (9.1%) |
| 8. | Office of General Services | $\frac{91}{48}$ | $\frac{64}{32}$ (70.3%) | $\frac{24}{16}$ (26.4%) | $\frac{3}{-}$ (3.3%) |
| 9. | U N C T A D | $\frac{209}{43}$ | $\frac{114}{23}$ (54.5%) | $\frac{79}{18}$ (37.8%) | $\frac{16}{2}$ (7.7%) |
| 10. | Public Informa- tion Service (Geneva) | $\frac{15}{2}$ | $\frac{10}{2}$ (66.6%) | $\frac{4}{-}$ (26.7%) | $\frac{1}{-}$ (6.7%) |
| 11. | UN Office in Vienna | $\frac{37}{7}$ | $\frac{27}{5}$ (73%) | $\frac{8}{2}$ (21.6%) | $\frac{2}{-}$ (5.4%) |

Sources: A/36/495, para. 16 and Table C; A/C.5/36/L.2.

*/ NOTES: Distribution of Member States in accordance with GA resolution 2152(XXI)

Group B: 25 countries with developed market economies

Groups A and C: 118 developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean

Group D: 11 countries of Eastern Europe.

^{1/} A/C.5/35/SR.28, para. 24

As of 30 June 1981, there were 154 Member States including: developed countries - 25, developing countries - 118, the countries of E. Europe - 11. The figures given in the table indicate that the group of countries with developed market economies has a clear predominance in the personnel composition of the above-mentioned departments and offices both in the total number of professional and above staff and in the number of heads of sections.

9. This predominance has been explained in the Secretary-General's comments as being due to "difficulties in locating qualified nationals of unrepresented or under-represented Member States who are available and interested in joining the Secretariat." (A/36/407/Add.1, para. 4).

In their first report (see para.24), the Inspectors undertook the task of identifying several cases where candidates submitted by these countries some of whom were interviewed by recruitment missions and considered as suitable from the point of view of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity but nevertheless were not appointed.

10. There is no denying that during the first post-war years there was a shortage of trained personnel in some countries Members of the United Nations. This was due to many factors of which the consequences of the Second World War and the old colonial system were partly to blame. Since that time, the situation has improved greatly. After 1960, in particular, most developing countries experienced considerable expansion in their resources of trained manpower.

11. Thus, the major obstacle to the application of the principle of the equitable geographical distribution within the Secretariat itself is not the shortage of qualified specialists but first and foremost the reluctance of the heads of some departments and offices to consider the necessity of recruiting candidates from unrepresented and under-represented countries for a large number of vacant posts in the Secretariat, and who continue proposing the appointment nationals from over-represented countries in spite of the provisions of the Charter and of numerous resolutions of the General Assembly aimed at achieving equitable geographical distribution both in terms of the number of posts and their levels. 2/

12. In the Secretary-General's comments (doc. A/36/407/Add.1 of November 1981) on the first JIU report on geographical distribution it is stated that "any system of desirable ranges established by the Assembly in accordance with the Charter principle that "due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible" must be administered "flexibly in the interest of the Organization." 3/ The Inspectors believe that this flexibility should not be unlimited, as is the case in many instances at present. The flexibility should be based on the Charter principle of equitable geographical distribution. Such an approach should provide that the composition of each organizational unit must include nationals of all geographical regions in accordance with the established regional desirable ranges or, in the case of small units, nationals of each of the three main social-economic groups of countries, i.e., developing countries, countries with developed market economies and the countries of Eastern Europe. Such an approach would constitute the necessary prerequisite for improving the situation regarding the equitable representation of Member States in the Secretariat as a whole.

2/ A/C.5/35/SR.28, para. 24.

3/ A/36/407/Add.1, para. 7.

13. The Inspectors continue to believe that the United Nations is universal by its nature and tasks. To implement effectively these tasks each entity of the Secretariat should have a diligent and competent staff which should be, to the maximum degree, universal in its composition.

14. The Inspectors consider that the General Assembly by adopting resolution 36/149 of 16 December 1981 has undertaken an important step in the direction of the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution to individual departments and offices. In this resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to apply the principle of equitable geographical distribution to the Department of Public Information (DPI) and, "until equitable geographical distribution is achieved, to take urgent steps to increase the representation of the group of developing countries, particularly at senior and policy-making levels, by a policy of recruiting from among their nationals, taking into account also the interests of other under-represented groups of countries, in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions 33/143 of 20 December 1978 and 35/210 of 17 December 1980...." 4/ This action taken by the General Assembly in respect of DPI clearly indicates the necessity for the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution to each entity of the Organization where a geographical staff imbalance still exists.

15. There is another question which the Inspectors would like to consider separately in the following paragraphs. In reading paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 12 of the Secretary-General's comments, issued in November 1981, the Inspectors got the impression that the fact that some Member States are either un-represented or under-represented in the Secretariat is explained by laying emphasis in particular on the "efficiency" of the candidates as against equitable geographical distribution of the staff. This explanation is unwarranted and may be characterized as in fact discriminatory in regard to candidates from some unrepresented and under-represented countries. As is known, the basis of personnel policy within the United Nations has been and remains its Charter, Article 101, paragraph 3 of which says: "The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible." These two principles are interconnected, mutually conditioned and are not contradictory. It has been stressed by the General Assembly in its numerous resolutions on this matter.

16. There are many opponents of the Charter's principle of equitable geographical distribution of staff who have frequently argued that the application of this principle would have an adverse effect on the efficiency of the Secretariat. So far, there has been no evidence to prove this. On the contrary, the recruitment policy and practices which have been pursued by many entities of the United Nations with an unjustifiable disregard of the principle of equitable geographical distribution has led to a failure to achieve tangible progress in the implementation of the many decisions of the General Assembly and in particular the numerous resolutions concerning establishing equitable geographical distribution of posts in the Secretariat. The present recruitment policy has been under strong criticism from many delegations at the Fifth Committee. 5/

4/ General Assembly resolution 36/149, Part B, para. 11.

5/ A/C.5/35/SR.59, paras. 16-18; A/C.5/35/SR.62, para. 105;
A/C.5/36/SR.52, paras. 41-42, 64; A/C.5/36/SR.53, para. 26;
A/C.5/36/SR.59, paras. 54-55.

17. The Inspectors believe that the primary task of the Secretariat is to observe fully the provisions of the Charter and the decisions of the General Assembly and apply them strictly in practice. Any deviations in this area are in contradiction with these governing documents.

B. Importance of implementing specific targets in the achievement of equitable geographical distribution in the United Nations Secretariat - Recommendation 2

18. The substance of recommendation 2 in the first JIU report is as follows:

- a) At least 60% of vacant posts in each entity should be filled by the nationals of unrepresented and under-represented countries;
- b) The remaining 40% of vacant posts should preferably be filled by nationals of States which are within their desirable ranges;
- c) The appointment of nationals of over-represented Member States should be permitted only in exceptional cases and on the understanding that such appointments will not result in increasing the degree of over-representation of these Member States.

19. As is known, resolution 33/143 requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary action in order to "ensure that all unrepresented and under-represented countries achieve their desirable ranges during 1979-1980." This target was not attained. Resolution 35/210 established another term - end of 1982 - for attaining this target. However, as will be seen from data shown in the following paragraph, there is no clear evidence that it will be attained unless more energetic measures are taken to this effect.

20. The statistical data for the period from 30 June 1981 to 31 December 1981 indicate that there were changes in the composition of the Secretariat, but these had no significant bearing on the equitable geographical distribution of the staff. For example, the total number of staff members in geographical posts increased during these six months from 2894 to 2932, i.e., by 38. 6/ No appointments were made from unrepresented countries. The number of unrepresented countries increased from 19 to 22 (as a result of the admission of three new Member States). The number of under-represented countries decreased from 26 to 24 and there was a net increase of 31 staff members from these countries. During these six months, there were 15 appointments and 15 separations of staff members from over-represented countries. Thus, there was no change in the total number (957) of staff members from over-represented countries although the total number of these countries decreased from 30 to 29. The representation of countries which were within their desirable ranges increased by 7 staff members. A simple calculation will lead to the following findings: as at 31 December 1981 it would have been necessary to appoint 49 candidates from unrepresented and 196 candidates from under-represented countries to provide these countries with their minimum desirable ranges. Taking into account the rate of increase in the representation of these Member States in the Secretariat (31 staff members during six months) this would take about 4 years $\left(\frac{49 + 196}{31} \times \frac{6}{12} = 3.95 \right)$.

And to provide these countries with their mid-point desirable ranges (summary of mid-point ranges for unrepresented countries as at 31 December 1981 was 176, and for under-represented countries the difference between the summary of mid-point ranges (890) and the summary of actual staffing positions (487) was accounted for (403)) it would take more than 9 years at the present rate of increase of their staff members in the Secretariat $\left(\frac{176 + 403}{31} \times \frac{6}{12} = 9.35 \right)$.

6/ A/36/495, Annex, Table 9.

21. The Inspectors are convinced that the implementation of recommendation 2 will contribute to a more speedy attainment of the target established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 33/143 and 35/210.

C. Advisability of reducing the number of permanent appointments and increasing the number of fixed-term appointments -
Recommendation 3

22. Recommendation 3 was made by the Inspectors in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization. It should be pointed out that the permanent contracts problem has today grown into a major issue involving the future of the personnel policy and practice of the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system. In this connection, the Inspectors feel it necessary to elaborate further on their above recommendation.

23. The implementation of this recommendation will be in conformity with trends which are now manifesting themselves in the activities of many organizations of the United Nations system, including that of the substantial growth in the number of staff members on fixed-term appointments. For example, in WHO these comprise - 78%, in UNESCO - 81%, in IAEA - 90.4%, in 1980.

24. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) has recently stated that "There is no evidence that standards (of integrity, impartiality and efficiency) are any different in those organizations which have low proportions of career staff than in the others; nor is there any ground for believing that standards would be higher if all staff were granted permanent contracts." 7/ The Inspectors fully agree with this opinion of the ACC.

25. The Inspectors believe that the number of permanent appointments should be reduced to the minimum required to ensure the efficient operation of the Organization. They, of course, understand that the question of establishing an optimum desirable percentage relationship between permanent and fixed-term appointments is a prerogative of the legislative bodies of each organization of the United Nations system. * At the same time, on the basis of this study, they would like to recommend to the General Assembly that in future the majority of the staff of the United Nations Secretariat subject to geographical distribution should have fixed-term appointments. The practical measures proposed by the Inspectors in their first report, which constitute an integral part of recommendation 3, are valid and significant for achieving an equitable geographical distribution of the staff in the Secretariat. These measures should include the following:

- a) No candidate should be granted a probationary contract on initial appointment;
- b) The number of permanent appointments should be reduced;
- c) Until geographical distribution is equitable, a quota should be established for granting new permanent contracts.

7/ ACC/1982/16, Annex IV, para. 5, dated 10 June 1982.

* Note: The Inspectors share fully the opinion of ICSC that "the determination of the proportion of permanent and fixed-term staff should be made on an organization by organization basis so as to reflect not only the differing functions and needs of the organizations but also the policy decisions of their governing bodies." (A/36/30, Annex I, para. 24).

As far as point a) above is concerned, the Inspectors noted the following statement of the ACC: "the view is increasingly held that a permanent appointment should be offered only after the staff member has served for several years (e.g., between three and six) on two or more successive fixed-term appointments; this (which is already the practice in a number of organizations) allows ample time to judge not only the staff member's work but also his all-round suitability for a career as an international civil servant." 8/

26. The widespread practice in the Secretariat of using permanent appointments has resulted in a situation in which about two-thirds of the professional and above posts in the United Nations at present are filled by staff with permanent contracts. This practice constitutes a considerable obstacle to efforts aimed at the attainment of an equitable geographical distribution of staff and eliminating the predominance of one group of countries in the Secretariat which has persisted since the inception of the United Nations. The posts filled on the basis of permanent contracts have actually become the "exclusive property" of the States whose nationals fill them. Some over-represented countries, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat, have more than 75 per cent of their nationals in the Secretariat on permanent appointments. 9/

27. It is necessary to point out that some entities of the United Nations Secretariat have already expressed unequivocally their preference for an increase in the number of fixed-term contracts. For example, the ECLA considers that an excessive use of permanent appointments has a deadening effect upon the Organization and the fact that some 68% of the professional staff of ECLA have permanent contracts restricts unnecessarily the Executive Secretary's flexibility in reordering priorities in the face of changing needs and new mandates from legislative bodies. 10/ As indicated in the first JIU report, UNIDO has already achieved a greater percentage share of appointments on fixed-term basis (49.7%) in comparison with that of the United Nations Secretariat as a whole (38.2%).

28. Thus, in the Inspectors' opinion, the question of permanent and fixed-term contracts appears to have ripened to a point where it would be possible for the General Assembly to take the requisite steps to set these matters right both in terms of percentage shares of these two types of appointment and the requirement of achieving an equitable geographical distribution of the staff in the Secretariat.

D. Feasibility of introducing a new type of interruptible (rotation) fixed-term contract - Recommendation 4

29. The purpose of recommendation 4 made in the first report (A/36/407) is to contribute to the creation of more favourable conditions for the career development and promotion of those staff members who serve under fixed-term appointments. By rotation fixed-term contracts the Inspectors understand the periodic secondment of staff for 4-6 years from national organizations (governmental or private) to the Secretariat with similar intervals between such secondments. A simplified appointment procedure might be devised for such persons.

8/ ACC/1982/16, para. 13, dated 10 June 1982.

9/ A/36/495, Annex, Table 10.

10/ ECLA letter to JIU of 4 June 1981, ref. no. ORG.300 (1-6).

30. The Secretary-General in his comments indicated that "It would be mutually advantageous to have arrangements for such secondment regulated in a more systematic manner so that the Organization may obtain maximum benefits from the services of such seconded officials without the introduction of a new type of appointment." 11/ The Inspectors note that the Secretary-General in principle is in favour of such arrangements but without introducing a new type of appointment.

31. The Inspectors would like to draw the attention of Member States to the merit of enriching the Secretariat and national agencies through such a mutually advantageous practice. They believe that such an approach takes into account the interests of most of the developing countries for which the permanent appointment of the best trained national specialists means a direct loss as well as those countries whose nationals in the United Nations come predominantly from government service. However, they are aware of some difficulties which might be encountered by those nationals who come from either the private sector or certain public services for whom there might be little prospect of a periodic return to these sectors or services. They hope, nevertheless, that such difficulties could be circumvented.

32. For these reasons, the Inspectors wish to emphasize that the proposed rotation contract has been recommended only as one of the possibilities. In this respect the experience of other international organizations where the number of fixed-term appointments has considerably increased could be studied seriously. To conclude, the Inspectors wish to reiterate that the proposed system of rotation fixed-term contracts would among other things make it possible to recruit personnel on a long-term planned basis, with full account for the highest professional competence of the officials and for the principle of equitable geographical representation of Member States. This would also provide an opportunity for the staff members on rotation contracts to return to the Organization at an appropriately higher level than that previously held by him/her, if the staff member has acquired new experience and knowledge both during his/her work in the home country and in the Organization. This would be tantamount to promotion of staff members on fixed-term contracts who are now in a less favourable position in comparison with the staff on permanent contracts, especially as promotion to senior posts (P-5 and above) is concerned.

E. Necessity of full observance of the Charter and the relevant decisions of the General Assembly concerning appointments of internal and external candidates to vacant posts - Recommendation 5

33. Recommendation 5 made in the first report reads as follows: "Vacancy announcements should be issued simultaneously for internal and external candidates and the consideration and selection of the best candidate should be made strictly in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter and the relevant resolutions and Staff Regulations adopted by the General Assembly." As can be seen from the above, this recommendation on the whole is closely associated with the basic features of a recruitment policy provided in the Charter and Staff Regulations approved by the General Assembly. The Inspectors recommend full and strict observance of the provisions of the governing documents concerning the procedure for filling vacant posts.

34. However, in the Inspectors' view these provisions are being misinterpreted by the Secretariat. The first report (A/36/407, paras. 40-45) contains an analysis of Staff Regulation 4.4 and the recruitment practice pursued by the Secretariat. This analysis leads to the conclusion that because of this misinterpretation

11/ A/36/407/Add.1, para. 21.

there has been an excessive slant towards filling vacant posts subject to geographical distribution by internal reassignments.

35. The following table contains data on this subject:

Number and percentage of staff at each level in posts subject to geographical distribution who were appointed at that level at 30 June 1981

| Level | Total staff | Staff appointed at that level | Staff promoted to that level | | |
|-------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|-----|
| USG* | 25 | 13 | 52% | 12 | 48% |
| ASG | 23 | 15 | 65% | 8 | 35% |
| D-2 | 83 | 36 | 43% | 47 | 57% |
| D-1 | 248 | 58 | 23% | 190 | 77% |
| P-5 | 559 | 138 | 25% | 421 | 75% |
| P-4 | 784 | 253 | 32% | 531 | 68% |
| P-3 | 702 | 276 | 39% | 426 | 61% |
| P-2 | 411 | 181 | 44% | 230 | 56% |
| P-1 | 61 | 20 | 33% | 41 | 67% |
| Total | 2 896 | 990 | 34% | 1 906 | 66% |

* Includes one staff member at the Director-General level.

Source: Division for Policy Co-ordination, Office of Personnel Services (latest available figures).

The figures in this table indicate that as at 30 June 1981 only one-third of all professional and above staff subject to geographical distribution were recruited from outside to their present grade while two-thirds were promoted. If one takes the posts of P-4, P-5 and D-1, the percentage of staff promoted at these levels accounted for about 75 per cent and only about 25 per cent of the staff at these levels were recruited from outside.

36. The Inspectors believe that "time-in-grade" promotion does not necessarily mean the acquisition by the internal candidates of a genuine professionalism but it certainly results in the frequent replacement of staff members who serve primarily on fixed-term appointments by internal candidates on permanent contracts.

37. This practice has led in many cases to appointing outside candidates in lower-level posts in the course of replacement of staff members who serve primarily on fixed-term contracts. It inevitably creates serious political consequences and puts staff members from countries whose nationals work mainly on permanent appointments into privileged and dominant positions in the United Nations Secretariat while other staff members who work on fixed-term appointments occupy to a large degree only junior professional posts. This approach seems to be discriminatory in substance and naturally constitutes a source of well-founded concern for those Member States which are now unrepresented as well as Member States whose nationals serve primarily on fixed-term appointments. Therefore, the Inspectors consider that any attempt to limit external recruitment for P-3 posts* and above in order to enlarge internal

* Note: As far as recruitment for P-1/P-2 posts is concerned, the General Assembly decided that 30 per cent of vacant posts at this level should be reserved for promotion by competitive examination from the General Service category.

promotion possibilities would be at variance with the Charter and the relevant decisions of the General Assembly concerning equitable geographical distribution of posts at all levels.

38. Giving preference to staff members on permanent contracts is usually advocated by reference to the need for their promotion, to the opinion of the Staff Committee, etc. In this connection, the Inspectors wish to emphasize that the defence of the legitimate interests and rights of career staff are normal. However, this defence should be based on the Charter and relevant decisions of the General Assembly in order not to create additional difficulties for the normal functioning of the Organization.

F. Improvement in geographical distribution of staff in senior and policy-formulating posts - Recommendation 6

39. The substance of recommendation 6 of the first report means that in order to ensure an equitable geographical distribution of staff in senior and policy-formulating posts, it is necessary to improve the representation of unrepresented and under-represented Member States in these posts. This recommendation fully corresponds to numerous resolutions of the General Assembly and in particular to resolutions 1436 (XIV), 1559 (XV), 1852 (XVII), 2359 (XXII), 3417A (XXX), 31/26, 32/197 and 33/143, in which the Assembly reiterated the objective of achieving equitable representation of Member States at senior and policy-formulating levels.

40. In considering the possible ways of attaining this important aim, the Inspectors suggest that notional targets should be set for senior and policy-formulating posts, for each geographical region, and in filling vacancies in these posts due attention should be paid to the established weighted desirable ranges.

41. In the Secretary-General's comments on the JIU report on geographical distribution it is mentioned that he has responded to the request contained in General Assembly resolution 34/219 (in regard to ensuring that Member States will have a balanced quantitative and qualitative representation). However, at the same time, it is stated that the weighted desirable ranges "have never been used as a regular measurement of the representation of Member States for the purpose of guiding recruitment policy." ^{12/} The Inspectors believe that the proper use of weighted desirable ranges would serve the best interest of the Organization in achieving the qualitative geographical distribution of staff in the Secretariat.

42. The statistical data given in doc. A/36/407/Add.1 indicate that during the period from 1978-1981 there were some improvements in the percentage distribution of staff in senior and policy-formulating posts or in the relationship of the actual staffing position of geographical regions to their mid-point of desirable ranges. These changes (in percentages) were as follows: ^{13/}

^{12/} A/36/407/Add.1, para. 28.

^{13/} Ibid., para. 29.

| Region | 1978 | | | 1981 | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--------|-----------------------|-----------|--------|-----------------------|
| | Mid-point | Actual | Difference (3)-(2) | Mid-point | Actual | Difference (6)-(5) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Africa | 10.2 | 11.4 | +1.2 | 13.5 | 13.3 | -0.2 |
| Asia and the Pacific | 21.3 | 15.6 | -5.7 | 18.1 | 19.6 | +1.5 |
| Europe (Eastern) | 14.2 | 11.1 | -3.1 | 13.2 | 10.6 | -2.6 |
| Europe (Western) | 22.7 | 26.1 | +3.4 | 22.8 | 25.5 | +2.7 |
| Latin America | 7.2 | 9.1 | +1.9 | 7.7 | 8.2 | +0.5 |
| Middle East | 4.4 | 6.0 | +1.6 | 5.5 | 6.9 | +1.4 |
| North America and the Caribbean | 20.0 | 19.6 | -0.4 | 19.2 | 15.4 | -3.8 |
| Other | - | 1.1 | +1.1 | - | 0.5 | -0.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | - | 100.0 | 100.0 | - |

These figures show that during the last four years the representation at senior and policy-formulating levels (D-1 and above) has changed as follows:

i) The position of the developing countries of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East has on average been improved from -1% in 1978 to +3.2% in 1981 over their aggregate mid-point;

ii) The position of developed countries of Western Europe decreased from +3.4% to +2.7% during the same period. The position of the countries of North America has decreased from -0.4% in 1978 to -3.8% in 1981 below their aggregate mid-points;

iii) The position of the countries of Eastern Europe is that they continue to be under-represented at this level.

43. These figures show that the concern expressed by the General Assembly was shared by the Secretariat and some measures were taken to improve the geographical distribution of staff at senior levels. However, the Inspectors believe that these measures were not sufficient to attain the objectives set forth by the Assembly for achieving equitable geographical distribution of staff at senior and policy-formulating levels.

44. In conclusion of this chapter, the Inspectors would like to mention that they consider it unnecessary for them at this point to elaborate further in this Addendum on recommendations 7-10 made in their first report which concern relatively technical questions of personnel practice, although they continue to believe that these recommendations are still valid and deserve consideration by the General Assembly in its efforts to achieve an equitable geographical distribution of the staff in the Secretariat.

III. CONCLUSIONS

45. An analysis of statistical data and official documents on the representation of Member States in the United Nations Secretariat indicates that there has been no significant change either in the quantitative or qualitative distribution of the staff of the Secretariat since the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. The principle of geographical distribution of staff has not been fully observed in many departments and offices during this period.

46. The factors hindering the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution described by the Inspectors in the first JIU report on this matter have continued in the personnel policy and practice of the Secretariat. These factors can be summarized as follows:

- 1) appointment of nationals from over-represented countries;
- 2) extensive use of permanent contracts;
- 3) filling vacancies preferably by internal reassignments;
- 4) deficiencies in geographical distribution of staff at senior and policy-formulating posts.

There is little evidence that these factors have been overcome.

47. The Inspectors are convinced that in order to achieve speedy implementation of the numerous decisions of the General Assembly concerning equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat it is necessary to take energetic and mandatory measures to remedy existing deficiencies in the application of this principle. They believe that the recommendations made in the first JIU report on geographical distribution (A/36/407) might be a basis for a true solution of this important question, which has been a subject of concern to Member States since the inception of the United Nations.

