



## **Opening Remarks by the OPCW Deputy Director-General at UN HR Directors Meeting**

**As delivered on 3 July 2019, The Hague, Netherlands**

Dear HR Directors and Managers,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am privileged and pleased to join you this morning for the opening session of the HR Network Meeting. On behalf of the Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Fernando Arias, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Directors, Heads of HR, and HR Policy officers of the UN System to the OPCW.

As you are aware, the OPCW is the implementing agency for the Chemical Weapons Convention. Every day, we endeavour to achieve the vision of a world free of chemical weapons. In addition to verifying the elimination of the Chemical Weapons stockpiles declared by possessor Member States, we strive to ensure the non-re-emergence of such weapons. At the same time, we develop the capacities of the Member States to face the use and the threat of use of chemical weapons and we promote the peaceful uses of chemistry. As of today 97% of the chemical weapons stockpiles declared by possessor States have been verifiably destroyed and for our work in destroying the world's chemical weapons stocks, the OPCW was the laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

As the Organisation enters its third decade of operation marked by a changing operational context and complex challenges, it is essential that the OPCW remains fit for purpose and continues to deliver effectively on its mandate. Therefore, we devote a special care and continuous attention to our human resources. At this juncture, I can even confidently assert that you are visiting us at an exciting time for the OPCW from an HR perspective!

In terms of Talent Management, we are currently introducing a new comprehensive system, have revised and modernised key HR policies, partnered with tech start-ups to utilize work tech to devise the best ways for optimizing each individual's potential and performance. Through these initiatives we aim to create a more people-centered workplace that celebrates diversity in all its forms.

Furthermore, we adopted our first "People Strategy" last year. This strategy focuses on the "Employee Experience" and represents an ecosystem integrating three core dimensions: engagement, culture and performance management. We are now working on a new framework for workforce management to ensure that the OPCW can always attract and retain the human resources necessary to address current and future challenges. This new framework will be discussed at the Organisation's Executive Council next week.

Another priority is gender equality: With the leadership and guidance of the Director-General, we have made one of our priorities to achieve gender parity in the Organisation's top structure. And I am very proud that we were able to recruit highly qualified female candidates and achieving gender parity in the top structure of the organisation, increasing the representation of women in the top structure from 10% to 50%.

To achieve equitable geographic distribution of staff and overall gender balance we have broadening the pool of potential candidates and expanded existing initiatives: developing a recruitment sourcing strategy, optimisation of language and structure of vacancy notices, using the services of a recruitment marketing company. All these initiatives have resulted in the highest number of applicants for P-positions ever. Moreover, to start the onboarding journey of new staff prior to their entry on duty, we have introduced a user-friendly onboarding app.

Last week we launched a revamped "Peer Recognition Programme". This programme is aligned to the new continuous conversation and feedback culture that we strive to develop, and seeks to improve the motivation and engagement levels of our Staff. The new Peer Recognition Programme offers easy and transparent mechanism to recognize everyday contributions and exemplary work or behaviours. It is our view that this will further improve sharing, communication and collaboration within the organisation.

In a nutshell, this is a glimpse of the latest developments in the area of HR at the OPCW. To conclude, I would like once again to welcome this distinguished group of HR managers at the OPCW today and to wish you an excellent and productive day.

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