

Fairness and transparency in staff selection

11. The post of D-2 in OUSG became vacant in November 2004. Between November 2004 and June 2007, the two previous Under-Secretaries-General had each selected an individual during their tenures to assume the D-2 functions temporarily and had given them special post allowances (SPA). In both cases, the Under-Secretaries-General did not issue a temporary vacancy announcement for the post contrary to the provisions stated in paragraph 5.1(e) of ST/AI/1999/17 and paragraph 1b of Annex 1 of ST/AI/2002/4 (or ST/AI/2006/3 effective 1 January 2007). The previous Under-Secretary-General in 2005 had selected a D-1 to perform the D-2 functions. After this incumbent was assigned to another office, the next Under-Secretary-General had selected a P-5 to perform the D-2 functions starting from March 2006 to date. This individual received an SPA at a D-1 level from March 2006 to November 2006. In December 2006, she was promoted to D-1. In February 2007, the current Under-Secretary-General applied the SPA of a D-2 level retroactively to the first day of her promotion to D-1.

12. Although the timing and granting of SPA were in accordance with the rules, the lack of transparency in the selection of the candidate for assuming the D-2 functions in OUSG had created a negative perception among staff. The justification for selecting a candidate even for a temporary vacancy is important because the incumbent have an advantage over other applicants when competing for the regular appointment.

13. Furthermore, the SPA panel had not reviewed the case of the P-5 that had been selected to perform the D-2 functions because the panel could only review cases for individuals assuming higher functions of up to the D-1 level. According to ST/AI/1999/17, "Special Post Allowance", for the D-2s, the Head of Department can make the decision after consultation with the Assistant-Secretary-General of Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM). However, because the Assistant-Secretary-General of OHRM reports to the Under-Secretary-General for Management who is also the Head of Department for this case, the independence of the Assistant-Secretary-General appeared to have been compromised when OHRM supported the approval for the grant of SPA despite incomplete documents and non compliance with the established procedures. The missing documents included a classified job description of the higher-level post; an explanation of how the vacancy occurred; and the progress made in filling the post; and finally the justification for the selection of a recommended staff member, including evidence that the department concerned has informed its staff of the temporary vacancy and has reviewed all eligible candidates who have expressed interest in assuming higher-level functions.

See Rec.04

14. In January 2007, the Under-Secretary-General inappropriately used a consultancy contract to retain the services of a United Nations Fulbright Scholar who was on academic training assignment in OUSG, DM. There were no terms of reference for this consultancy contract and the individual was paid only \$3,000 per month, an amount equivalent to the allowance she was getting during her academic training. This amount is significantly lower than the normal rates paid to a consultant. *The OUSG stated that there were terms of reference for this contract.* [Please provide supporting documentation]

15. In November 2006, the then Under-Secretary-General had written to the Fulbright Manager acknowledging the purpose of the Fulbright Scholar programme and the commitment for the scholar to return to her home country after her training. The present Under-Secretary-General did not honour this commitment and decided to recruit this individual as a P-3 using