

**Briefing on the G to P Career Path for
General Service and Related Categories and Field Service**

5th Committee of the General Assembly

**Remarks by
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Working Group on General Service Career Prospects**

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

Good afternoon.

I am very pleased to be with you here today to brief you concerning the issue of the G to P exam for General Service (GS) and related categories and for Field Service (FS) that has been an ongoing matter for discussion over many years. I hope that we may use this opportunity to clarify some of the underlying important aspects concerning this issue, to view a brief video montage and, to answer any questions that you may have.

Currently, staff members in the GS and related categories as well as in the FS category up to the FS-5 level are not eligible to apply to positions in the Professional category unless they first pass the Young Professional Programme (YPP) examination as G to P candidates and even they do successfully pass the exam, only ten (10) per cent of YPP placement each year can be G to P candidates. So, if 100 positions are allocated to the YPP in a given year only 10 positions can be filled by G to P candidates and these are also further allocated amongst the different functional areas i.e. Legal Affairs, Social Affairs, Statistics etc. This results in the current situation providing only extremely limited opportunities for colleagues in these categories to advance and to reach their full potential.

The Secretary-General's report (A/73/372/Add.1) requests "*....the endorsement by the General Assembly of the proposal to allow all staffs serving in the General service and related categories and at the FS-1 to FS-5 levels in the Field Service category to apply for positions in the professional category up to the P-3 level that are not earmarked for the young professional programme.*" We fully support the Secretary-General's proposal and as such, would like to appeal to the Member States to put an end to this obsolete and deleterious practice. The administration and staff representatives within the Secretariat collectively support this important goal which would emulate the practice in the Agencies, Funds and Programmes and will bring the UN Secretariat closer to the goal of 'One United Nations'.

We understand the need for rejuvenating the organization however, we also believe that all staff within the organization deserve the opportunity to contribute to the work of the organization to the maximum of their capacity. We also strongly believe that the significant change envisaged under the current reforms in the areas of development, peace & security and management are only achievable if there is a change in culture within the organization and that all staff are united behind a common cause, the values enshrined in the charter and the organization's mission. The abolishment of the G to P exam is one aspect, perhaps the single most important aspect from a staff perspective that the organization is entering into new era, where every staff member is equally valued, nurtured and given the opportunity to advance and contribute to the work of the organization to their maximum potential. I have no doubt that such a signal would contribute to raising the morale of staff and to the successful fulfillment of the reforms. Many-many colleagues in the GS category have tremendous expertise, wide ranging skills and important institutional knowledge along with the necessary educational and language skills that are necessary to successfully compete at the Professional level. By lifting the barrier and abolishing the exam, other important issues could also be addressed, as example; more equitable gender balance. In addition, many FS colleagues work in the most difficult field locations work side by side with peers in the professional category performing the same roles.

With the elimination of the G to P exam, colleagues who are currently limited to serving in a single duty station would be more mobile and could serve the organization globally - including in difficult field locations. It will also assist colleagues from under and unrepresented countries to join the Professional category along with many qualified women.

In closing, the G to P exam is a concept that has no place in a modern workforce and it is time we consigned it to the history books. The removal of the G to P exam is fundamental if a true meritocracy is to exist within the organization and GS and FS colleagues are to be given the freedom to reach their full potential in life.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to brief you this afternoon on this truly important matter. I stand ready to answer any questions that you may have.