

# United Nations Nations Unies

## BOARD OF AUDITORS

Phone: (212) 963-5623

### Opening statement to the Fifth Committee

on United Nations Board of Auditors First Annual Progress report on the implementation of the Information and Communications Technology Strategy A/72/151

June 2018

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Chairman, Mr. Rajiv Mehrishi, Comptroller and Auditor General of India and the other Board Members Professor Mussa Assad, Controller and Auditor General of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Kay Scheller, President of the German Federal Court of Auditors, I have the honour to introduce the Board's first annual progress report on the implementation of the ICT strategy. This report was issued by the Board in July 2017.

#### **Background**

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), while considering the previous report of the Board (A/70/581) recommended that the Board submit an annual progress report during the five years implementation period of the Strategy which was endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution A/RES/70/238B. The present report of the Board of Auditors is the first report in response to the above resolution of the General Assembly and examines the implementation of the Strategy in United Nations during the years 2015 and 2016.

#### **Key findings**

#### **Governance Framework and Accountability**

The Secretary General's Bulletin defining the organization of the Office of the Information and Communications Technology (OICT) and its roles and functions including that of the CITO, was issued in September 2016, i.e., almost two years after the commencement of the strategy

period of five years. The delegation of authority and designation of staff members performing significant functions in OICT are yet to be issued as of February 2017.

The provision in the Compact of Senior Managers with regard to implementation of the Strategy was subjective and generic in nature and did not facilitate an objective assessment of their performance in implementing the ICT Strategy. Departments are yet to align their business plans to the Strategy and they continue to run their own ICT units.

### **Monitoring of Strategic Projects**

Project monitoring involves continuous tracking of physical and financial progress to control time and cost overruns and execute the project in an economic, efficient and effective manner. However, both the reports on the status of implementation of the Strategy presented the project timelines and the physical progress achieved in terms of percentage completion but did not provide details of project cost and financial progress achieved against each of the 20 Strategic Projects.

### **ICT Policies and Compliance**

Policies on important subjects which, inter-alia, included information security, disaster recovery, cloud computing, minimum security for websites, video conferencing, mobile devices, email services, and remote access remain to be promulgated and/or revised. Policy compliance function to monitor, measure and report on policy implementation is yet to be put in place. Further, the self-regulatory policy compliance function indicated in the first and the second reports on the status of implementation of the strategy, has not been fully implemented due to lack of resources.

### **ICT Human Resource**

Though training programmes were developed, they could not be implemented due to lack of resources. Against the requirements projected by the OICT, the funds provided for substantive and technical ICT skills training were less than 5 per cent.

### **Information Security**

Though there was significant progress (60 per cent) by the end of 2015 in implementation of strategic project for information security across the Secretariat, only 5 per cent progress was achieved during 2016. Network security, classification of information assets and mandatory

implementation of minimum requirements of public websites were areas of concern with low progress.

### **Governance and Review Process of ICT investments**

Despite the Strategy emphasizing that OICT will oversee and monitor ICT investments to enable more informed decision making and holistic reporting of global costs, the involvement of OICT and CITO in ICT procurements has been limited.

### **Global Sourcing**

The Strategy required negotiation of contract discount using global purchasing volumes of hardware and software licenses. Though, the Secretary General's reports on the status of implementation of the strategy also reported that the organization negotiates discounts in the areas of infrastructure, externally acquired licenses and related ICT services, the OICT had not carried out any analysis of discounts obtained so far through global sourcing.

### **Defragmentation**

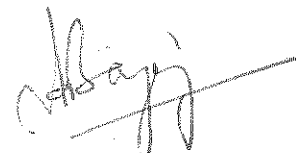
The progress of defragmentation and consolidation of ICT resources was slow with only three out of 70 ICT units across the Secretariat having been consolidated as of January 2017 notwithstanding a memorandum from the Chef-de-Cabinet to the Heads of Department.

### **Recommendations**

Of the 23 recommendations made in the Board's previous reports (A/67/651 and A/70/581), two recommendations (9 per cent) have been fully implemented and 21 (91 per cent) are under implementation.

This concludes my introductory statement. I, along with my colleagues, would be happy to provide any clarifications or additional information that the Committee may require.

Thank you.



**Anand Bajaj**  
**Director of External Audit, India**  
**Chair – Audit Operations Committee**