

BOARD OF AUDITORS

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**Opening statement to the Fifth Committee
on the Board of Auditor's third annual progress report on the implementation of
the Information and Communications Technology Strategy (ICT) A/74/177**

[November 2019]

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Chairman, Mr. Kay Scheller, President of the German Federal Court of Auditors, and the other Board Members Mr. Rajiv Mehrishi, Comptroller and Auditor General of India, and Mr. Jorge Bermúdez, Comptroller General of the Republic of Chile, I have the honour to introduce the main findings from the Board of Auditors report on the implementation of the ICT Strategy.

Background

The ICT strategy is focused on five major areas or key drivers, namely, a strengthened governance and leadership framework, modernization in support of organizational priorities, the transformation of ICT delivery, innovation to foster new technological solutions in the long term, and optimal use of ICT resources.

Key findings

Governance and leadership

The Board noted that the decision making bodies on ICT strategy did not meet regularly. The Information and Communication Technology Executive Committee had not held any meetings in 2018 while the Information and Communications Technology Board met only twice in 2018. Of the 22 ICT technical procedures due for review as at 1 January 2018, only 12 were revised in 2018. As part of the annual review and self-certification exercise

initiated in August 2018, entities were requested to report on only two of the 42 ICT policies currently in force to which the response rate was very low, with only 5 out of 70 entities submitting completed self-certification forms.

Modernization

The Board noted critical actions for information security like network segmentation and classification of information assets were pending. The disaster recovery exercise could not meet the time targets and highlighted problem areas which had been flagged in the past. Further exercises have been postponed.

Transformation

As at 31 December 2018, there were 740 Secretariat websites, 360 of which were not built on approved technologies. Though multiple issues remain to be addressed regarding website rationalization, the activity has been taken out of the project mode and mainstreamed as an ongoing activity.

The global Enterprise Network Operations Centre project was temporarily suspended in the light of the management reforms. The monthly progress reports indicated that the project was 100 per cent complete though the project objectives had not been fulfilled and the Board was informed that additional funds for this purpose would be requested in 2021.

The aim of the Unite Service Desk project (phase 3) was to build an efficient standard global shared-service model. The Board noted that, although the Office of Information and Communications Technology has designated the project as 100 per cent complete, the consolidation of the service desk resources, assets and field-level operations of the former Department of Field Support with the Unite Service Desks has been placed on hold and is expected to be completed only by the end of 2019.

The project on application consolidation had been closed ahead of the proposed completion date citing the reduction of the number of applications to less than 1,000, though scope for further consolidation had been identified. Premature closure or mainstreaming of projects could lead to reduced attention to their implementation and completion.

The Board noted that, even by March 2019, the ICT units of 27 United Nations entities, offices and departments at Headquarters, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions had yet to be harmonized.

This concludes my introductory statement. My colleagues and I will be happy to provide further explanations and respond to any questions the Committee may have.

Thank you.



Peter Korn

**Director of External Audit, Germany
Chairman, Audit Operations Committee**