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The Chairman
Le Président

General Assembly
5th Committee

Statement introducing the JIU report
“Review of Management and Administration in UNODC”
before the 5th Committee of the GA

(New York, 27th October 2011)

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to introduce today the JIU Report (JIU/REP/2010/10) on Management and Administration in the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crimes. The authors of the report are Inspectors Yishan Zhang (report coordinator), Papa Louis Fall and Tadanori Inomata.

The authors of the report acknowledged the excellent cooperation that was accorded to them by UNODC – its management and staff, and the member states. This JIU report is the outcome of their joint efforts.

The authors were very much pleased to see the positive response to the Review from the UNODC Executive Director, who reassured JIU that “a course of action and timelines will be set for a successful implementation of the JIU recommendations.”

The report contains 14 recommendations: One is addressed to the two Governing Commissions; one is for the General Assembly. The rest of the 12 recommendations are all directed to the Executive Director. These recommendations, if implemented, will help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this organization, thus enabling it to fulfil better its mandates, areas of high priority of the United Nations: fighting against drugs, crimes and terrorism in all its forms.

The following three major areas are covered in the report, these are:

Governance Improvement

The Office is the only one in the United Nations with two separate and parallel Governing Commissions, a fact that is affecting its efficiency. The rapidly increasing mandates and expanded activities of the office add to the difficulties and complexity. The Office was created by merging the programmes of drugs and crimes. Before the merging, Programs for Drugs and Crimes each had its own set of structures with its own Commission and Fund. When the Office was set up the two programmes were

unified. However, the Commissions and the funds remained unchanged as the original. To strive for a more integrated and coherent governance mechanism, we listed in the report three options. The first option is to merge the two Commissions. This needs the political will of member states, and it is a time consuming exercise. To use the Chinese proverb, “distant water cannot quench the present thirst”. The option could not solve the governance issues we are now facing. It is valid only for future consideration. Option two is to create an executive body. To set up an additional body such as an executive board or a programme and budget committee was suggested by quite a number of member states. However, this option risks duplication with the commissions and involves additional financial costs, which might not be so appealing in the present financial difficulties. That is why the authors put forward Option three as a potential solution, joining the two reconvened sessions with their roles and functions adjusted or converted to serve as a strengthened budgetary and programmatic mechanism. And a testing period of three years was suggested to see the effectiveness and impact on the governance

Financial Framework

The delicate financial situation of the Office has been at the centre of interest for years and has been widely commented. On the one hand, due to the recognition by the international community of the importance of its mandates, the Office has been experiencing an increasing influx of SPF contributions; on the other, the core resources, the aggregate expenditures from Regular Budget and GPF are not sufficient to cover core activities of the Office. The mismatch of increased mandates, expanded activities and the financial core resources is affecting adversely the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office, leaving some programmes half-done or not at all implemented. The complex situation is caused by multiple reasons. The report put forward the following recommendations to rectify the situation:

Recommendation 3 invites the General Assembly to ensure that the Office has sufficient resources to carry out its mandate.

Recommendation 5 proposes that the Executive Director increase the transparency of overall resource allocation thus raising the confidence of donors so as to strive for reducing earmarking of contributions.

Recommendation 6 suggests that the Executive Director formulate a fund-raising strategy to further enlarge the donor base.

Human resources management

Concerning human resources management, the report has two recommendations: one concerns equitable geographical representation; and the other covers gender issue.

Equitable geographical representation is an important principle and guideline in the human resources management of the United Nations. In UNODC, geographic origin of Professional staff is not sufficiently balanced. 68 nationalities were represented among the workforce in 2009, almost one fourth of them are from three countries of the same regional group. And as far as consultants are concerned, the picture is even more worrisome. Four countries contribute 51 % of the consultant’s pool.

The JIU report recommended that the Executive Director establishes a plan of action to broaden the diversity of the Professional workforce as well as of the pool of consultants, in particular, by considering more candidates from developing countries.

The general situation of gender balance in UNODC is improving, but it is still rather disturbing, especially in the senior level positions, out of which more than three quarters are occupied by males. Only 17.6 % of the field representatives are females. During the interviews and in the surveys conducted for the report, comments like UNODC is a “male-dominated organization” were often heard.

The report recommended that the Executive Director should undertake further measures to improve the gender balance at the senior level, including for Field Representatives.

UNODC is a global leader in the fight against illicit drugs, international crime and terrorism. It is our common objective to make it more effective and more efficient. JIU hopes that the recommendations and their timely implementation, would, like the proverb says, “add flowers to silk”, be a plus for this organization to perform its mandate.

Thank you.