



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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**66th Session of the General Assembly
Fifth Committee**

**Item 134. Proposed Programme budget: biennium 2012-2013
ICT & Umoja/ERP**

United Nations

New York

29 November 2011

– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Croatia^{*}, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro and Iceland⁺, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this declaration.

At the outset let me thank both the Controller/Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Maria Eugenia Casar and the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Choi Soon-Hong for introducing the third progress report of the Secretary-General on the Enterprise Resource Planning project and the report of the Secretary-General on the status of implementation of ICT. We also wish to extend our thanks to the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Mr. Collen Kelapile, for introducing the related report of that Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

We continue to support management reform, including the reform of human resources management, of procurement and the work of the Change Management Team, amongst other efforts to modernise the Organisation and make it work more effectively and efficiently. Management reforms can and should be a major step towards modernisation,

^{*} *Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

⁺ *Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.*

and a way of allowing the Secretariat to better manage its human and budgetary resources.

Mr. Chairman,

We therefore also strongly support the implementation of ERP. It is an opportunity to make the UN much more effective and efficient through streamlined information management and business processes. We believe that sustained and long-term commitment is vital, now more than ever, for Organisation-wide acceptance and realisation of the benefits of the new system.

But that support means we are even more concerned that the project does not currently appear to be on the right track. We read in the report presented today that significant delays are now anticipated in the implementation of the project. We strongly believe that the Secretariat should give priority to avoiding any further slippage, cost overruns and unproductive use of resources.

Second, we must once again underline the obligation - in times of crisis more than ever - to manage financial resources efficiently, thus stressing the need to exert careful financial management of UMOJA, to ensure that it can be delivered within its approved budget of USD 315 million.

Third, we are very concerned about the governance of the project. UMOJA has been functioning without a permanent Director since 31 May 2011. That is too long for a project of this magnitude and complexity, which is already experiencing delays, and when there have also been other major changes to the project governance structure. We

strongly call for a solid and efficient permanent governance structure for the UMOJA project and we concur with the ACABQ recommendation that we need this no later than the first resumed sixty-sixth session. In this regard, we equally concur with the Committee's recommendation to request the Secretary-General to provide details on the status of staffing in general, as timely recruitment is another key requirement for the realisation of UMOJA. UMOJA is vital to the UN. It is unacceptable that its implementation is suffering.

Mr. Chairman,

Turning now to the information and communication technology proposal that is being presented to us. We recognise the importance of an Organisation-wide ICT strategy in seeking to rationalise and harmonise Secretariat operations and structures for a better United Nations, with the aim of improving the overall effectiveness, efficiency and cohesiveness of ICT operations.

In general terms, we welcome and encourage efforts to seek further opportunities for synergies and for the adoption of common ICT standards and solutions within the Secretariat as well as across the UN system, thereby pursuing an effective and timely realisation of quantified benefits and savings. But we continue to have doubts about the feasibility of the current proposals. ACABQ has, rightly we think, suggested there should be a reprioritisation of work. But we want to go further and question each of the four projects in detail, and we are concerned about entering into any significant new ICT projects before the full implementation of UMOJA and IPSAS.

In that regard, we support the ACABQ recommendation to reduce significantly the scope of the current ICT proposal and would suggest, moreover, that the management

structures proposed be reduced, in line with the Secretary General's own underlying assumptions of the linkage between administrative and bureaucratic structures and the size of the project.

In addition, we believe that neither the ICT nor the UMOJA-projects should be intermingled; each one requires its individual and appropriate implementation plan and governance structure.

Finally, we reiterate our long-standing position that all measures need to be taken to avoid a piecemeal approach in budget presentation, and thus are very concerned that the present resource requests are being put forward as add-ons to the regular budget.

Mr. Chairman,

We look forward to having our concerns addressed about this agenda item, our questions answered and to entering into a constructive discussion on these issues in informal consultations.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.