



Check Against Delivery

United Nations General Assembly Sixty-Sixth Session

Fifth Committee

**Introduction of the Note of the Secretary-General on the Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on “Inter-Agency Staff Mobility and Work/Life Balance in the UN System”**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

I am pleased to introduce, on behalf of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the note of the Secretary-General conveying his comments and those of CEB member organizations on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit titled “Inter-Agency Staff Mobility and Work/Life Balance in the United Nations System”, contained in document A/66/355/Add.1.

At the outset, I would like to note that the CEB cooperates with the Joint Inspection Unit on many levels. The report before you today and others such as on the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, which is on the Committee’s agenda for this session, is an example of the level of cooperation that exists between the CEB and the Joint Inspection Unit. CEB member organizations are committed to ensuring good information flows between each organization and the Joint Inspection Unit. Consequently, CEB members welcome the review of this important aspect of human resource management that deals with a subject that is central to ensuring that the United Nations system works in an integrated manner. It also underscores many of the on-going issues currently under review within the human resources inter-agency bodies, including the International Civil Service Commission and the Human Resource Network of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

The report before you contains comments from agencies which have generally focused on three main issues: (i) the feasibility of implementing some of the recommendations, (ii) dual career support, and (iii) medical services. Throughout the report, agencies expressed appreciation for the Joint Inspection Unit’s recognition that a “one-size fits all” approach to mobility would not suit an entity as diverse as the United Nations system. Nevertheless, CEB members indicated their reservations that many of the

recommendations contained details or practices that would indeed inhibit their implementation.

On the general subject of dual-careers, agencies agreed with the Joint Inspection Unit that this was an important element in their ability to attract qualified staff members, but they also suggested that the report could have gone further by recommending the strengthening of local networking amongst international organizations.

As you can see in the body of report consolidating the comments of the Secretary-General and of the agencies, while CEB members largely accepted most of the recommendations, they also expressed concerns regarding some of the implementation details that the recommendations contained. As an example, may I draw your attention to recommendation 3 which calls for the elaboration of a detailed plan for the development of a set of common staff regulations and rules for the entire United Nations system. In their response to this specific recommendation, agencies noted that, overall, they had fairly similar staff regulations and rules, but that where there were differences, these may, in some cases, require action by governing bodies and therefore more difficult to achieve by executive heads or through inter-agency mechanisms alone.

If you would also allow me to draw your attention to another example, agencies supported recommendation 5 which calls for organizations to review their internal rules so that staff members from other agencies applying for vacant posts can do so on an equal footing as internal candidates. However, agencies note that there are cases where this procedure may be difficult to apply specifically highlighting an exception for staff on abolished posts, and these individuals should indeed have some preference for vacancies. But on this issue as a whole, agencies noted that reciprocity remained the greatest challenge they faced when considering modifying staff rules in this manner. Unless all agencies complied, it would be difficult for any agency to open up their recruitment in this way.

Mr. Chairman,

I use these examples to illustrate the range of responses that agencies provided to the recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit. I would like to reiterate however, that by and large, agencies generally supported the report and its recommendations.

In closing, I would like to register the appreciation expressed by the United Nations system to the Joint Inspection Unit for this report, which of course covers a topic of great interest to CEB members given it involves one of the most important asset of the United Nations system, that of its staff. Organizations of the United Nations system found much value in the report and welcomed its comprehensive nature. The CEB is committed to continue working with the Joint Inspection Unit and to support you, Mr. Chairman, the Bureau, and the Committee in taking this work forward. I stand ready answer any questions you or the Committee may have.

Thank you.