

Agenda Item 129: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

8 March 2013

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Department of Management**

Introductory Statement to the Fifth Committee

**Second progress report on the accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat:
Report of the Secretary-General (A/67/714)**

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

It is a pleasure for me to introduce the Secretary-General's Second Progress Report on Accountability. Accountability is such a broad topic with so many component parts. This time we have reported progress made over the past year and focused on the specific requests of the General Assembly in resolution 66/257; Enterprise Risk Management and the conceptual framework of Result-based Management.

Promoting a culture of accountability

The Secretary-General believes in the need to emphasize the culture of accountability first of all at the most senior levels. This is of crucial importance to embed such a culture as a core value throughout the Secretariat. Therefore, ethics and integrity now feature prominently in the induction programme for senior leaders.

Another initiative being launched this year is the Leadership Dialogues programme to promote a culture of accountability at all levels of the Organization. The Secretary-General has required all managers to engage in this dialogue with their staff about the meaning of international civil service. Staff in all locations will participate in a discussion about specific ethics and integrity issues led by their direct manager.

Oversight body recommendations

Another area where we are continually making progress is dialogue with the oversight bodies and implementation of their recommendations. The Management Committee, a high level committee established to strengthen executive management, holds quarterly meetings on oversight issues and invites a different oversight body to participate in each of these meetings. The USG/OIOS participates, as an observer, in these meetings.

In addition to the Management Committee meetings, I meet regularly with the oversight bodies and discuss in detail their findings, recommendations and their implementation.

As noted in the report, the increased attention to oversight issues and monitoring of recommendations has resulted in a positive trend in the implementation of recommendations.

Personal accountability and performance appraisal

What we need to strengthen in the United Nations is personal accountability, in parallel with institutional accountability. In terms of personal accountability among senior leaders, the 2013 senior managers' compacts with the Secretary-General have been strengthened. They have been made more strategic through better alignment to management priorities and key transformational reform initiatives, such as Umoja and IPSAS. They also take into account the lessons learned from Storm Sandy on organizational resilience management. The compact clarifies priority objectives this year and specifically what is required of each senior manager in terms of the implementation of key initiatives.

Within the framework of the compact of the heads of department and office, Assistant Secretaries-General in turn sign their compacts with their supervisors. We have also been working to develop work programmes for staff below the level of Assistant Secretary-General in line with senior managers' compacts, and strengthen the performance appraisal system of all staff.

To support the roll-out of the new Performance Management and Development System, the Secretary-General introduced a mandatory Learning Programme for Managers and Supervisors, which has been rolled out globally. As of November 2012, over 50 per cent of managers had been trained.

Preventing potential conflicts of interest

The Secretariat regularly reviews the established mechanisms designed to prevent, identify and manage personal conflicts of interests to ensure that they respond to the contemporary needs.

One such review is currently being conducted of the framework for the financial disclosure programme with a view to making the programme more risk sensitive.

Another initiative is the establishment by the Ethics Office of a new advice category related to "Procurement ethics".

Strengthening accountability in the field missions

One of the major management challenges is accountability of staff in the field, given its number and complexity. We have been working to strengthen accountability in the field missions as a priority. Since 2012, the missions have introduced letters of representation as an internal control measure and management accountability tool and a new Integrated Conduct and Discipline Framework has been implemented.

Enterprise risk management

The first area of focus this year is enterprise risk management and internal control across the Secretariat. We continue to make progress in a gradual manner despite resource constraints.

Pilot projects were carried out in many offices with high risk potential in the Secretariat. Most recently, my office developed an e-learning programme to enhance the

understanding of basic risk management concepts across the Secretariat. This training programme will be available to all staff. We will continue working on individual risk assessments with other offices.

In November 2012, in response to the General Assembly's "concern over the lack of detailed analysis with regard to the key risk areas" of the Organization, the Management Committee, which serves as ERM Committee for the Organization, requested the office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management to conduct a *Secretariat-wide Enterprise Risk Assessment*. This exercise will be launched this spring and will identify the top strategic risks and related managerial responses to be monitored by the Management Committee.

The results of the assessment will provide the basis for the development of a *Risk and Internal Control Framework*, which will outline the internal control system that provides guidance to managers.

The schedule and parties responsible for conducting the Secretariat-wide risk assessment, the development of an internal control framework and the launch of a communications strategy are contained in the report. [Figure 1]

Conceptual framework for results-based management

Another priority is the request of the General Assembly to propose a conceptual framework for results-based management (RBM). The General Assembly also requested to assign a senior official responsible for the implementation of RBM.

The Secretary-General presented a conceptual framework for your consideration and assigned me as a senior official responsible for the implementation of RBM. We proposed an integrated approach that includes all the elements of results-based budgeting (i.e., programme planning, budgeting, monitoring, reporting and evaluation), and human resources dimension along with a "lessons learned" element. [Figure II]

It is important to add the human resources dimension to the process, that is, the senior managers' compacts and the Performance Management and Development System — as well as the role of the Management Performance Board (MPB) — thereby linking personal and institutional objectives and building a bridge between the financial and human resources strategy of the Organization.

The key policies, standards and toolboxes of the concept of RBM in the Secretariat already exist independently from one another. But what we need now is to ensure that each toolbox functions better in an integrated and coordinated manner and to embed RBM throughout the Organization.

To this end we are establishing a governance structure for RBM that sets clear lines of responsibility and accountability for every senior manager that intervenes in this process and which is described in detail in the report. [Figure III]

The Secretary-General emphasized that strengthening an accountability system in an organization as complex as the United Nations is a daunting task and a continuous process..." (A/64/640). We fully recognize the importance of developing a clearly defined plan of action

with specific, practical steps to improve accountability, as recommended by the Advisory Committee.

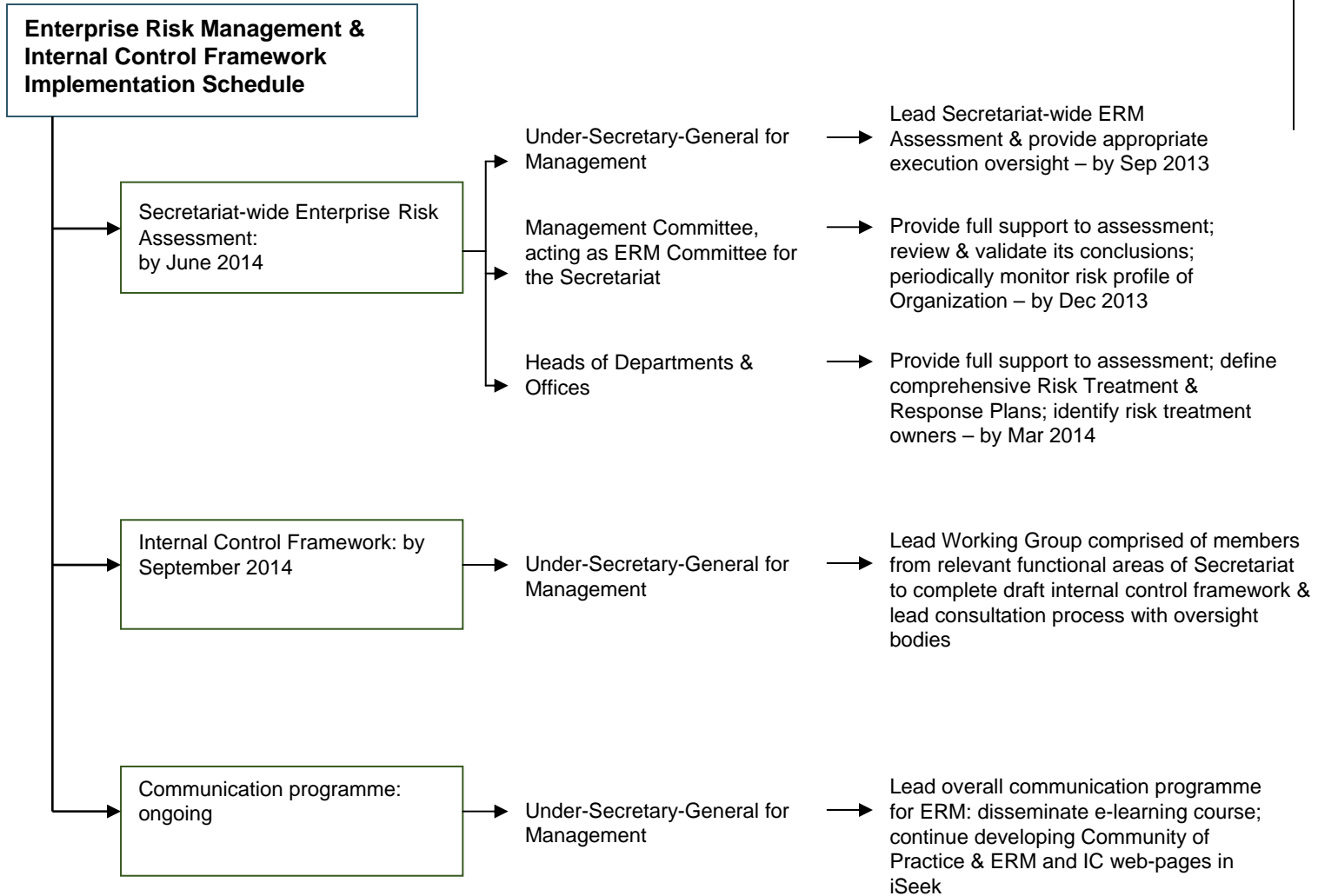
For the Secretariat to develop such a detailed action plan, it is essential to establish first an agreed framework of the RBM to guide the Organization's work in this area. Thereafter, it is our intention to mobilize all process owners through the Result-based Management Task Force for identifying specific, practical measures within the agreed framework to improve functioning of every toolbox for Results-based Management, and to develop an integrated action plan.

I therefore hope the General Assembly will approve the proposed conceptual framework for RBM, which will not only allow the Organization to become more results-oriented but will also provide a basis for the design blueprint and baseline configuration for Umoja Extension.

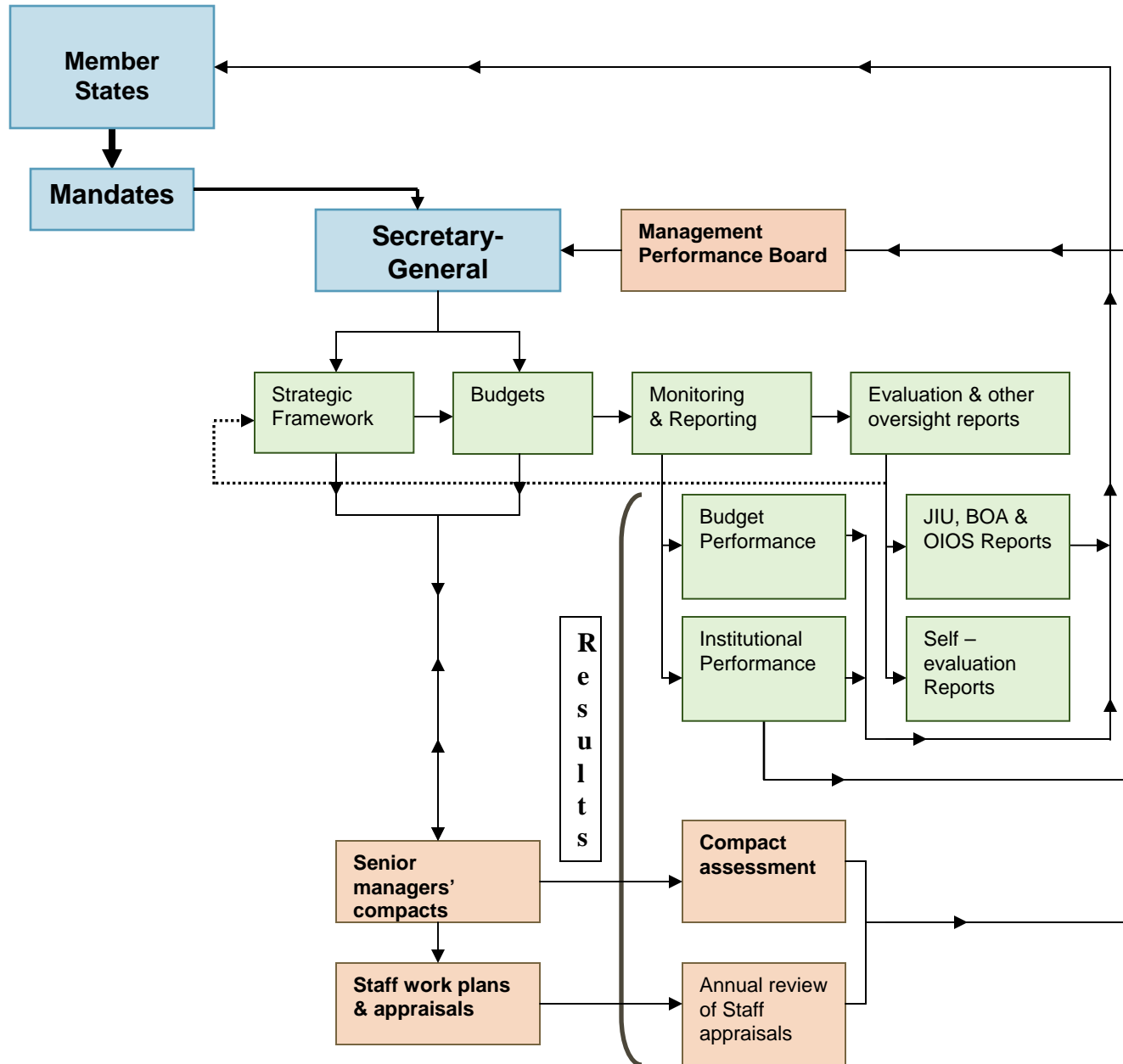
The Secretariat is prepared to meet these challenges by working together with all its stakeholders in a process of continuous improvement to make a more transparent and accountable Organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

ERM: Implementation Schedule



Conceptual Framework for RBM (Integrating the HR component)





A Governance Structure for Embedding RBM – Project & Process-owners

