JOINT INSPECTION UNIT
of the United Nations System

CORPS COMMUN d´INSPECTION
du Système des Nations Unies

INTRODUCTORY NOTE
BY THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

"INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) GOVERNANCE
IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM ORGANIZATIONS"
JIU/REP/2011/9

For consideration by the first resumed part of the sixty-seventh Session of the Fifth Committee
of the United Nations General Assembly
4 March 2013

1. As part of its programme of work for 2011, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) conducted a review of "Information and communication technology (ICT) governance in the United Nations system organizations" and issued a report (JIU/REP/2011/9) in this context, which was transmitted to the General Assembly by the note of the Secretary-General A/67/119 dated 2 July 2012.

2. The said report was prepared by Inspectors Yishan Zhang (Coordinator) and Nikolay Chulkov (Co-author).

3. The objective of the report was to conduct a comparative analysis of the different ICT governance frameworks, practices and processes in the various United Nations system organizations, with a view to identifying best practices and lessons learned and thereby promote effective ICT governance.

4. The key aspects considered in the report included the ICT governance structures in place; implementation of the organization's ICT strategy; strategic alignment of ICT with the organization's business objectives and mandate; ICT resource management, decision-making process and investment; ICT performance and risk management, including ICT security and business continuity/disaster recovery. In addition to ICT governance within the organizations, the review also examined ICT governance at the United Nations system-wide level, notably coordination and cooperation among the United Nations system organizations, for instance, through the ICT Network (ICTN) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and its High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM).

5. Based on findings identified by the Inspectors, the present report contains 11 recommendations, one of which is addressed to the legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations, nine to their executive heads and one to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his capacity as Chairman of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

6. The report's 11 recommendations seek to strengthen the ICT governance frameworks of the United Nations system organizations regarding the role, composition and effectiveness of the organizations' ICT governance committee or equivalent; the organizations' ICT strategy including its implementation and alignment with the organization's business needs; the role and responsibilities of the Chief Information Officer or equivalent position; ICT risk management; ICT performance and oversight; and ICT investments. Finally, the report recommends to further enhancing coordination and cooperation among United Nations system organizations in the area of ICT under the guidance of CEB.

7. The Secretary-General issued also note A/67/119/Add.1 by which he transmitted to the General

Assembly his comments and those of the CEB regarding the present JIU report noting that the "organizations of the United Nations system largely support the analysis and conclusions of the report and note that it provides useful benchmarking information and advocates a "best practice" approach to ICT governance. Most organizations are pleased to note that the majority of the recommendations contained in the report are already implemented and plans are under way to ensure the implementation of the other relevant recommendations of the report. Agencies further expressed their appreciation for the high degree of collaboration that took place between the Joint Inspection Unit and the heads of ICT at the participating organizations, noting that the Unit participated in two meetings of the Information and Communications Technology Network of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) High-level Committee on Management."

8. In concluding, the Inspectors wish to make reference to General Assembly resolution 64/262 stating in paragraph 11 "[The General Assembly] reiterates its invitation to the legislative organs of the participating organizations to fully consider and take concrete action on the relevant recommendations issued by the Unit."