

Statement of the Vice Chairman

Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

9 March 2015

United Nations procurement activities

(ACABQ report A/69/809, related report A/69/710)

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report on United Nations procurement activities (A/69/809).

Mr Chairman,

The Advisory Committee notes the opportunity presented by Umoja to integrate interrelated business processes and to eliminate duplication, and looks forward to receiving information on the impact of Umoja on procurement in future reports to the General Assembly. As for information and communications technology procurement, particularly in peacekeeping, the Advisory Committee considers that more needs to be done to address the weaknesses pointed out by the Board of Auditors in this area.

The Advisory Committee acknowledges the progress made with regard to the transition in solicitation methodology for the procurement of air charter services, from bidding to requests for proposal (RFP). In this regard, the Committee is pleased with the preliminary outcome of the pilot RFP for MONUSCO, which was issued in 2014, and notes that it attracted a significantly higher number of vendors from a wide geographical area. The Committee expects that the process of solicitation and contract award under the RFP methodology will be competitive, fair, transparent and timely.

Coming to the Regional Procurement Office in Entebbe, the Advisory Committee welcomes the benefits so far realised by this pilot project in terms of administrative cost savings, economies of scale, staff training and increased outreach to vendors within the region. However, the Committee is concerned about the low utilization rate of the regional systems contracts administered by the Office.

Mr Chairman,

The Advisory Committee takes note of the Secretary-General's preliminary proposal to introduce the concept of environmentally friendly and sustainable procurement but cautions that the concept has not been considered for approval by the General Assembly. The Committee believes that more work needs to be done to refine the understanding of this concept and how it applies to the United Nations in practical terms.

The Advisory Committee notes that the Board of Auditors has often cited cases of non-compliance with established rules and guidelines in procurement practice, resulting in the inefficient use and wastage of resources. The Committee also notes, however, that there has been no indication of individual accountability being assigned in these cases.

Finally, the Advisory Committee would have wished to see proposals which may require the attention of the General Assembly presented with more clarity and prominence in the Secretary-General's report in order to facilitate their consideration by the General Assembly.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.