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Agenda item 131

**Financial reports and audited financial statements,
and reports of the Board of Auditors**

FIFTH COMMITTEE

**Report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the
recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report on
progress in the handling of information and communications technology
affairs in the Secretariat (A/70/607)**

Statement by

**Ms. Atefeh Riazi, Assistant Secretary-General and
Chief Information and Communication Technology Officer
Office of Information and Communications Technology
Department of Management**

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report on progress in the handling of information and communications technology affairs in the Secretariat (A/70/607), which is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/216 B of 23 December 1993.

This report provides information in response to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report on progress in the handling of information and communications technology (ICT) affairs in the Secretariat

(A/70/581), which is an update on the previous report of the Board of Auditors on this subject (A/67/651).

The Administration has accepted all the recommendations of the Board of Auditors (one of them partially). The reasons for this partial acceptance are stated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/70/607). Member States shall be aware that the audit was undertaken approximately 8 months into the implementation of a 60 month strategy and prior to the consideration of the budget proposal by the General Assembly. At that stage the implementation of the ICT Strategy was in its formative stages, however much progress has been made since.

An issue that was exposed by the report of the Board of Auditors as well as during the assessment that was done to inform the ICT Strategy was related to the lack of transparency and the management of ICT resources. With the budget structures and fragmentation of ICT, the ability to manage resource utilisation within the ICT framework has been challenging. However, the measures that are being undertaken to strengthen governance, the implementation of Delegation of Authority and the Umoja system will allow visibility and associated decision-making to be substantially improved in this area.

The Board of Auditors also noted that the elements of the Enterprise Delivery Framework such as the Enterprise Data Centres, Enterprise Application Centres, Regional Technology Centres, etc. have not been fully implemented. I am pleased to report that while the Board of Auditors were undertaking their assessment some of these ICT structures were not in place, they are now implemented and operating. The continuing consolidation of ICT resources and programmes into the Enterprise Delivery Framework (paragraph 9 of Section II of resolution 69/262 and paragraph 10 of Section V of A/70/248) has now become a priority.

We accept issues related to the absence of Department of Field Support data and recognise that that perspective was echoed by the ACABQ and Fifth Committee in considering the ICT Strategy progress report. In this regard, it is expected that a full Secretariat-wide assessment of ICT will be presented at the 71st session now that Department of Field Support has provided its renewed commitment with the implementation of the strategy.

The tension between operational freedom and central control was highlighted in the previous report of the Board of Auditors (A/69/651) and these issues were again highlighted by the Board of Auditors in the context of Information Security. These observations are valid, however, the clear authority given to the Chief Information Technology Officer in paragraph 12 of Section II of Resolution 69/262 is now being implemented and OICT is working to institute tighter, consistent, organisation wide measures to address information security.

It is essential that the measures aimed at strengthening governance, clarifying accountability and overcoming fragmentation and duplication are implemented across the global Secretariat, including field missions. The specific instances identified by the Board of Auditors where fragmentation continues are being addressed through consultation and institutional means rather than addressing individual issues.

Please permit me, Mr. Chairman, to express on behalf of the Secretary-General his sincere appreciation to the Board of Auditors for the constructive spirit in which it discharges its oversight function. In the case of the Information and Communications Technology Strategy the contributions of the Board to the Secretariat have been extremely valuable and we are grateful for this.

We remain confident that our own commitment to the timely and thorough implementation of the Board's recommendations will contribute to the improved management of resources and the improved efficiency of the United Nations, especially in this important area of information and communications technology.

Finally, I would like take this opportunity to express my appreciation to my colleagues in the Secretariat who have worked very hard and in a spirit of strong collaboration with the Board. We will be available during the informal consultations sessions to respond to the questions the distinguished Delegates of the Committee might have regarding the report of the Secretary-General.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.