

Statement of the Chairman

Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

8 March 2016

Fifth progress report on the accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat

(ACABQ report A/70/7/770; related report: A/70/668)

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report on the fifth progress report on the accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat (A/70/770).

In past years, the Advisory Committee has commented extensively on each of the different aspects of the accountability framework and addressed a wide range of specific operational matters and initiatives. However, this year, the Committee acknowledges that the Secretariat has made progress in establishing structures and systems for a viable accountability framework and recommends that additional practical measures should be introduced to ensure an improved institutional and personal accountability in the future.

In its report before you, the Committee addresses the accountability framework's four underlying concepts, namely: monitoring and oversight mechanisms; measuring organizational activities and processes; evaluating outcomes; and lastly, operationalizing and enforcing a credible personal and institutional accountability framework.

Mr. Chairman,

An accountability framework must include proper guidance for the prevention, identification and handling of fraud and corruption, as well as prescribed parameters to identify possible operational irregularities which, if necessary, will trigger appropriate corrective action. It must also include a clearly-defined policy for the protection of whistle-blowers. The Advisory Committee requests that the Secretary-General provide a status update on the development of the anti-fraud framework, which is currently under development, to the General Assembly at the time of consideration of the present report.

I would like to emphasize that an effective system of accountability also rests on the full and timely implementation of the recommendations of external and internal oversight bodies and of the resolutions of the General Assembly. Its effectiveness also rests on the proper measurement of the Organization's efficiency and effectiveness, based on clear and realistic indicators, with a view to presenting a comprehensive picture to help in the management and stewardship of the Organization.

Lastly, I would like to stress that the Advisory Committee is of the view that the credibility of the accountability framework rests on the Organization's ability to operationalize and enforce remedial measures for staff and officials who have not adequately exercised their responsibilities. As further work is needed in this respect, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to develop a clear, transparent and precise set of parameters, aimed at defining responsibility areas, particularly for senior managers, for non-compliance in these responsibility areas.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.