



JOINT INSPECTION UNIT
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Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to introduce today the Report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) entitled “Capital/refurbishment/construction projects across the United Nations system organizations” (JIU/REP/2014/3), contained in document A/70/368.

The Unit welcomes the note of the Secretary-General reflecting his comments and those of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) on the recommendations provided in our report (A/70/368/Add.1). We also welcome the recent report of the Secretary-General on the “Strategic Capital Review” (A/70/697).

The JIU review focuses on major capital/refurbishment/construction projects undertaken by United Nations system organizations, and presents good practices and key lessons learned from them, by each phase of the project cycle. The Unit is convinced that the identified good practices are applicable to all refurbishment and construction projects, irrespective of their location, scale and type. Therefore, they should be followed by all the organizations across the system.

The report notes the weakness of the United Nations system as a whole in sharing and disseminating best practices and lessons learned regarding refurbishment and construction. The review concluded that, as a first step in this direction, until a proper coordination body is established for this purpose, the secretariats of the United Nations organizations should recognize and adequately support the existing inter-agency network of facilities managers; it further recommended that a working group on facilities management be established in the context of the CEB High-Level Committee on Management. The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to report in the future to this honourable body on the efforts made in this regard.

Moreover, during the JIU review, on the basis of the case studies and the interviews conducted, it was noted that underperformance issues relating to contracted companies and individuals had been disregarded and had not been brought to the attention of legislative/governing bodies in time by some organizations, due to the lack of adequate periodic reporting mechanisms.

The report further advises each organization to take into account its overall global needs for construction and refurbishment of buildings (including their systems), so that all organizations plan and prioritize projects accordingly, prior to undertaking a new one. The Inspectors found that, to date, only a few organizations have introduced such a global needs' forecast and planning, as the projects reviewed had been planned individually and not as a part of a global strategy.

The review noted that all the United Nations system organizations had integrated environmental considerations and features into their refurbishment/construction projects in order to improve energy efficiency and obtain environmental benefits. However, it was found that there is a lack of coherence in applying environmental policies across the system.

I do understand that every capital/refurbishment/construction project is different and faces unique challenges. Nevertheless, I believe that the endorsement of the recommendations contained in the report will greatly facilitate the undertaking of all such projects across the system, ensuring the achievement of their overall goals and cost efficiency.

I look forward to your comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman