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Statement by Cherith Norman Chalet, Minister-Counselor
on
Agenda Item 134:
Information and Communications Technology
Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly
Tuesday 17 November 2015

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My delegation would like to thank Ms. Atefeh Riazi and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu for introducing the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee, respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

The UN is a multi-faceted organization where information communication technology (ICT) is essential to all of the complex work it does – from enabling a doctor to brief the Security Council from Liberia in the midst of the Ebola crisis, to allowing Force Commanders in remote locations such as northern Mali to communicate with headquarters. Having an integrated strategy that meets the diverse needs of the organization in an efficient and effective way is imperative. Last fall, Member States supported the Secretary General's comprehensive ICT strategy to make IT use more secure, efficient and harmonized across the Organization, and to enable related change initiatives like Umoja and the Global Service Delivery Model that will allow for more effective mandate delivery.

Recognizing the challenge of accommodating the distinct needs of various parts of the UN and their different ways of operating, the General Assembly requested the Secretary General to provide an update on the implementation of the strategy this fall, and a look ahead to the expected achievements of the strategy in the years to come.

Mr. Chairman, the update before us indicates that a comprehensive ICT strategy that incorporates the entire organization is yet to be realized. Every change initiative presents challenges as new ways of working are required. Strong leadership is necessary to break down silos and create a new framework with clear roles, responsibilities and accountability. We must ensure that the strategy properly supports the various parts of the Organization in fulfilling mandates while cultivating proper oversight, coherence, and accountability. We note the conclusion of the Advisory Committee that the prerequisites for success are not in place one full year after the strategy was approved and, if nothing changes, the strategy will not succeed. We cannot accept this outcome – both because IT is so essential to the effectiveness of the organization and because it accounts for such a significant share of spending. We call on the

Secretary-General, and senior leadership across the Secretariat, to take the necessary actions to ensure the success of the strategy as a matter of priority.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.