

*** CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY ***

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

Agenda item 134

Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

FIFTH COMMITTEE

Global Service Delivery Model for the United Nations Secretariat (A/71/417)

Statement by
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13 December 2016

Madam Chairperson,

Distinguished delegates,

The report of the Secretary-General on the Global Service Delivery Model for the United Nations Secretariat, A/71/417 dated 30 September 2016, has been submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/248.

The Secretariat has been implementing management reform initiatives in the last few years to make a modern, efficient and integrated global organization. Umoja has standardized and automated business processes across the Secretariat in a single system. It is now being stabilized as a mature system for managing financial, human resources and common services.

However, the administrative support structure is lagging behind the modern global organization. Administrative services across the Secretariat are highly fragmented, delivery is inconsistent and efficiency could be improved.

GSDM provides the opportunity to simplify and consolidate the fragmented administrative service structures of the Secretariat. It is up to program managers to decide who needs to be hired, travel, what needs to be purchased. Decision-making will continue to be decentralized. What GSDM aims at is to empower program managers to better manage their program and the related resources. By consolidating the administrative, transactional processing required to implement those decisions more efficiently through shared services centers, program managers will be better equipped to focus on managing their program and carrying out their mandates.

GSDM is a corporate reform initiative. The Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Mr. Khare, and I have worked closely together on the development of a single Secretariat model that will deliver high-quality, timely and standardized administrative services across the global Secretariat, including peacekeeping and other field-oriented entities.

The GSDM is based on the framework report last year and its development has benefitted from the direction set by the General Assembly, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, and the recommendations of oversight bodies. We have taken into account the experience and lessons learned from the shared services within the Secretariat such as UNOG and RSCE and the United Nations system and similar initiatives in the public sector.

Targeting operating model

We examined whether processes can be provided from a single location for the entire Secretariat. Given the broad nature of the work of the Organization and the need to ensure that functions could continue to be carried out in the event that one location was temporarily unable to operate, a minimum of two locations with capacity to operate critical functions is necessary for business continuity.

In order to reach the end-state locations, a phased approach is being proposed. A transition phase of initial consolidation is proposed in 2018-2019 (Phase 1) in order to achieve the end-state two locations in 2020-2021 (Phase 2). The phased approach will provide valuable lessons and the opportunity to refine the end-state design based on those lessons.

Initial consolidation

The Secretary-General proposes initial consolidation in 2018-2019 of human resources administration, payroll and accounts payable into six duty stations of main administrative service providers, in order to leverage existing capacity in different regions as a transition phase. The six duty stations; Bangkok, Entebbe, Geneva, Nairobi, New York and Vienna already have experience in providing certain remote shared services and the proposed changes in 2018-2019 represent an important transition phase that will help better prepare staff for the implementation of global shared services in 2020-2021.

To meet client needs better is the overriding guideline of GSDM. The client support desks at the service centres and major duty stations will serve as a single point of entry for clients and effectively act as a gateway between those providing services and the clients.

The current arrangements for field missions include a range of service delivery models, resulting in different processes used across different missions and associated inconsistent service delivery. Leveraging existing shared services arrangements would foster standardization to improve service delivery, while also realizing economies of scale through further consolidation of administrative support services at the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe. Having the consolidated location in a more secure and stable environment helps to provide continuous, uninterrupted support provision and reduces the number of personnel working in high risk environments.

In 2018-2019, Phase 1 will entail an incremental transfer of the administrative support services within missions to the RSCE. In line with the Secretariat-wide approach, missions in the Americas region will be serviced out of the shared services center in New York.

In New York alone, administrative services are provided by DM offices, 11 executive offices and other administrative units within departments and offices. Such fragmentation has resulted in duplication and inefficiency, inconsistent service delivery, and a less than optimal client experience.

In 2018-2019, a shared services center in New York will be organized into service lines representing end-to-end administrative processes, and will include functions such as human resources administration and payroll, accounts payable, travel, travel claims and ticket payment processing. Every requirement of staff will be addressed through a single point of entry. In view of the level of fragmentation, this initial consolidation is an essential preparation for the global consolidation planned in 2020-2021.

For 2020-2021, the Secretary-General proposes further consolidation of those services into two shared services centres. Consolidation in two shared services centres will deliver high quality, consistent services across the global organization. It will also achieve significant efficiency gains which will allow us to reprioritize work to high priority substantive activities.

Change management

As with many other major reform initiatives, the success of GSDM will depend on strong commitment of senior leadership, effective project management, change management and open communications. It is undeniable that many managers in the Secretariat would prefer to maintain the status quo, even if that means less than optimal service to staff, continued inefficiency and additional costs to Member States. We, as agents of change, have to guide those managers to put the Organization's interests first and have the courage to lead their departments into new ways of working.

Madam Chairperson,

We have reached a turning point. In order to implement GSDM and make the Organization more effective and efficient, we need the support of the Fifth Committee. In order to move to the next stage of GSDM, resources are being requested for the project management team. Without the dedicated project management team, the Secretariat will not be in a position to continue to develop the detailed organizational design and change management for GSDM.

In order to implement Phase 1 in 2018-2019, we request that you invite the Secretary-General to include detailed proposals in the respective budgets, which will provide the Fifth Committee the opportunity to consider the details of the proposals next year. Alignment with the budgetary cycles is crucial. Otherwise, the Secretariat will continue with business as usual and the opportunity will be missed. In our view, the prolonged continuation of redundant administrative structures, such as running payroll from 10 locations despite one global system

and the continuation of historical fragmentation of administrative support units in New York, and sending administrative support staff to insecure locations when there is an established shared services centre, can no longer be justified.

Shared services are already provided from UNOG and RSCE. In order to realize the benefits of GSDM which emanate from the global delivery of services, we need to expand further and move beyond what is already taking place. We know that the Organization can do better and we seek the Fifth Committee's continued support to allow us to move forward.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.