



Check Against Delivery

United Nations General Assembly Seventy-first Session

Fifth Committee

Introduction of the Note of the Secretary-General on the Report of the Joint Inspection Unit
“Succession planning in the United Nations system organizations”

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

I am pleased to introduce, on behalf of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the note of the Secretary-General conveying his comments and those of CEB members on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit “Succession planning in the United Nations system organizations” found in document A/71/393/Add.1.

Organizations of the UN system agree that succession planning is an important component of organizational management and therefore welcome this report, which they found informative and useful, and which offers a valuable analysis of this important administrative function. They particularly appreciate the comprehensive nature of the report, which illuminates the current strategies, policies and practices in place across the UN system.

As you can see from the Note of the Secretary-General, organizations support the findings in the report, although not without some additional comment. Some organizations note that existing rules and regulations may inhibit fully applying the approaches to succession planning that the report presents, as they may require consultations with governing bodies. Organizations also emphasize that during times of significant organizational change, such as during strategic alignments or changes to organizational prioritization, fully implementing succession planning as presented in the report may prove challenging.

Madam Chair, although organizations generally support the recommendations they also provided comments intended to clarify their position. For example, organizations expressed support for recommendation 2, which calls for the development and implementation of frameworks and strategies for succession planning. But they also note that this work will almost certainly require resources, especially when coupled with a very ambitious timeframe, and suggested that there are informal activities that can further the objective of the recommendation while they determine the extent of any needed frameworks and strategies. Resource requirements also featured in comments on recommendation 3. Organizations support the benchmarks in the report, and recognize their value, but some organizations felt that further analysis would be necessary to better understand the resource implications before moving forward.

These comments notwithstanding, on behalf of the organizations of the UN system, I would like to thank the JIU for this report, which covered a topic of interest to CEB members and importance to the entire UN system.

Of course, I stand ready to answer any questions you or the committee may have.

Thank you