



**United Nations General Assembly Seventy-third Session
Fifth Committee**

**Introduction of the Note of the Secretary-General
on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled:
“Review of whistle-blower policies and practices in United Nations system organizations”**

Madam Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

It is my pleasure today 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 entitled “Review of whistle-blower policies and practices in United Nations system organizations” as contained in A/73/665/Add.1

Organizations of the United Nations system welcomed the report of the Joint Inspection Unit and its findings and commended the richness of its information and the usefulness of its data. Organizations further noted that the report offered a number of useful recommendations.

Organizations found the good practices and approaches identified in the report valuable, while noting that specific tailoring would be required to meet the characteristics and needs of individual organisations, as they recognized that the United Nations, as a whole, has a differentiated system of addressing wrongdoing.

Organizations observed that a deeper analysis on the root causes of the challenges involved in ensuring whistle-blower protection within the United Nations system would have enriched the

review, noting that such challenges are closely linked to issues of policy harmonization and implementation, both across and within organizations.

Organizations further observed that their respective institutional and governance structures could have been accorded greater prominence to better describe which legal and internal administrative tools are available to guarantee justice for staff members or other complainants.

Small organizations, in particular those that do not currently have an ethics officer or ombudsman, find the implementation of the proposed recommendations challenging in terms of both timeline and resource implications, when those implications are not budgeted.

Organizations welcomed most of the recommendations contained in the review, while linking their implementation to possible inclusion in future budget cycles.

I would like to convey to the distinguished delegates that on 25 January the CEB Secretary received a letter from the JIU Secretariat on behalf of the JIU inspectors who authored the report "requesting that the CEB correct and clarify" certain paragraphs in the Note which the inspectors deemed to "contain factual errors that could have a detrimental impact on: a) the credibility of the report and the JIU; and b) the protection of key informants who participated in the review with guarantees of full confidentiality". In a spirit of collegiality, the secretary of the CEB held a detailed telephone consultation with the Inspector in order to discuss and agree on the process of handling these concerns within the established working methods. As a result, and with the agreement of the JIU Inspector, the JIU letter was circulated by the CEB secretariat to all member organizations with a specific request to carefully consider the concerns raised and to address them if deemed necessary.

Within the two-week timeframe provided for a response, the CEB secretariat received no request from any member organization to revise the Secretary-General's Note, with the exception of alerting us to the misplacement of paragraph 33, currently under recommendation 8, which belongs under recommendation 7 (between para 29 and 30). This misplacement was contained in the original submission of inputs and not captured during the final review process.

On 28 February 2019, the CEB secretary conveyed the results of this consultation to the inspectors through a letter to the JIU secretariat and, therefore, the content of the Note remained unchanged.

Thank you for your attention.