



PHILIPPINES

**Statement Delivered by
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Permanent Mission of the Philippines
to the United Nations**

**During the Main Part of the Seventy-Fourth Session of the
Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, 11 October 2019, 10 am**

**Item 138. Report on the Activities of the Office of the Internal Oversight Services
(OIOS) for the Period of 1 July 2018- 30 June 2019**

**Item 137. Report on the Activities of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee
(IAAC) for the Period 1 August 2018 – 31 July 2019**

The Philippine delegation would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Mavroyiannis¹, on your election as Chair of the Fifth Committee for the 74th session of the UNGA.

The Philippines aligns itself with the Statement of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Ms. Heidi Mendoza, for her presentation specifically on the recommendations to improve internal controls, accountability and efficiency in the organization. My delegation also notes the report on *Strengthening the role of evaluation and the application of evaluation findings on programme design, delivery and policy directives*.

¹ Ambassador Andreas Mavroyiannis is the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations.

We would also like to thank Ms. Patricia Arriagada Villouta, Chairman of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC), for the Committee's presentation and for its report on the proposed programme budget of the OIOS for 2020.

The Philippines recognizes the important role of the OIOS in strengthening the internal oversight in the Organization through internal audit, inspection and evaluation and investigations. We welcome the progress in the implementation of its initiatives to enhance the functioning of the Office and promote cooperation and coordination with relevant UN entities. We underscore the importance of organizational independence of evaluation functions reflective of the Office's ability to perform its tasks based on sound decision-making and with less interference.

Of the 1,177 recommendations to improve internal controls, accountability mechanisms, and organizational efficiency and effectiveness, we observe that 48 were classified as critical to the Organization, and that the implementation of these critical recommendations is overdue. The financial implications of these recommendations, amounting to approx. \$5.3 M, were presented in the addendum to the present report, including items related to peacekeeping activities. We support the recommendations aimed at cost savings and payment recoveries. To date, \$0.9 M have been realized. At this session, my delegation hopes to hear from the Secretariat an update on those critical recommendations pending implementation.

On OIOS' report on *Strengthening the role of evaluation and the application of evaluation findings on programme design, delivery and policy directives*, we note the Office's observation on certain weaknesses in evaluation function and practice as well as in evaluation reports, which have fallen below system-wide standards. These weaknesses or gaps have an impact on the ability of certain UN entities to achieve organizational standards. In view of this, my delegation continues to call for sustained commitment by the Secretariat to strengthen the culture of accountability and evaluation. The Philippines welcomes the initiative of the Secretary General through the establishment of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC), in particular its Evaluation Section, which presents an opportunity to address common challenges to help close these gaps.

The Philippines looks forward to participating in the discussion on the recommendations to strengthen evaluation, and looks forward to hearing other possible measures, which would be useful to address critical areas for strengthening evaluation.

The Philippines would also like to acknowledge the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC) on its activities and reiterates its appreciation for the Committee and its expert advice and recommendations that contribute to the fulfilment of the Office's oversight responsibilities.

The Philippines notes the IAAC's report, indicating that the projected resources for OIOS for 2020 from the regular budget is \$61,551,600, compared with 61,085,100 for 2019, which is a slight increase of 0.8 per cent. My delegation hopes to hear more about the breakdown of the projected resources to ascertain which particular divisions of the Office would need more support and enhancements.

Finally, my delegation commends the good cooperation among OIOS, IAAC and other oversight entities, including the Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit, to reduce duplication of oversight work, without prejudice to the independence of each. We encourage these Offices to continue to work closely with each other and relevant entities to carry out their responsibilities in a timely manner and ensure accountability and efficiency.

Mr. Chair, the Philippine delegation would also like to take this opportunity to extend its profound gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Heidi Mendoza for her dedication, her legacy, and her significant contribution to improve the Office and its functions since her assumption. We congratulate her on her accomplishments and wish her the best, as she leaves her post effective this October.

In closing, my delegation renews the support of the Philippines for the important work of the Fifth Committee, as we commence our session inspired by an ambition to further enhance the organizational efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations.