



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

Ms. Katarina SALAJ

Political Attaché

Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

Item 139. Review of efficiency – Accountability

75th Session of the General Assembly

Fifth Committee

First Resumed Session

15 March 2021

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Monaco and Andorra align themselves with this statement.

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to thank Ms. Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, as well as Mr. Conrod Hunte, Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for their presence and for presenting the reports on this agenda item.

The Member States of the European Union reiterate our strong support to ensuring that the UN has a robust accountability framework, one that matches the highest level of transparency and contributes towards the strengthening of a culture of results. An effective accountability system is at the heart of the Secretary-General's commitments to shift the management paradigm. It is aimed at ensuring better execution of programmes and delivery of mandates, through stronger support structures and smarter decentralization, together with a comprehensive shift in leadership and organizational culture.

Three years ago, the General Assembly endorsed the Secretary-General's vision for a new management paradigm. This paved the way towards a more robust and structured approach to accountability based on culture of change and strengthened leadership. Today, we commend the Secretary-General for all the achievements made so far in the implementation of his vision. The roll-out of the new delegation of authority framework successfully empowered managers across the Secretariat, eliminated unnecessary layers of bureaucracy, and allowed decisions to be made closer to the field. These changes proved critically needed in the global pandemic, which put the Organization through the test, and served as a proof of concept of the Secretary-General's vision and his ambition for a new management paradigm.

* *The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

Mr. Chair,

We wholeheartedly believe that the Organisation should uphold the highest standards of conduct, professionalism and accountability, and in this regard, welcome the Secretary-General's report on the measures implemented in order to strengthen, even further, the accountability system under the new management paradigm. We welcome progress made towards full operationalization of the Business Transformation and Accountability Division, a key structure for a sound accountability framework. The Division certainly contributes to an increased focus on performance, results and smart management, which are fundamental to ensuring a greater impact in the field and an effective implementation of mandates.

The Member States of the European Union continue to emphasize the need for a cultural shift within the Organization. Ensuring that the UN staff maintain the highest standards of conduct and uphold the Organization's core principles remains our priority. We welcome the Secretary-General's commitment to prevent and address any type of misconduct, especially sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, and call for continued engagement in this area. UN staff should feel safe to report any wrongdoings and be protected against retaliation when they do so.

We also welcome the different recommendations and reports made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit in the field of oversight and accountability. This session we will pay particular attention to the recommendations contained in the JIU report on Enterprise Risk Management. Effective and integrated ERM practices are crucial for more proactive and better-informed decision-making as well as good governance, which contributes to the successful achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Lastly, we look forward to the result of the ongoing review of the accountability system, which is conducted by the OIOS and the JIU at this very moment. We are confident that the outcomes will provide useful guidance on how to achieve a system that is even more relevant, efficient and effective.

Mr. Chair,

The Member States of the European Union look forward to engaging on this important agenda item with all members of the Fifth Committee in a spirit of constructive cooperation, consensus and collegiality.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.