

Agenda Item 139: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

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Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance**

Secretary-General's tenth progress report on accountability: strengthening accountability in the United Nations Secretariat (A/75/686)

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased to present the report of the Secretary-General entitled, “Tenth progress report on accountability: strengthening accountability in the United Nations Secretariat.”

As the new management paradigm is taking root in the Secretariat, efforts to further strengthen its accountability system are following a structured approach. In addition to adapting its management practices to the changes brought about in organizational structures, strategies and policies, the Secretariat is striving to ensure that focus is centered in results, rather than in activities and deliverables.

In addition, the Secretariat is undertaking efforts to leverage data as a strategic asset to improve organizational performance. Through relevant, real time data for measuring performance in key areas and augmented enterprise applications that enable monitoring and tracking, the Secretariat aims to achieve enhanced data-driven decision-making and increased transparency, which are critical for strengthening the culture of accountability.

As an example, the newly introduced integrated planning, management and reporting solution for managing projects end-to-end, which is part of Umoja Extension 2, enables clear linkages between resources and results frameworks. This supports the strategic requirement of reporting programmatic results along with the underlying resource data.

Decentralization of decision making embodied in the new system of delegation of authority is being well supported. Using advanced data analytics to provide visibility to all delegations from the Secretary-General and heads of entities to other officials within each entity, providing comprehensive feedback to entities on performance in the use of delegated authority, and introducing a training programme for staff with delegated responsibilities in supporting the resource stewardship are some of the steps taken. In 2020, this also included the monitoring of exceptions and discretionary decisions related to COVID-19 as per the special measures guidelines issued by the Secretariat.

To provide assurance to Member States that Secretariat-wide mandated activities are being implemented effectively and efficiently, that financial reporting is reliable and IPSAS-compliant, and that regulations, rules and procedures are in

adherence with the regulatory framework, the first annual statement of internal control for all entities is being prepared to be issued.

In this tenth progress report, the Secretary-General provides an update on the latest efforts made by the Secretariat to strengthen its accountability system.

Following the introduction in Section I of the report, section II provides an overview of progress made in the implementation of the accountability system of the Secretariat, which includes measures taken to enhance the culture of accountability in the Secretariat and to strengthen the Secretariat's accountability system under its six components. These include areas such as advancing the implementation of results-based management, strengthening the senior managers' compacts, reviewing the Organization's policy framework, and addressing conduct and discipline issues in terms of prevention, enforcement and remedial actions, among others.

Sections III and IV of the report contain conclusions and recommendations. In addition, the report includes four annexes:

- Annex I contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 74/271 on accountability.
- Annex II provides the status of implementation of resolutions on administrative and budgetary matters adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session;

- Annex III includes a summary of the progress in the implementation of results-based management; and
- Annex IV provides the cumulative rate of implementation of the recommendations of oversight bodies issued since 2010.

The Secretariat has made steady progress in implementing key initiatives that reinforce accountability as a central pillar of effective and efficient management. To continue the momentum, the Secretariat is fully committed to working with all stakeholders in a process of continuous improvement in 2021 and beyond.

The Secretariat looks forward to receiving your comments, contributions and decisions on this important subject.

Thank you very much.