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Report by the Secretary-General

SECRETARIAT'S COMMENTS TO THE JIU REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE ITU

Summary

The document presents the ITU secretariat's response and comments to the Recommendations provided by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the United Nations system.

Action required

The Council is invited to **take note** of the document, **consider** the JIU report and Recommendations, and **take action** thereon as it deems fit.

References

[PP Resolution 57 \(Kyoto, 1994\)](#)

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Res. 57 (Kyoto, 1994) on Joint Inspection Unit *instructs the Secretary-General* to continue to cooperate with the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the UN and to submit to the Council reports of the JIU having a bearing on the Union, together with comments he considers appropriate; and *instructs the Council* to consider the JIU reports submitted by the Secretary-General, and to take action thereon as it deems fit.

2. REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE ITU

2.1. The Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System included in its Programme of Work for 2015 a "Review of management and administration in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)". The scope of the review primarily focused on issues such as governance, executive management, organizational structure, strategic planning, financial management, human resources management, information and communication technology management and oversight mechanisms. Additional corporate functions identified as relevant have been added as appropriate.

2.2. The full JIU report "JIU/REP/2016/1: Review of management and administration in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)" can be found in [Document C16/49](#).

3. ITU SECRETARIAT'S RESPONSE TO THE JIU RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. The Secretary-General welcomes the comprehensive review conducted by the JIU. The report serves to contribute to the ongoing work of the Secretariat in further improving and streamlining its administrative and management processes, through its eleven (11) formal recommendations to the Secretary-General and a number of informal recommendations, which are "additional suggestions for reinforcing the management framework and related practices at ITU"¹. One formal recommendation is addressed to the Plenipotentiary Conference and the Council.

3.2. The ITU Secretary-General accepts the formal and informal recommendations made by the JIU and considers that they will contribute to the process of continuous improvement and to further strengthening of ITU's administrative and management processes. He expresses the commitment of the ITU secretariat to implement the recommendations within the timescales proposed. However full implementation of some recommendations might depend on available resources.

3.3. The Secretary-General will report to the 2017 Session of Council on the progress achieved.

3.4. The ITU Secretariat is developing an action plan to implement the JIU formal and informal recommendations, and some are already in the process of implementation. The following initial responses relate to each of the eleven formal recommendations of the JIU addressed to the secretariat.

Recommendation 1: The Secretary-General should review the framework of the management committees to ensure synergy and complementarity and avoid duplication in their mandates, notably by updating the existing, or creating new, terms of reference as necessary.

Secretariat's Response: The framework and the terms of reference for the management committees will be reviewed to ensure synergy and complementarity and avoid duplication in their mandates.

Recommendation 2: The Secretary-General should conduct an in-depth analysis of the efficiency and the effectiveness of management functions and administrative support services in all components of the Union, taking into account the specificities and needs of each Sector, and report the results and proposals to the Council in the context of the elaboration of the ITU budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

Secretariat's Response: A Project Team under the chairmanship of the Deputy Secretary-General with participation of the Bureaux and General Secretariat Departments will conduct an in-depth analysis of the efficiency and the effectiveness of management functions and administrative support services in all components of the Union, with a view to simplifying them and converting them to electronic work processes, eliminating any overlap and duplication of tasks, taking into account the specificities and needs of each Sector. The results and proposals will be reported to the Council in the context of the elaboration of the ITU budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

Recommendation 3: The Secretary-General should finalize and present for endorsement by the Council at its 2017 session a coordination and cooperation strategy in areas of mutual interest to the General Secretariat and the three Sectors, as requested by Member States in resolution

¹ JIU/REP/2016/1 page iii

191 (Busan, 2014), and report annually to the Council on its implementation.

Secretariat's Response: The Inter-Sectoral Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF) facilitates the coordination and collaboration among the three Bureaux and the General Secretariat, with a view to avoid duplication of effort and optimize the use of resources. The Secretary-General will finalize and present a comprehensive coordination and cooperation strategy.

Recommendation 4: The Secretary-General should further develop and consolidate the core elements of accountability into a stand-alone accountability framework, present it to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session, and report annually on its implementation.

Secretariat's Response: An Accountability Framework is a statement defining the organization's commitments, that is, its aims, standards and procedures and how it ensures that it is accountable to its membership. In this regard, the Secretariat will develop the guiding principles of an Accountability Framework in collaboration with the membership. The way in which ITU's priorities are set, how its budget is approved, its resources mobilized and accounted for, and its performance monitored, evaluated, and reported, should show that the Union can be relied on to fulfil its mandate.

Recommendation 5: The Secretary-General should develop a comprehensive plan to improve the stability and the predictability of the financial base of the Union, integrating options for increasing revenues and cost-saving proposals, and present it to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session.

Secretariat's Response: The Union has taken numerous measures over the years in improving its long-term financial stability and predictability of its financial bases. Council 2014 has established the ASHI fund as of 1 January 2014. PP-14 through its Decision 5 invited the Member States to announce their provisional class of contribution' two years prior to the four-year Financial Plan period. Also the Decision 5 suggests the measures for reducing expenses of the Union. Resolution 158 acknowledged the need to increase the revenue of the Union by developing new financial mechanisms which could include new products, revising cost-recovery revenues and increasing the amount of contributory units. The Secretariat will develop a comprehensive plan that will include these efforts and future efforts.

Recommendation 6: The Secretary-General should finalize and present to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session, and regularly update thereafter, a risk management policy comprising all the elements of a systematic and comprehensive corporate risk management framework, and report annually to the Council on its implementation.

Secretariat's Response: Following related IMAC Recommendations, the implementation of a systematic risk management mechanism is on-going. Latest progress update was presented in [Document CWG-FHR 6/11](#).

Recommendation 7: The Secretary-General should develop and present to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session an action plan with specific targets, indicative timelines and monitoring measures aimed at improving geographical representation in the Professional category and above within each component of the Union, and report annually to the Council on its implementation

Secretariat's Response: The ITU Management is fully committed to work in this area, through the implementation of concrete and positive actions. An action plan will be presented to Council 2017 aimed at improving geographical representation in the Professional category and above. However, the impact of a possible decision to be taken by the ITU Council regarding the UNGA decision to increase the mandatory age of separation at 65 as from 1.1.2018 for all staff in service on that date needs to be evaluated, as it will considerably reduce the room for manoeuvre in this area.

Recommendation 8: The Secretary-General should present to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session an action plan to complement the Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Policy, with specific targets, indicative timelines and monitoring measures to improve gender balance, especially at senior management level, within each component of the Union, and report annually to the Council on its implementation.

Secretariat's Response: The ITU Management is fully committed to work in this area, through the implementation of concrete and positive actions. An action plan will be presented to Council 2017 aimed at improving gender balance, especially at senior management level. However, the impact of a possible decision to be taken by the ITU Council regarding the UNGA decision to increase the mandatory age of separation at 65 as from 1.1.2018 for all staff in service on that date needs to be evaluated, as it will considerably reduce the room for manoeuvre in this area.

Recommendation 9: The Secretary-General should develop and present to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session a comprehensive policy on the use of non-staff personnel and provide to the Council an annual consolidated and analytical report on its implementation within each component of the Union.

Secretariat's Response: The HR Strategic plan for the period 2010-2015 established, in its para 24 that "some specific contractual arrangements, such as contracts for retirees (United Nations system and national), national experts/consultants and national professional officers, need to be further reviewed and clarified". Temporary arrangements had been established in 2010 taking into account the regulations and practices existing in other organizations of the UN Common system. A comprehensive evaluation of the situation with a view to establishing a new regulatory framework will be presented to the 2017 Session of Council. Previous recommendations already established by the JIU in its Report JIU/REP/2014/8 on the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organization should also be taken into consideration.

Recommendation 10: The Secretary-General should ensure that human resources processes, such as recruitment, appointment and promotion, are covered by formal procedures included in the regulatory framework and are consolidated by the end of 2017 into a comprehensive human resources handbook.

Secretariat's Response: The Secretariat has established a recruitment guidelines brochures which is about to be completed. In addition, a project for the development of an HR administrative handbook, grouping all regulatory texts, practices and forms, will be launched in the course of the year.

Recommendation 11: The Secretary-General should present to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session an updated version of the Information Technology and Information Management Strategy, encompassing all dimensions of information management and report annually to the Council on its implementation.

Secretariat's Response: While the IT & IM strategy is an internal tool primarily for the executive management, the Secretary-General will present an updated strategy including the dimension of information management to Council for appropriate consideration.

Recommendation 12: The 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference should ensure that the role of the regional presence in achieving "One ITU" is mainstreamed in the Strategic Plan of the Union, and the Council should ensure that this role is appropriately cascaded down into the operational plans of each Sector.

The recommendation is addressed to the ITU Member States.
