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Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Rouven Klein (Germany)

Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2024

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 27

Jointly financed administrative activities

1. At its 17th meeting, on 12 June 2023, the Committee considered programme 27, Jointly financed administrative activities, of the proposed programme plan for 2024 and programme performance information for 2022 ([A/78/6 \(Sect. 31\)](#)).

2. The Chair of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the Chair of the Joint Inspection Unit and the Secretary of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) introduced the programme and responded to questions raised by the Committee during its consideration.

Discussion

3. Several delegations expressed support and thanked all representatives of ICSC, the Joint Inspection Unit and CEB for a comprehensive presentation of the programme plan. Support was also expressed for advancing the work of the three entities.

4. With regard to ICSC, a delegation thanked the Commission for its important work to safeguard and improve the conditions of service of staff of the United Nations common system as it faced system-wide challenges brought about by an ever-changing global employment market. The delegation congratulated the Commission for its recent achievement related to the new parental leave framework, which would provide for extended paid leave for parents, regardless of gender, and allow women to have greater equality with men in terms of career opportunities, as well as allow for more flexibility in a rapidly changing work environment. ICSC efforts to strengthen a coherent and effective human resources management system that was

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aligned closely with the achievement of organizational goals and objectives, including the promotion of geographical diversity and rejuvenation of the workforce, and the integration of a strong gender perspective in its operational activities, deliverables and results, as appropriate, were also welcomed. Another delegation expressed gratitude for the efforts of ICSC in promoting geographical diversity and the rejuvenation of the workforce. While a reduction in the ICSC budget resulting from the conclusions of the Finance and Budget Network was noted, a concern was shared regarding the financial constraints faced by the Commission for 2024. A delegation sought clarification on not including the ICSC proposal for the establishment of a P-4 Legal Officer post for 2024, which had also been proposed the previous year. The Chair reminded the Committee of its working methods and that questions on resources were for the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee.

5. In reference to the Commission's performance measure planned for 2024 under result 1 as reflected in table 31.2, namely positive indications with regard to the attraction and retention of staff, in particular women at hardship duty stations classified as D and E, a question was raised as to what was meant by "positive indications".

6. Regarding the Joint Inspection Unit, one delegation expressed support for a strong Unit that had controlled the efficiency of services and the proper use of funds of the United Nations and that provided an independent view aimed at improving management and methods while achieving greater coordination among the organizations of the United Nations system. It was noted that better information for legislative body decision-making and improved efficiency, effectiveness, coordination and collaboration were crucial for the organizations of the United Nations system, and that the Unit played an essential part in ensuring that all of those objectives were met. The unique role of the Unit as an external and independent system-wide inspection, evaluation and investigation body was of utmost importance for that reason, and it was expected that the level of resources required by the Unit would reflect that importance, as expressed by the General Assembly in its recent resolution. The delegation welcomed the Unit's plan for 2024, in particular the focus on its capability to effectively monitor the acceptance and implementation of its recommendations. Another delegation noted the reduction of the Unit's budget by the Finance and Budget Network for 2024, while recognizing that the mandate of the Unit had been taken very seriously. The same delegation pointed out that it would be vigilant in supporting the full budget of the Unit as the will of the Assembly to intervene would be requested.

7. In reference to paragraph 31.42 under result 2, increased acceptance of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations, it was noted that the programme's work in 2022 had contributed to 74 per cent of the Unit's recommendations being accepted by participating organizations, which had met the planned target. Given the target of 76 per cent for 2024, a delegation requested clarification on how such a specific target could be planned and actually achieved. At the same time, it was also noted that figure 31.V showed that the availability of reviews carried over from the previous year (annual) had only been 50 per cent in 2022, while the planned performance measure for 2023 and 2024 was 100 per cent. Information was requested to explain the discrepancy in that regard. Clarification was also sought with regard to the strategy for 2024 as reflected in paragraph 31.30 (d), develop and implement effective platforms for the sharing of good practices and knowledge in the various thematic areas of the work of the Unit, including the innovative practices and institutional knowledge originating from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

8. With regard to CEB, a delegation expressed support for its crucial work to strengthen and amplify the capacity of the multilateral system to deliver on all aspects

of its sustainable development, human rights, humanitarian and peace actions around the world and to leverage the collective capacity of the organizations of the United Nations system for the effective delivery of mandates. The following aspects, in particular, were welcomed: strengthening the efforts to drive the systemic change through a focus on providing better data, including analysis and communications; innovation and digital transformation; strategic foresight; stronger results orientation; and a work culture that would simplify and encouraged collaboration. In that regard, a question was raised as to how the work of CEB linked to the overall United Nations 2.0 process.

9. In reference to the performance measure planned for 2024, as reflected in table 31.20 under result 1, planned result for 2024, namely improved accessibility for United Nations organizations and Member States to a larger volume of United Nations system-wide financial data, with enhanced functionality for interactive data analysis and effective, evidence-based decision-making, clarification was sought as to what was meant by “improved accessibility”.

10. Another delegation welcomed the continued efforts of CEB to support the effective implementation of the United Nations priorities and commended its wide-ranging efforts, which would: (a) drive innovation in working methods; (b) improve transparency and accountability; (c) prioritize risk management; and (d) lead digital transformation for increased coordination across the United Nations system. The delegation underscored the importance of the support of CEB for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The CEB data webpage was described as dynamic and interactive, notably with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals, and that use of the CEB website for the presentation of data was valued in particular. Furthermore, the delegation commended CEB for providing the tool, which was more accessible and made it easier to disaggregate and filter data to create tailored analyses. In that regard, additional information was requested to explain the value of a dynamic online platform for users. While appreciation was expressed for the work of CEB, a delegation enquired whether issues covering the areas of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse were taken in 2023 and why no reference to such work was included in the budget review for 2024.

11. One delegation expressed support for the programme and emphasized that there was no doubt that the important work by ICSC, the Unit and CEB was carried out within the United Nations system, especially those activities related to ICSC and the Unit. The delegation highlighted the traditional call on CEB to continue its work based on established mandates and recalled in relevant General Assembly resolutions that the Committee had reaffirmed the need for the Assembly to request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to ensure that activities of the Board were in line with intergovernmental mandates. For 2024, it was observed that the programme of work did not contain a single reference to multilingualism, although the Committee had reiterated its call for multilingualism, which was one of the core and fundamental values of the United Nations system. In that context, questions were raised as to what action had been taken by CEB to promote multilingualism and why that information was not included in the programme of work for 2024.

12. Another delegation highly appreciated the work carried out by CEB in strengthening collaboration, harmonization and coordination within the United Nations system. While the vital importance of multilingualism to the work of the United Nations was stressed, a call was made to reduce the gap between English and the other five official languages of the United Nations. In addition, the delegation expressed serious concern about the issue of geographical representation and called for further efforts to increase representation from underrepresented countries for an inclusive and diverse workforce.

Conclusions and recommendations

13. **The Committee commended the work carried out by ICSC, noting its key role in enabling member organizations to deliver on their mandates by creating conditions of service that helped to attract and retain staff, the most valuable resource of the United Nations common system, and stressed the need for legal expertise within the ICSC secretariat.**
14. **The Committee welcomed the proposed focus of ICSC for 2024 on the inclusion of the workforce diversity component in the human resources management framework, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution [73/273](#) on common system organizations, as well as on standards of conduct.**
15. **The Committee commended the work carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit and underlined the importance of its long-standing commitment to strengthening transparency and accountability across the United Nations system.**
16. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly encourage CEB to continue its efforts to promote the system-wide delivery of mandates aimed at ensuring efficiency, in particular in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.**
17. **The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to foster a coordinated approach to multilingualism, which was a core and fundamental value of the United Nations system, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.**
18. **The Committee reaffirmed the need for the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to ensure that activities and initiatives were in line with intergovernmental mandates.**
19. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly encourage CEB to continue its efforts to address sexual exploitation and abuse and all other forms of misconduct and harassment.**
20. **The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly encourage the Secretary-General to ensure transparency and accountability of the established budgetary procedures of the cost-sharing arrangement between the entities represented in the Finance and Budget Network.**
21. **The Committee further recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 27, Jointly financed activities, of the proposed programme budget for 2024.**