



JOINT INSPECTION UNIT
of the United Nations System

CORPS COMMUN d'INSPECTION
du Système des Nations Unies

19 December 2013

Ref.: JIU/ML/2013/1

Management Letter

Background

1. The Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU) has included in its programme of work for 2013 a report on the Management and Administrative Review (MAR) of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) including follow up inspection of the JIU 2009 MAR recommendations.
2. Apart from face to face and teleconference interviews with UNWTO officials and with representatives of Member States based in Madrid, information was obtained from responses to specific questions and relevant official documentation.

UNWTO Senior Management

3. The 2009 MAR included a recommendation requesting the Secretary-General to “reviewing the current top-heavy structure of the secretariat with a view to streamlining it.” At the time, the Organization, with a regular budget staffing of less than 100 positions, was headed by a Secretary-General, assisted by a Deputy Secretary-General (DSG), an Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) and a Director of Programme and Coordination. However, the ASG was placed at a D-1 (step IV) pay grade. A Member State that was part of the ad hoc Working Group established by the UNWTO Executive Council to review the 2009 report commented that “*the post of the ASG should be reconsidered again. This post has no legal basis in the UNWTO Statutes.*”
4. The Secretary-General a.i., when presenting his Management Strategy and Designation of the Senior Management Team to the UNWTO General Assembly in 2009, in response to the related recommendation, stated that senior management of the Secretariat will be constituted into a management team. This team would consist of three newly-created posts of programme-oriented Executive Directors (ED) with similar seniority levels to *de facto* replace the positions of DSG, ASG and Director of Programme of Coordination. The Strategy was accepted by the General Assembly and the three ED candidates proposed by the Secretary-General (elected at the General Assembly) were hired, effective 1 January 2010.

5. The pay grades of the new EDs were never stated in the Secretary-General's reports to the Executive Council on the human resources situation at UNWTO. It was only on reviewing internal documentation that it was discovered that the EDs were given an ASG pay grade and which was subsequently confirmed by the Secretariat.
6. Considering that the Organization has been under severe budget constraints (zero nominal growth and only recently real nominal growth) the fact that these EDs were given ASG salaries is disconcerting. Furthermore, when comparing the percentage of Professional staff members above the D2 grade at UNWTO with other CEB organizations, UNWTO is at nine percent while the others are between zero and two percent for Professional staff members at Headquarters and established offices.¹
7. The Secretariat could not provide the commensurate senior management staff costs under the 2009 organigramme (SG/DSG/ASG/D) and the one currently in place (SG/EDs) when requested by the Inspector. Had the three EDs been placed on a D2 (step 1) salary scale instead of the current ASG grade from 1 January 2010, the annual savings would have amounted to at least 100,000 Euros per annum.

Recommendation 1

The Secretary-General should downgrade the pay grade of the Executive Directors from the current ASG level to the D2 grade level, effective 1 February 2014 and inform the Member States accordingly.

UNWTO Liaison Office in New York

8. The Inspector, while going through the official documentation of the Organization, has noted that no reference is made to UNWTO Liaison Office in New York except in the organization chart. Its existence was confirmed through a Note Verbale issued on 5 December 2013 by the Special Representative of the UNWTO to the United Nations addressed to the Permanent Representative and Observers to the United Nations and Heads of Liaison offices of the Specialized Agencies and related organizations informing them of its office relocation. The Note Verbale also provided the names and contact telephone numbers of the Special Representative, the Deputy Representative and Senior Counsellor.
9. The Inspector also noted that all UNWTO officials based in the Liaison office are collaborators and thus "non-staff" members. He is of the view that the Head of the Liaison office should be a UNWTO staff member. Furthermore, considering that no report on the activities of the Liaison office has been made available to Member States, it is perhaps opportune that the Secretariat undertakes a cost-benefit analysis on maintaining the Liaison office.

¹ "Personnel Statistics – Data as 31 December 2011", Table 5A, CEB/2012/HLCM/HR/16.

Recommendation 2

The Secretary-General should include a detailed report on the activities and costs of the UNWTO Liaison Office to the forthcoming Executive Council Meeting in June 2014.

Recommendation 3

The Secretary-General should undertake a cost-benefit analysis of the New York liaison office, taking into account the historical presence of the office and its various representatives based therein. This analysis should be presented, along with the detailed report on the activities and costs of the said office, to the forthcoming Executive Council Meeting in June 2014.

Granting of Diplomatic Privileges to UNWTO officials on pro-bono contracts

10. Some UNWTO officials are either given pro-bono contracts and thus theoretically incur no “costs” to the Organization. However, it has been brought to the Inspector’s attention that some of these officials have been granted diplomatic privileges by the host country at the request of the Organization. This implies a cost for the host country. He further questions whether the decision to grant such contracts is creating a precedent that would not be in the long-term interests of the organization.

Recommendation 4

The Secretary-General should rescind the practice of granting pro-bono contracts with diplomatic privileges with immediate effect.