



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
30 June 2023

Original: English

Committee for Programme and Coordination

Sixty-third session

30 May–30 June 2023

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Rouven **Klein** (Germany)

Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2024

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 25

Management and support services

1. At its 4th and 13th meetings, on 31 May and 6 June 2023, the Committee considered programme 25, Management and support services, of the proposed programme plan for 2024 and programme performance in 2022 ([A/78/6 \(Sect. 29\)](#), [A/78/6 \(Sect. 29A\)](#), [A/78/6 \(Sect. 29B\)](#), [A/78/6 \(Sect. 29C\)](#), [A/78/6 \(Sect. 29D\)](#), [A/78/6 \(Sect. 29E\)](#) and [A/78/6 \(Sect. 29F\)](#)).

2. The Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, the Assistant Secretary-General, Chief Information Technology Officer in the Office of Information and Communications Technology and other representatives of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and, together with other representatives of the Secretary-General, responded to questions raised by the Committee during its consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Delegations welcomed the integral role of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and expressed appreciation and support to the Department for the efficient and effective delivery of its mandate and for promoting a United Nations with a management system that was transparent and accountable and delivered effectively in accordance with its mandates. The Department's commitment to continuous improvements and to driving results-based management policies and practices into the daily functioning and culture of the Organization was commended. A delegation expressed its appreciation to the Department, which it saw



as the author and executor of many of the Secretary-General's reform initiatives and as one of the key units of the Secretariat, both from a substantive and a technical perspective. Another delegation expressed its support for the significant work of the Department in realizing the Secretary-General's management paradigm and enriching ongoing reforms through continuous improvement and new ways of working internally. The delegation commended the Department's strategy for 2024, which aimed to advance the new management paradigm through an integrated approach with four interlinked pillars: the enterprise resource planning solution; programme planning, finance and budget; human resources; and business transformation and accountability. A delegation welcomed the Department's policy leadership in all management areas through the provision of a clear, integrated global management strategy and policy framework and through strengthened monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms, especially internal control.

4. Noting how hard the Department was working to support the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, and thus the whole Organization, a delegation cited a former President of the General Assembly, who once had stated that the Fifth Committee was the backbone of the Assembly (and, the delegation added, the Committee for Programme and Coordination was part of the overall budgetary process), and concluded that, by the same logic, it could be said that the Department was the backbone of the United Nations Secretariat, noting that the two Committees would not function without the Department's support and the Organization could not deliver on its mandates without adequate finance and liquidity, comprehensive accountability, capable management and diverse and competent human resources.

5. A delegation expressed its appreciation for the vital role the Department continued to play in implementing the Secretary-General's reform agenda throughout the Organization and making the United Nations operational, efficient and productive throughout the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and beyond. The delegation was joined by others, which expressed support for efforts to strengthen the Organization's resilience, including its preparedness to maintain business continuity in emergencies by guiding, monitoring and adjusting the post-COVID-19 ways of working at United Nations Headquarters to continually adapt to changing environments, risks and opportunities.

6. A delegation thanked the Department for assisting Member States in finding agreement on two very important resolutions in recent years, on human resources management (General Assembly resolution [77/278](#)) and the budget cycle reform (Assembly resolution [77/267](#)). In that regard, it noted that, in the previous year, the last piece of the Secretary-General's reform agenda had been completed and that his vision for management reform had been delivered with the decision, by consensus, to lift the trial period of the annual budget cycle in order to consolidate the benefits of a shorter cycle and to focus on mandate delivery and performance. The delegation mentioned that the whole Organization and all Member States were benefiting from a more results-oriented culture and more agile programme planning, but that for the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, that required even more work and much commitment. A delegation expressed interest in how the Department was preparing to implement the budget cycle resolution, what elements it deemed important and what everyone should have in mind for the smooth implementation of the resolution. Another delegation enquired whether, with the sessions of the Committee for Programme and Coordination beginning earlier starting the following year, in mid-May, there were any considerations that discussions would start in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions before the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

7. Recalling paragraph 40 of resolution [77/278](#), in which the Assembly had recalled the Secretary-General's bulletin on flexible working arrangements, a delegation asked how the new internal working practices, as mentioned in the strategy for 2024 under the overall orientation and under subprogramme 1, Enterprise resource planning solution, services to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly and to the Committee for Programme and Coordination, and management advisory services, component 3, Management advisory services, result 1, on post-COVID-19 new internal working practices, would relate to the internal administrative provision that staff be physically present at Headquarters three days a week.

8. Appreciation was expressed for the significant work done by the Department to ensure an effective recruitment process attracting the most qualified candidates while advancing equitable geographical representation and gender parity. A delegation highly appreciated that the Department would work towards the equitable geographical representation of Member States and looked forward to seeing progress. In that regard, another delegation noted paragraph 29A.9 and requested more information on the Secretariat's plan to bring about such improvements. With regard to the change in the desirable ranges system, approved by the Assembly at the first part of its resumed seventy-seventh session in resolution [77/278](#) and expected to enter into force from January 2024, a delegation asked how the Department was preparing itself for the change and when it expected Member States to start seeing changes in the composition of the Secretariat.

9. Delegations welcomed further work to implement the strategic action plan on addressing racism mentioned in paragraph 29A.2 (h) and to promote dignity for all staff across the Secretariat, expressing the view that it was important to ensure that the United Nations was an inclusive and respectful workplace for staff, and requested information on the implementation of the anti-racism strategy.

10. Efforts to strengthen the exercise of delegation of authority were also welcomed, and a delegation asked for some recent examples where it had had a positive impact on the way the United Nations delivered its mandates and on the results on the ground. Efforts by the Department to strengthen the accountability framework, simplify policies, enhance transparency and facilitate risk management monitoring and reporting were applauded.

11. A delegation welcomed the Department's work to prevent sexual harassment through a system-wide and victim-centred approach (mentioned in paragraph 29A.9) and enquired as to how the Department would encourage bystanders to act, combating inaction towards instances of sexual harassment. Referencing table 29A.35 and the planned result for 2024, namely the reporting of behaviour that constituted sexual harassment, another delegation, while agreeing with the importance of preventing sexual harassment, expressed concern that establishing performance measures such as increased reporting of behaviour that constituted sexual harassment might lead to false accusations. The delegations enquired as to how the Department would address that issue, and proposed language in that regard for consideration indicating that false allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse made with knowledge of their falsity constituted misconduct for which disciplinary measures should be imposed.

12. Under result 3, digital transformation and innovations through Umoja for more effective decision-making, under subprogramme 1, component 1, delegations, while expressing their appreciation and support for digital transformation, such as the workforce portal, questioned why the basis of the initiative mentioned was the framework set out in Our Common Agenda and "United Nations 2.0", as indicated in paragraph 29A.27, when neither had been discussed by Member States yet.

13. Referring to paragraph 29A.28, in which it was stated that the component would enhance the user experience of Umoja, a delegation was unclear on the division of

labour between the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Office of Information and Communications Technology, as Umoja served as a business transformation tool, while information technology was under the responsibilities of the Office, and requested clarification in that regard.

14. A delegation noted that the Department had successfully provided technical support to the Secretariat through the enterprise resource planning system and to Member States. The delegation also noted that, with every year, the quality and accessibility of information afforded to Member States on elections had improved.

15. With regard to result 1, improved information available to delegates, under subprogramme 1, component 2, Services to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly and to the Committee for Programme and Coordination, a delegation indicated that it might be good to look towards the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management on what measures might be useful to make documents, which Member States needed to read, available as soon as possible.

16. A delegation expressed deep appreciation for the high-quality support and the hard work of the secretariat of the Fifth Committee and the Committee for Programme and Coordination, as well as to the Programme Planning and Budget Division for its efforts in improving the quality of the budget reports, including monitoring the terminology used, early engagement with Member States and providing more tables and charts for easy reference.

17. With regard to subprogramme 2, Programme planning, finance and budget, a delegation noted the importance of a coherent and comprehensive approach to the analysis of financial statements, strengthening accountability in all United Nations operations, improvement in the quality of data analysis to facilitate the management of resources in special political missions, and independent and responsible risk management for the Organization's capital projects. The delegation noted that, through the document, it was able to familiarize itself with the Finance Knowledge Gateway, an integrated digital platform and United Nations global community for Umoja finance users, and sought additional information thereon as well as the corresponding mandate.

18. With regard to paragraph 29A.58, with regard to the strategy for component 1, Finance, a delegation proposed adding text on strengthening the management of extrabudgetary resources.

19. With regard to figure 29A.IV, which indicated the budget confidence levels for ongoing global United Nations construction projects, for result 2, independent risk management for global United Nations capital construction projects, under component 2, Field operations finance, a delegation suggested including the strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

20. With regard to result 3, improved accuracy of budget proposals, under component 3, Programme planning and budgeting, where it was mentioned in paragraph 29A.95 that the component would propose tailored recosting adjustments for specific items when the projected price changes for the item were significantly different from the consumer price index, a delegation enquired as to how the tailored recosting would be done and for what kind of specific items, and what kind of conditions would be considered other than inflation.

21. With regard to subprogrammes 3, Human resources, and 4, Business transformation and accountability, a delegation called upon the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance to be guided by the view of the General Assembly, especially in terms of human resources management, as a resolution thereon had been adopted in April 2023 for the first time in six years. The delegation sought information on how the Secretariat had taken on the resolution.

22. With regard to paragraph 29A.98 (f) under the strategy for subprogramme 3, component 1, Global strategy and policy, where reference was made to adopting new values and behaviours in talent management, a delegation expressed interest in hearing more and asked what new values and behaviours were referred to.
23. With regard to paragraph 29A.107, where it was mentioned that the component would embark on a staff selection 2.0 multi-year programme, with an expected end result of delivering a new, effective, fair, efficient and agile recruitment process, a delegation indicated that it highly appreciated and welcomed the initiative as equitable geographical representation remained a core concern, and that it looked forward to its implementation and fruitful result.
24. With regard to the Department of Operational Support, delegations commended the support it provided to the United Nations Secretariat, including advisory, operational and transactional support services, such as process simplification, data analytics, support for partnerships and capacity development. A delegation valued the efforts to innovate and put clients at the heart of process design, with a view to enabling Secretariat entities to deliver on their mandates and achieve results. Another delegation indicated that it recognized the crucial role of the Department as the operational arm of the Secretariat and the client-facing interface for operational support matters, and expressed its appreciation for the vital role the Department played in business process improvement, business continuity and making the United Nations operational, efficient and productive throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Another delegation commended the Department for its collaborative spirit.
25. A delegation expressed its appreciation for the Department's attention towards the Sustainable Development Goals and valued its contribution in guiding the procedural changes needed across the United Nations to accelerate the achievement of the Goals. The delegation sought feedback on how the Department might go further in seeking collaboration opportunities and synergies, such as through the effective use of mutual recognition, including in the areas of human resources and supply chain management.
26. A delegation strongly supported the Department's plans to continue to support efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities to the United Nations premises and to leverage the increased use of digital tools and platforms to upgrade the digital infrastructure at Headquarters in order to increase accessibility.
27. The delegation also expressed its support for the Department's efforts to strengthen outreach and training for vendors, including for women-owned businesses.
28. A delegation recalled the crucial role of the United Nations Global Service Centre in providing high-quality and customized counselling to field missions on the reduction of their environmental footprint.
29. A delegation indicated that equitable geographical representation remained a concern and requested information on what measures the Department would take in that regard.
30. A delegation, referring to paragraph 29B.7 (b), where, with regard to external factors, it was mentioned that the overall plan for 2024 was based, among other factors, on the planning assumption that relevant United Nations and non-United Nations partners continued to cooperate, amplifying the Department's impact in supporting client needs and discharging its mandates to ensure timely and sustained delivery of operational support, sought clarification on who those non-United Nations partners were.

31. Referring to paragraph 29B.11, where, in the context of support to Member States and clients on issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was mention of the medevac mechanism, a delegation indicated that it understood the mechanism was to close at the end of 2022 and asked about its status and the Secretariat's plan with regard to the mechanism.

32. Support was expressed for the approach of the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support to organizing the work of the Department in accordance with existing mandates. In that regard, a delegation referred to General Assembly resolution [76/274](#) on cross-cutting issues, which referenced cross-cutting logistical and procurement mandates of the Secretariat as well as the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that had been endorsed to be considered for the work of the Department, and pointed out that it was missing under legislative mandates and sought clarification on why it was not included.

33. With regard to the enabling deliverables for subprogramme 1, Support operations, component 1, Human resources support, in the area of administration, a delegation indicated that it was surprised to find information about the Department's plans to implement and review new sustainable supply chain technologies. The delegation noted that in paragraph 20 of its most recent resolution on procurement (resolution [69/273](#)), the General Assembly had not yet approved the concept of sustainable procurement. The delegation recalled and expressed support for the recommendation contained in paragraph 39 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions ([A/69/809](#)), that the Secretary-General should prepare a comprehensive report on the concept and its relationship with the four procurement principles set out in the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, as well as the impact of its implementation if approved by the Assembly. The delegation added that such a report had not yet been submitted to the Assembly for consideration. In that regard, it requested an explanation on the meaning of sustainable supply chain technologies, and what the previously mentioned wording meant and whether it had anything to do with the concept of sustainable procurement.

34. With regard to table 29B.4 under result 2, improved young professionals programme, under the same component, the delegation made reference to the 2024 planned performance measure, namely that at least 55 per cent of appointed young professionals programme candidates were from unrepresented/underrepresented countries, and requested an explanation. The delegation's understanding was that the programme in principle could only take in candidates from unrepresented/underrepresented countries and therefore sought comments on the planned indicator for 2024, noting the information provided that candidates appointed through the programme included those from overrepresented countries as well as countries within the range.

35. A delegation welcomed the strategy set out in component 2, Capacity development and operational training, as well as component 3, Health-care management and occupational safety and health, particularly the training on emergency blood transfusion provided to field medical personnel in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

36. On paragraph 29B.54, which referenced gender-sensitive medical services under component 3, a delegation asked how many cases requiring such services had been reported in the past few years.

37. A delegation welcomed subprogramme 2, Supply chain management, component 1, Integrated supply chain management, and stressed the importance of result 3 regarding the Department's environmental strategy to reduce the environmental footprint in the field. It noted that the strategy would come to an end

soon, so it would be crucial for the Secretariat to propose a way forward in consultation with Member States. The delegation recalled that the consultation process was ongoing and, in its capacity as Co-Chair of the Group of Friends leading on environmental management in the field, indicated that it was proud to contribute to that process and looked ahead to the final way forward that would be proposed.

38. It was noted that, with regard to subprogramme 3, Special activities, and result 3, on mutually beneficial collaboration in support operations through a support partnerships framework, in table 29B.22, the planned indicator for 2024 indicated that the United Nations Support Office in Somalia would be enabled to provide operational support to non-United Nations security forces in Somalia. A delegation proposed to change the indicator to reflect that the United Nations Support Office in Somalia would be enabled to provide operational support to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, in accordance with its mandate as endorsed by the Security Council.

39. With regard to the Office of Information and Communications Technology, delegations expressed support for and commended the Office's work, particularly in its post-COVID-19 pandemic efforts, enabling a mobile and digital workforce and navigating digital transformation in a rapidly changing digital landscape, supporting the General Assembly with meeting formats that were inclusive for everybody, the delivery of cloud computing support and the establishment of a data architecture blueprint to meet the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere.

40. A delegation thanked the Office for presenting an information and communications technology (ICT) strategy, which outlined a five-year vision to harness the power of technology and data for more effective mandate implementation, and encouraged the Office to submit refined elements of the strategy in the context of a detailed, time-bound implementation road map, which should include: (a) precision on the strategy's intended objectives, identifying for each objective concrete actions to achieve it; (b) key performance indicators, deliverables and a clear and effective governance and accountability framework that clarified the balance between central control and operational freedom; (c) estimates of the resources needed for the implementation of the ICT strategy made with a view to rationalizing the allocation of existing ICT expenditures and to avoid duplication and overlap; (d) information on the Secretary-General's efforts in leveraging the power of technology innovation in the pursuit of the Organization's objectives, particularly the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and (e) an outreach component to promote awareness.

41. The same delegation recommended that a risk analysis exercise be undertaken with regard to security of information and communication, and enquired about the state of play of the ICT strategy implementation road map and comprehensive risk analysis. Furthermore, the delegation recalled paragraph 29C.25 of the document and enquired as to how the planned result to strengthen data-driven decision-making for several United Nations entities was embedded in the quintet of change of the Secretary-General towards a United Nations 2.0. Lastly, the same delegation sought clarification on the performance measure reflected in figure 29C.II, specifically about the increase in the number of users with access to desktop telephone services using Microsoft Teams from 43 to 6,500, and requested details on the current number for 2023 and the chances for progress in 2024.

42. A delegation expressed support for the continued shift to enterprise platforms from legacy applications, leading to a more cohesive, coherent and resilient ICT ecosystem, and enquired about the plans to update the underlying infrastructure of the

Wi-Fi service in the Secretariat Building to meet the requirements of the delegates, the wider user community and the Secretariat.

43. Recognition was given to the contribution that data made towards effective mandate implementation. In that context, support was expressed for the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General as part of the quintet of change, and efforts to strengthen system-wide interoperability and synergies were encouraged in order to better enable mandate implementation. A delegation referred to paragraph 29C.7, which discussed the Office's approach to innovation, and sought information on the Office's assessment of the demand for innovation across the United Nations Secretariat and its capability to use, deploy and exploit any innovative approaches.

44. A delegation recalled the reference to hybrid and virtual meetings in the document and drew attention to the fact that hybrid and virtual formats of meetings for intergovernmental bodies had been devised exclusively to ensure business continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic and following the recommendations of local bodies, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States of America, which had indicated that in-person meetings should not take place. Furthermore, the delegation emphasized that the General Assembly had not provided a mandate to conduct meetings in those formats and recalled that the Committee on Conferences would discuss the matter in September 2023. Clarification was sought as to the ways in which the Office of Information and Communications Technology was collaborating with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the only department of the Secretariat that provided conference services to Member States, and specifically how the Office chose various platforms and which office had the authority to decide on those platforms from the standpoint of their mandates.

45. With regard to the United Nations Offices at Nairobi, Geneva and Vienna, a delegation commended the efforts to draw on lessons learned from the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, including in the context of the strategic heritage plan, building on lessons learned to ensure business continuity in the three Offices to support the next normal planning efforts, and asked all three Offices to share their plans for crisis preparation and planning, following the disruption caused by COVID-19. Another delegation thanked the Offices for their programme plans for 2024 and recognized their excellent work in 2022.

46. A delegation expressed support and appreciation for the work done by the Offices in carrying out their mandates of management support services and underscored the accountability to Member States for the efficient and effective delivery of those mandates entrusted by them in the areas of finance, human resources, ICT procurement and infrastructure. The delegation expressed support for diverse procurement, including from developing countries, and support for outreach to developing countries through international procurement seminars.

47. With regard to human resources management, a delegation requested additional information on the work being done to achieve equitable geographical representation in all offices away from Headquarters, and a delegation indicated that it supported the equitable geographical representation of posts, including at the senior level.

48. Another delegation sought clarification on the current situation with regard to the face-to-face visits to the United Nations Office at Vienna and United Nations Office at Nairobi buildings by the staff of the complex. A question was raised regarding the proportion of staff attending the workplace in person five days a week and staff working remotely.

49. A delegation expressed appreciation for the comprehensive nature of the programme plan of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, which reflected a breadth of

ambition, scope and results, enabling business continuity through service provision to over 60 United Nations agencies and increasing support to the global resident coordinator system and overall support to Our Common Agenda. The delegation noted that the previous year's programme had referenced the business operations strategy 2.0, which incorporated new business and delivery models as part of the future growth of the Office, and enquired about the reasons for not reporting on the strategy in the current programme plan.

50. A delegation noted that a key function of the United Nations Office at Nairobi was to provide human resources administration, payroll and finance services to international staff in 131 resident coordinator offices around the world, as well as to the globally dispersed offices of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). The same delegation commended the comprehensive staff health and well-being programme of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, particularly regarding mental health post-pandemic, and enquired as to how the Office was leveraging the available knowledge resources across other duty stations, including United Nations Headquarters, the United Nations Office at Vienna and the United Nations Office at Geneva, including through exchanges of best practices. Furthermore, the delegation commended the United Nations Office at Nairobi for continuing to utilize lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and for maintaining a commitment to business continuity management for 2024. Lastly, the delegation noted the strong support of the Government of Kenya and the city of Nairobi, and asked for an update on upcoming partnerships with both to upgrade and improve infrastructure, particularly regarding the UN Avenue project.

51. A delegation recalled the reference in paragraph 29D.14 to the evaluation of the Joint Inspection Unit on business continuity management in United Nations system organizations completed in 2022, which had guided the plan to review its business continuity performance during the pandemic and identify gaps for corrective measures in 2024. In that regard, the delegation sought clarification about the gaps already identified and the proactive measures that could be taken to mitigate gaps.

52. A delegation noted that non-United Nations institutions were involved in the recruitment process at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, requested further information on the modalities used for that process and sought clarification on the specific improvements to the recruitment process, noting that previous human resources recommendations had not been fully implemented and acknowledging that some recommendations seemed difficult to implement. The delegation asked for an update on how the Office would improve going forward. On another topic, the delegation noted that measures rolled out to combat COVID-19 at the United Nations Office at Nairobi had been more drastic than in New York, and recalled the daily tests referenced in the report. However, the delegation noted that daily COVID-19 tests had not been conducted during the sessions of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat held in 2022, and requested an update about the measures currently in place. Lastly, the same delegation noted that one of the key functions of the Office was to provide travel services and asked for further information on how Umoja was used for travel and whether it was helpful in organizing and purchasing travel.

53. A delegation enquired about the utilization level of the Nairobi campus and its facilities and sought clarification about the size of the campus, which was cited as 142 acres in paragraph 29D.5 and as 140 acres in table 29D.7.

54. With regard to the United Nations Office at Geneva, a delegation welcomed the continued focus on building a sustainable infrastructure to moderate meetings and conferences in accordance with the business continuity model, and underlined the importance of ongoing and proactive maintenance to safeguard Member States'

investment in the strategic heritage plan. The delegation asked about the best model for operating the newly renovated building and the best use of space.

55. A delegation commended the United Nations Office at Geneva for continuing to cope with challenges following the pandemic and in the context of the strategic heritage plan, especially for supporting, at short notice, special high-level negotiations organized by special political missions. The delegation enquired about the Office's initiative to assess the level of disability inclusion for ICT solutions available to Geneva client entities, as noted in paragraph 29E.12. The delegation noted that the new upward feedback system mentioned in paragraph 29E.38, which was implemented globally for all directors and with which staff were evaluated against workplans to improve team interaction and adaptability, was well received by staff, and enquired about the next steps in improving performance management. Regarding the strategic heritage plan, the delegation asked about the current utilization level of open office space compared with traditional office space.

56. In welcoming and expressing gratitude for the exceptional work done at the three duty stations, a delegation noted the work done in the conference rooms in Geneva and the new building having a sophisticated ventilation system above the standards. The delegation noted a third category of gender-neutral restrooms for those using the facilities and enquired from which mandate it had been initiated. The delegation also enquired about the progression of the construction work and for how long the digital platforms for meetings would be necessary.

57. A delegation noted the hard work that had gone into preparing the programme plans, and expressed the view that that type of reporting, increasing transparency, could only help Member States support the work of the Offices. The delegation expressed its support for the strategy described in paragraph 29E.50 to equip rooms with hybrid conference equipment. The delegation's reflection was that an extension of business continuity arrangements to allow for the continued provision of hybrid conferencing services was needed to make effective use of those facilities. The delegation noted that the Human Rights Council had obtained an extension until the end of the calendar year, but assumed that a broader, medium-term solution for all the entities to whom the United Nations Office at Geneva provided hybrid conferencing services could be needed.

58. Another delegation pointed out that one of the key functions of the United Nations Office at Geneva was to provide conference services to meetings of intergovernmental bodies. The delegation welcomed the measures the Office had taken in 2022 to ensure the continuity of the intergovernmental process during the pandemic, namely the organization of virtual or hybrid meetings as a temporary measure in cases where the face-to-face format had not been possible owing to the risks of the spread of COVID-19. Considering that those problems were now behind, the delegation stated that the Secretariat, including the United Nations Office at Geneva, did not have a mandate from the General Assembly to hold intergovernmental meetings in a virtual or hybrid format. The delegation indicated that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the key department of the United Nations Secretariat for the provision of conference services, operated in that paradigm, and expressed the view that that was how the United Nations Office at Geneva should act.

59. A delegation noted that the business continuity plan of the United Nations Office at Vienna did not meet the target of increased preparedness for future crises, as a recent Office of Internal Oversight Services audit on ICT security had confirmed that further adjustments would be needed in 2023. In that regard, the delegation sought information elaborating on the adjustments needed to meet the business continuity targets on the basis of the assessment.

60. A delegation commended the continued focus of the United Nations Office at Vienna on issues relating to human resources, in particular, efforts to create a more inclusive, respectful and supportive work environment, as set out in paragraph 29F.31. While recognizing the central role of the training of staff, the same delegation pointed out that it would be useful to see some other metrics in assessing the impact of the programme in order to understand whether the objectives of the programme were being met. A question was raised on whether plans were in place to measure success.

Conclusions and recommendations

61. **The Committee recommended that the plenary or the relevant Main Committee or Main Committees of the General Assembly, in line with Assembly resolution [77/254](#), consider the programme plan for programme 25, Management and support services, of the proposed programme budget for 2024 under the agenda item entitled “Programme planning” at the seventy-eighth session of the Assembly.**
