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Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2024

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 27

Jointly financed administrative activities

1. At its 13th meeting, on 21 May 2024, the Committee considered programme 27, Jointly financed administrative activities, of the proposed programme plan for 2025 and programme performance in 2023 ([A/79/6 \(Sect. 31\)](#)).

Discussion

2. Recognizing the leadership and committed work of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the Joint Inspection Unit and the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), several delegations thanked the representatives of the three entities in preparing the proposed programme plans for 2025 and reiterated the continued support to the goals of the jointly financed administrative activities. It was emphasized that the three entities had greatly contributed to better coordination and effectiveness of the United Nations system.

3. In a world of volatility and uncertainty, a delegation noted that it was urgent for the organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen collaboration, harmonize goals and policies, enhance work efficiency and reduce duplication of efforts and the waste of resources. In this context, the importance of multilingualism in the work of the organizations of the United Nations system was stressed. A delegation pointed out that organizations should use all six official United Nations languages equally and fully in all their activities in efforts to reduce the gap between the use of English and the other five languages. At the same time, the delegation expressed serious concern about the imbalance in the composition of the staff members of the United Nations



agencies and repeatedly called for improvements in the future, noting that United Nations agencies should have a more inclusive and diverse composition of staff members. To ensure higher percentage of staff members from developing countries, ICSC, the Joint Inspection Unit and CEB were requested to take practical measures to coordinate and strengthen supervision over the United Nations agencies.

4. With regard to ICSC, several delegations expressed support for its important work to regulate and coordinate the conditions of service for staff of the United Nations common system while making the improvements necessary to ensure that staff kept pace with the changing world. The proactive efforts by the Commission in safeguarding and improving the compensation system and living conditions of the United Nations staff members were appreciated. It was emphasized that efforts made to strengthen the coherence and efficacy of human resource management systems were essential for ensuring that the ambitious objectives of the United Nations system were delivered. A delegation expressed support and welcomed the recommendation of the Commission to regularize the payment of an allowance at duty stations with extreme hardship conditions.

5. In respect of the ICSC strategy for 2025, several delegations expressed interest in paragraph 31.4 of the proposed programme budget for 2025 regarding the intention of the Commission to conduct a review and propose relevant updates to the General Assembly on any new developments and improvements as they related to geographical diversity and the rejuvenation of the workforce. Noting that the proposed outcome was the promotion of geographical diversity and rejuvenation of the workforce, a delegation urged that those goals be given priority, resulting in a robust action plan. It was recalled that the matter of equitable geographical representation had been raised in every interaction the Committee had had since the start of the sixty-fourth session and that the rejuvenation of the Organization was a growing concern as it had not been highlighted to the same extent. In this context, a delegation reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to continue his ongoing efforts to ensure the attainment of equitable geographical representation in the Secretariat and as wide a geographical distribution of staff as possible in all departments and offices and at all levels. While the work of the Commission in this aspect was highlighted, as efforts were being made to address the problem, the delegation enquired about the timelines and details that could be shared to the Committee regarding the initiative and any expected outcomes. Furthermore, questions were raised on the availability of information regarding the age range of the workforce at that stage and whether the rejuvenation of the workforce had been affected by the liquidity crisis. Clarification was also sought related to the ongoing efforts by the Secretary-General in the retention of deserving young professionals and the reasons for their resignations, as well as the measures proposed for tracking and monitoring the movements of serving young Professional staff members.

6. In reference to the planned result 2 for 2025, “a common system compensation package that is fit for purpose, competitive and cost efficient”, a delegation expressed concern that the detailed outline of review to be developed in 2024 and a progress report that would be submitted to the General Assembly in 2025 would be a very challenging task. The delegation expected the Commission after the global surveys, to solicit information from the staff at large and to put forward a more reasonable mechanism of positive incentives on the basis of the principles of being fair and truthful to facts in order to attract and retain more talents in the United Nations system. In respect of the performance measure in table 31.3 under result 2, information was sought as to when the pulse of staff would be taken regarding their satisfaction with the common system compensation package and if there were early indications of staff satisfaction.

7. Regarding the Joint Inspection Unit, several delegations expressed appreciation for the diligent work of the Unit to ensure an independent perspective regarding improvements to the United Nations management and internal procedures. Its recent report on the review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations was commended. In the context of a complex operating environment and increased risk at many duty stations, it was emphasized that the report was an important step to ensuring a more fully aware and equipped United Nations system.

8. In addition, support for a strong Joint Inspection Unit with sufficient resources was emphasized by a delegation for the active role it played in reviewing matters bearing on the efficiency of services and the proper use of funds to ensure efficiency in management and administration across the United Nations system organizations. Another delegation recognized Result 1, in which the work of the Unit contributed to 77 per cent of recommendations being accepted by participating organizations, exceeding the planned target of 76 per cent, and noted that it was the shared responsibility of Member States through governing bodies and organizations secretariats to ensure the swift implementation of the Joint Inspection Unit's recommendations.

9. In reference to the Joint Inspection Unit's strategy for 2025, particularly in paragraph 31.27, another delegation expected the Unit to focus on its accountability and oversight functions and to further improve the coordination and collaboration of the United Nations system for synergy. With regard to the Unit's engagement with the Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services, information was requested to further elaborate on the specific areas of cooperation with the oversight bodies.

10. With regard to the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, appreciation was expressed by several delegations for the great amount of work carried out by CEB to promote coherence, cooperation and coordination in the policies, programmes and activities of the organizations of the United Nations system. Emphasis was placed on the unique role of the Board in shaping synergy within the United Nations system and in promoting the Sustainable Development Goals to jointly address the global challenges. In that regard, a delegation reiterated its appreciation for the Board's important work to strengthen and amplify the capacity of the multilateral system to deliver on all aspects of sustainable development, human rights and peace.

11. Support was expressed by another delegation for the work of CEB on the continued modernization of the United Nations data portal and its interoperability. Efforts to disseminate data through functions, such as the CEB data portal, an important provision in allowing for more innovative analysis, communications and digital outreach, were appreciated. Noting the reference to paragraph 31.54 under result 3, clarification was sought if there was any resistance among staff or organizations to the implementation of the Digital ID initiative.

12. Another delegation stressed the importance of constant adherence by the entities to the intergovernmental mandates listed in the document. While the need to promote equal geographic representation among Member States in the United Nations Secretariat was noted, a question was raised on what measures were being taken by CEB in that area. Although references to gender perspective and disability inclusion were mentioned in the strategy and external factors for 2025, as reflected in paragraphs 31.46 and 31.47, the same delegation questioned why a reference to ensuring equitable geographical representation was missing. Moreover, clarification was sought on why, among similar mandates on inclusivity and representation, information related to that basic principle, and part of the Charter of the United Nations under article 101, as enshrined in countless General Assembly resolutions,

was not included. In respect of paragraph 31.40 under the deliverables, clarification was further sought regarding the decrease in the number of Fifth Committee meetings for 2025, in which the Joint Inspection Unit participated, from 10 in 2024 to 8 in 2025.

Conclusions and recommendations

13. **The Committee commended the work carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and coordination of the United Nations system, and underlined the importance of its long-standing commitment to strengthening transparency and accountability across the United Nations system.**

14. **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 for Sustainable Development.**

15. **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.**

16. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 27, Jointly financed activities, of the proposed programme budget for 2025, subject to the following modifications:**

II Joint Inspection Unit

Legislative mandates

General Assembly resolutions

Add “77/279 Joint Inspection Unit”.

Add “78/276 Joint Inspection Unit”.
