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Chairman: Mr. Sharma (Nepal)
*Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 119: Joint Inspection Unit (*continued*)
(A/57/34, A/57/58 and Add.1, A/57/61, A/57/321,
A/57/327 and A/57/434)

1. **Mr. Iossifov** (Russian Federation) said that the activities of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) made a vital contribution to greater financial and administrative efficiency in the Organization. The daily functioning of the United Nations and its systems and the ongoing reform required coordinated and effective efforts by the oversight organs and his delegation accordingly supported any steps to strengthen both internal and external oversight bodies and avoid duplication of their activities. It welcomed the cooperation between JIU and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the Panel of External Auditors and other internal oversight services of the organizations of the United Nations system and the multilateral financial institutions, as well as the reports of JIU to the Fifth Committee, the Committee on Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). It was, however, concerned that the secretariats of the participating organizations were so slow to provide JIU with the information and/or comments requested, and that the legislative organs of the organizations of the United Nations system considered and acted on so few of the JIU reports. His delegation called for greater efforts by JIU, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and the secretariats of the participating organizations to remedy the situation.

2. His delegation did not support the proposal that JIU should include in its reports the comments of participating organizations on its findings and recommendations. A constructive exchange of ideas and information during the preparation of the reports was, of course, necessary, but there could be no advance reconciliation and correction of those findings and recommendations would undermine the work of JIU as the only source of independent oversight and inspection.

3. Although his delegation was not satisfied with the number of reports JIU had produced in 2001, it had nevertheless been impressed by the useful analysis and recommendations in some of them, such as the report on the management of buildings (A/56/274) and the

report on reforming the Field Service category of personnel in United Nations peace operations (A/57/78). It also welcomed the attention which JIU had paid to the administrative and financial activities of the specialized agencies. It was pleased that the proposed list of reports to be prepared in 2003 included one on procurement practices (which should comment on the compliance of the Secretariat with the relevant rules), and reports on the implementation of results-based management and on human resources management. It thought, however, that JIU should also turn its attention to such topical issues as the security of United Nations premises at Headquarters and in the field, the coordination of United Nations peace-building and special political mission structures, the training of United Nations staff and, above all, a critical assessment of the effectiveness of United Nations programmes and mandates in order to meet new challenges, assign priorities and redistribute scarce resources. It also hoped that there would finally be a report on multilingualism in the United Nations system.

4. **Mr. Kramer** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand said that the three delegations were pleased that JIU had taken action to reduce the number of reports it produced, in order to clear the backlog, and had sought to respond to the concerns expressed by delegations in 2001 and to the need to comply with the provisions of its statute, as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 56/524. They urged JIU to take the opportunity to give its reports greater focus and to make targeted and specific suggestions for action.

5. A more systematic link needed to be established between the consideration of programme matters and the consideration of administrative, financial and budgetary matters, as highlighted in the JIU report entitled "Enhancing governance oversight role: structure, working methods and practices on handling oversight reports" (A/57/58). The Advisory Committee had made useful observations on the subject, and it would be helpful if JIU could describe its reactions to those observations during the Committee's informal consultations.

6. He welcomed the inclusion in the annual report of a section on the follow-up of JIU reports and recommendations. He hoped that JIU would continue its discussions with participating organizations to ensure more effective follow-up, and that it would

complete and apply the arrangements being developed to track follow-up activity.

7. He also welcomed the intention of JIU to include in its reports the comments of the participating organizations on its findings and recommendations, in accordance with the request of the General Assembly. However, the inclusion of such comments should not prevent the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) from issuing separate comments when it deemed it necessary to do so.

8. The programme of work of JIU for 2003 and beyond covered important matters including cooperation with multilateral financial institutions and institutional and programme issues connected with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). He hoped that those reports would indicate how international organizations could best complement each other and avoid unnecessary duplication. It would also be interesting to learn more about the contribution JIU could make to the assessment of issues related to the implementation of results-based budgeting. The proposed programme of work for 2003 and beyond, however, also included reports about which the delegations for which he spoke and other delegations had expressed concern the previous year; he looked forward to further discussion of those proposals during the Committee's informal consultations.

9. **Mr. Yamanaka** (Japan) said that participating organizations should make greater use of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit. In many instances, however, the delay of the comments of CEB was a major factor in preventing the reports of the Unit from being considered by the legislative organs in a timely manner. Quite often, also, individual comments on the draft reports differed from the coordinated comments of CEB.

10. With regard to the programme of work of the Unit, his delegation attached great importance to the interaction between the Unit and participating organizations. It would therefore welcome information on recent progress in that area and on progress in compliance with the provisions of article 9 of the statute of the Unit. It would also welcome information on the implementation of paragraph 16 of resolution 56/245, in which the Assembly requested the Unit to place more emphasis on the evaluation aspects of its work.

11. **Mr. Sabagh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation was satisfied with the work of the JIU, but hoped that its recommendations would focus more on facts. He pointed out that the word used to translate "oversight" in the Arabic version of the reports was incorrect.

12. **Mr. Kuyama** (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit) responding to the questions that had been raised, said that he would leave the discussion of specific points until the Committee's informal consultations and confine his responses to more general issues.

13. On the matter of progress on the evaluation aspect of the work of JIU, he said that the best example was a case study focusing on the water sector that had been prepared and would be transmitted to the Second Committee as part of the goal of reporting on technical cooperation projects and their end-beneficiaries.

14. With regard to the request in paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 56/524 that the comments made by participating organizations should be included in JIU reports, he said that experimental steps were being taken. The pioneering work in that regard was the report on support costs related to extrabudgetary activities in organizations of the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2002/3). Throughout the preparation of that report, efforts had been made to maintain contact with the participating organizations and to incorporate their views. Even at the stage of the final draft, however, some organizations had taken issue with certain aspects of the report, and JIU had decided to include those observations in an annex attached to the report. Further discussion on the matter of incorporating the comments of participating organizations in JIU reports was certainly needed. However, JIU did not intend in that process to depart from the terms of article 11.4 of its statute; that consideration, and the need to maintain coherence between the organizations of the United Nations system, would guide its discussions with the participating organizations.

15. **Mr. El Atrash** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his delegation continued to be convinced of the importance of JIU. It was satisfied with what the Unit had achieved and wished to encourage it, in the interests of improving the Organization's administrative and financial performance, to redouble its efforts, to increase collaboration with other oversight bodies and to make more specific and applicable recommendations. His delegation was also

concerned about the delay in the issuance of JIU reports — a delay which had been particularly long in 2002 — since it could have negative consequences for the work of the General Assembly. He urged JIU to look into the question of the preparation of its reports and recommendations and try to avoid such problems in the future.

16. **Mr. Yussuf** (United Republic of Tanzania) commended the Joint Inspection Unit on its efforts to ensure that its recommendations were implemented. In that connection, it would be helpful to Member States if the Unit were to prepare a table listing the specific recommendations that had been made, the status of their implementation and, where applicable, the reasons for their non-implementation.

17. **Mr. Manczyk** (Poland) said that the themes covered in the preliminary listing of potential reports for the programme of work of the Unit for 2003 (A/57/321) and beyond reflected the most important problems emanating from the new priorities adopted in the Millennium Declaration and were attuned to the second stage of the Secretary-General's reforms.

18. It would be useful to have an evaluation of the mechanisms planned or already in place to ensure an interdisciplinary approach to the formulation and implementation of the programmes and activities of a number of United Nations organizations and to specific problems in the economic and social fields. He recalled the proposal of the Secretary-General regarding the consolidation of reports that were relevant to both the Second and Third Committees. The Unit might likewise wish to examine the possibility of merging some of the activities and programmes in the economic and social fields.

19. His delegation shared the view that the proposed review of their planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluations systems would help United Nations organizations to cope more adequately with requirements for efficiency and accountability. The resulting report, however, should be prepared after the second stage of the Secretary-General's reforms had been implemented, since budgeting, programming and planning were important components of those reforms.

20. **Mr. Kuyama** (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit), replying to the question raised by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, said that the Unit's current practice was to prepare a table that tracked the steps taken in the implementation of its

recommendations up to the point at which its report was considered by a legislative organ. Another table tracked the follow-up action taken by the organ in question. The information was therefore available and could be easily submitted in the format requested. He cautioned, however, that certain recommendations were addressed specifically to the executive heads of organizations.

Agenda item 115: Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (A/57/265)

21. **Mr. Walton** (Director of the Management Policy Office, Department of Management), introducing the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the statistical report of the Chief Executives Board on the budgetary and financial situation of the organizations of the United Nations system (A/57/265), said that the report was the seventh of its kind and the first to be presented by the Chief Executives Board. The tables included in the report contained information on approved regular budgets (1994-2003); assessed contributions (1994-2003); percentage assessments (2002-2003); assessments voted and received (2000-2001); collection of assessed contributions (2000 and 2001); working capital funds; voluntary contributions: expenditure (2000-2001); and voluntary contributions: funds received (2000-2001). The footnotes accompanying the tables clarified individual figures and provided general explanations relevant to the scope and interpretation of the data presented. The note was for information only and the Committee was not required to take any action.

22. **The Chairman** proposed that the Secretariat should prepare a draft decision for the consideration of the Fifth Committee, in which the Committee would recommend that the General Assembly take note of the note by the Secretary-General on the budgetary and financial situation of organizations of the United Nations system: statistical report of the Chief Executives Board on the budgetary and financial situation of the organizations of the United Nations system, contained in document A/57/265.

23. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.