



# General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

Official Records

Distr.: General  
31 March 2014

Original: English

## Fifth Committee

### Summary record of the 29th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 11 March 2014, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Taalas . . . . . (Finland)

*later:* Mr. Dosseh (Vice-Chair) . . . . . (Togo)

*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative*

*and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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*Thematic cluster II: Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic*


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*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 132: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations** (*continued*)

*Progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat (A/68/697 and A/68/783)*

1. **Mr. Takasu** (Under-Secretary-General for Management), introducing the Secretary-General's third progress report on accountability in the United Nations Secretariat (A/68/697), said that the report outlined the progress made over the last eight months and included an action plan for further strengthening each accountability tool, such as results-based management, discussed in the report. It also provided an overview of how the business transformation projects, Umoja and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), constituted the foundation for strengthening accountability in the Organization. Every accountability-related initiative being implemented was part of a comprehensive process aimed at making the United Nations a better-managed organization.

2. Those initiatives could be grouped into three categories: those which introduced a stronger focus on performance and results; those which sought to improve governance and oversight; and those which sought to ensure better management and administration. Umoja and IPSAS would contribute substantially to the first two categories, by improving the Organization's ability to monitor and report on performance and results, and by providing real-time, comprehensive data for decision-making.

3. Further to the request by the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/253, that the Secretary-General should start to implement the results-based framework in a phased manner, an interdepartmental working group, led by his Office, had developed an action plan to implement results-based management by considering each stage of the process. The group's recommendations had been endorsed by the Management Performance Board, which would monitor their implementation. The working group had determined that what was most needed was for senior managers to demonstrate their commitment to results-based management and the pertinent training and tools. In addition to the findings and recommendations of the working group, the third progress report also included the results of an extensive review of literature from within the United Nations

system and other organizations on the lessons learned and the challenges faced by different organizations when implementing results-based management.

4. The Secretariat had made significant progress in the implementation of enterprise risk management. His Office had just completed a Secretariat-wide risk assessment, with input from every head of department and office and other senior staff. All offices and departments now had a focal point. The preliminary results, including risk definitions, an analysis of key risk drivers, a description of the controls already established by management and an evaluation of their effectiveness, and an outline of potential risk response strategies, would be presented to the Management Committee in March 2014.

5. Once the Management Committee had arrived at a common understanding of the principal risks and their criticality, the responsible managers in the different areas of the Organization would define comprehensive risk treatment and response plans and identify responsible risk owners. His Office would monitor progress and periodically report to the Management Committee on the implementation, updating and maintaining of the risk register.

6. Strengthening an accountability system in an organization as complex as the United Nations was a daunting, ongoing, task; however, with the support and encouragement of Member States, the Secretary-General was committed to making the United Nations a better managed and more accountable organization.

7. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/68/783), said that IPSAS and Umoja were expected to bring about transformational change in the Organization, and that in future reports the Advisory Committee intended to assess their effect on enhanced accountability and transparency.

8. On performance, the Advisory Committee noted that, as in 2011/12, in the 2012/13 performance cycle only 1 per cent of staff had been rated as partially meeting or not meeting performance expectations, a percentage that raised concerns about the credibility of the performance appraisal system. There must be a viable system of rewards and sanctions linked to performance.

9. One initiative aimed at improving accountability in the Secretariat was the strengthening of senior managers' compacts. Senior managers played an important role in providing a model of exemplary conduct and setting the right tone for staff. Compliance with the applicable regulations and rules was, of course, central to a more accountable Secretariat. Lastly, the Advisory Committee recommended against the Secretary-General's request that accountability reports should be submitted on a biennial basis, given the initiatives in progress and upcoming developments.

10. **Ms. Rios Requena** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group had considered the Secretary-General's report in the light of the requests made by the General Assembly for detailed plans and updates on the implementation of efforts to strengthen accountability in the United Nations Secretariat, in accordance with the definition of accountability given in its resolution [64/259](#). The General Assembly, in its resolution [66/257](#), had emphasized the importance of establishing and fully implementing effective and efficient mechanisms that would foster institutional and personal accountability at all levels. In that regard, senior managers had a special responsibility to act as exemplary models for their staff. In particular, senior managers were responsible for accurately reflecting organizational mandates and for ensuring that such mandates were implemented throughout their departments. The Group therefore expected that mixed performance by senior managers on the standard managerial indicators in the compacts would be addressed.

11. The continued low percentage of staff rated as partially meeting or not meeting performance expectations in the 2012/13 performance cycle raised profound concerns about the credibility of the appraisal system. There must be a viable system of rewards and sanctions. As recommended by the Board of Auditors, the link between performance appraisals and rewards or sanctions should be strengthened for all United Nations staff, including those in peacekeeping operations. The policy of zero tolerance of sexual exploitation or abuse must also be fully implemented.

12. Lastly, the Group remained of the view that the General Assembly should continue to receive annual progress reports on the implementation of the accountability framework, as it was a continuous and ongoing exercise.

13. *Mr. Dosseh (Togo), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

14. **Mr. Dettling** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that the systematic application of the accountability system was essential to ensuring that the management of the United Nations was predictable, credible, effective and efficient. However, that could not be achieved without a firm commitment by staff and clear leadership by management. The Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen the accountability system, including the establishment of the working group on results-based management and the development of an action plan to implement the group's conclusions, were therefore welcome. The task of fully implementing cultural change on such a scale would not be easy. Since the introduction of results-based budgeting 13 years previously little progress had been made, and the Organization should now focus on results rather than outputs. The adoption of a results-based management system was a priority for the United Nations; the Secretariat should intensify its efforts to ensure the credible and sustainable implementation of such a system.

15. Welcoming the action plan on the establishment of an enterprise risk management and internal control framework, on the basis of the first Secretariat-wide risk assessment, he urged the Secretariat to establish the framework as soon as possible. The framework had a role to play in the sound management of the Organization, and must be taken into account in the decision-making processes of the Secretariat and the General Assembly. The Secretary-General should also strengthen the coherence of the tools for implementing the accountability system, so that Member States could better understand and support those initiatives. To that end, the Secretary-General should put forward a plan providing a clear overview of the different lines of action, objectives and a time frame for implementation.

16. Lastly, the Secretary-General should take the necessary measures to remedy the chronic delay in the issuance of his reports, as it had a direct impact on the work of the Committee and formed part of the Secretariat's duty of accountability to Member States.

17. **Mr. Lieberman** (United States of America) said that the principles of accountability, integrity, efficiency and effectiveness were key to ensuring the success and long-term viability of the Organization. It was therefore imperative for the United Nations to have strong control mechanisms and oversight capabilities in place to monitor results and to ensure that mandated

activities were carried out responsibly, effectively and efficiently. Every dollar wasted through inefficiency, mismanagement or corruption was a dollar not spent on performing the essential work of the Organization.

18. While his delegation welcomed the progress made in implementing IPSAS and Umoja to bring about a positive transformative change at the United Nations, it underscored the need for those projects to be completed effectively and efficiently. Like any major transition, the process had not always been easy, but it was essential to building a modern and sustainable United Nations that could meet future global challenges. His delegation would continue to monitor developments in those key areas and would also be interested to learn more about how the Secretariat would implement the recommendations of the working group on results-based management.

19. Enterprise risk management had been under consideration for some time, with many useful recommendations from various quarters, including the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, regarding the need to assess risk and mainstream risk management at every level of the Organization. In that connection, the Secretary-General should complete the Secretariat-wide risk assessment expeditiously and senior management should continue to make it a priority.

20. Noting the Advisory Committee's concerns regarding the credibility of the United Nations performance appraisal system and the need for a viable system of rewards and sanctions, his delegation would be interested to hear more about plans to implement additional key performance indicators to further increase accountability and enhance internal controls. The United Nations should be the standard bearer for personal accountability by holding staff accountable for achieving results and taking prompt corrective action in the event of poor performance or misconduct. His delegation therefore commended the Secretary-General on having improved the usefulness of senior manager compacts by measuring performance against targets set in the leadership compacts.

21. Concerns persisted about accountability in field operations, especially with regard to sexual exploitation or abuse and criminal misconduct. It was imperative for the United Nations policy of zero tolerance of sexual exploitation or abuse to be fully implemented throughout the Organization, but especially in field operations, where those who had

recently suffered as a result of conflict might be the most vulnerable. His delegation looked forward to the finalization of the Department of Field Support policy on accountability for conduct and discipline in field missions, and to the introduction of risk management practices in pilot areas.

22. Lastly, the Organization should expedite its efforts to revise the administrative issuances describing the types of conduct for which disciplinary measures might be imposed. He looked forward to the completion of the comprehensive review of the regulatory frameworks for protecting whistle-blowers, with a view to ascertaining what more needed to be done to protect those reporting wrongdoing and misconduct.

*Civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict*  
(A/68/696-S/2014/5, A/68/696/Corr.1-S/2014/5/Corr.1 and A/68/784)

23. **Ms. Cliffe** (Assistant Secretary-General for Civilian Capacities), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict (A/68/696-S/2014/5 and A/68/696/Corr.1-S/2014/5/Corr.1), said that the report provided new information on results, lessons learned on supporting national ownership, and outreach, in particular to the global South. As the final report of the civilian capacities initiative, it outlined how the lessons learned in that area could be taken forward within the mandates of existing structures and business processes. The report summarized lessons learned within the overall scope of the civilian capacities initiative, as set out in General Assembly resolution 66/255, and with regard to the five capacity gap areas identified by the Senior Advisory Group: inclusive political processes; safety and security; justice; core government functionality; and economic revitalization. Supporting capacity-building in those areas was still relevant as integrated missions around the world, mandated to support national capacity-building, continued to face challenges.

24. The main results included the development of comprehensive guidance material to support national institution-building; improved system-wide coordination mechanisms, such as the global focal point for police, justice and corrections; identifying new sources of expertise, in particular in the global South; and the application of strengthened approaches at the country level. The principal lessons learned were grouped into three key areas: supporting national ownership of institution-building in post-conflict settings; broadening

and deepening the pool of civilian expertise for peacebuilding; and enhancing regional, South-South and triangular cooperation.

25. The report described how the Organization could define, within existing planning and budgeting processes, realistic national institution-building outcomes that supported national ownership and the resources needed to achieve them. Instead of proposing to change the format, structure, sequencing or presentation of budgets, the report articulated how the United Nations could present more information to Member States to support planning and decision-making in those areas. It outlined measures to strengthen integrated assessment, planning and implementation, and clarified the division of labour between United Nations missions and country teams. Drawing upon the complementary capacities of those missions and country teams, as defined by the Security Council in its resolution 2086 (2013), would not change the existing mandate of any of the United Nations entities, but it would help to avoid duplication and to maximize collective support.

26. The report also highlighted the need for more clearly delineated institution-building outcomes; information on how national decision-making cycles might affect or change mission activities; and descriptions of the mix of inputs required. Such measures should sharpen the focus on institution-building results in the planning process and promote a more systematic link between planning and resources.

27. Another lesson learned was the need to produce a few key results quickly across the political, security, justice, economic and social sectors, in order to build the confidence of conflict-affected populations in their national institutions. While no proposals were made in that regard, the report did indicate that integrated assessment and planning processes would, where mandated, have a stronger focus on the support needed for institutions to deliver rapid, confidence-building results. Those processes would also identify gaps in support to core political, justice or security institutions in mandated areas that might threaten peace and security, so that those risks could be drawn to the attention of Member States.

28. With regard to sustained financing of national institutions, senior leadership teams should work with host governments and international financial institutions to identify the costs of sustaining national

institutions and ensure that robust financing frameworks were in place for the longer term. Since most post-conflict countries lacked domestic resources and were dependent on external funding, Member States should ensure sustained and predictable financing to support national institution-building after conflict. The report presented a systematic series of steps to apply all the lessons learned from the earliest stages of the planning processes until mission drawdown and transition. The General Assembly should explicitly encourage application of those lessons through the measures set out in the report.

29. The lessons learned and future actions on outreach, particularly through the CAPMATCH pilot online platform, showed that relevant civilian expertise was available in Member States, particularly those in the global South, which comprised more than two thirds of CAPMATCH participants. The CAPMATCH pilot supported the provision of a broader pool of candidates for existing selection processes, and had resulted in specialized expertise being deployed to Liberia, Yemen, Côte d'Ivoire and South Sudan.

30. However, human outreach to field presences and supplier countries was needed to support existing business processes so as to refine requirements, build sustained relationships and resolve issues in order to allow deployments to go ahead. Member States had indicated that they wanted to engage with the United Nations through the normal structures of the Secretariat and established selection processes. The report therefore focused on existing workforce planning and outreach capacities in the Department of Field Support, together with the thematic areas of expert outreach in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions and other offices within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs.

31. Lastly, South-South, regional and triangular cooperation and partnerships with international financial institutions could be very valuable to post-conflict countries, as such cooperation, which was often based on voluntary funding, ensured a coordinated approach to financing capacity-building needs and drew on the experience of institution-building in the global South.

32. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/68/784), said that, by previously deferring

consideration of earlier reports of the Secretary-General and of the Advisory Committee, the General Assembly had failed to conclude its consideration of those reports. The Advisory Committee therefore reiterated all its previous observations and recommendations so that the General Assembly could examine them in conjunction with the observations and recommendations contained in the present report.

33. The reports of the Secretary-General had been directed at multiple audiences. The Advisory Committee noted that its consideration of those reports had preceded the deliberations of the bodies concerned, that the civilian capacity initiative encompassed several different work streams with administrative and budgetary implications, and that the reports on the different elements of the initiative did not outline precise programmatic, administrative and budgetary implications. Neither was it clear what the specific administrative and budgetary implications of the conclusions drawn in paragraphs 19-33 of the Secretary-General's report were, particularly with respect to the content, timing and sequencing of United Nations budgets. National institution-building objectives were currently reflected in mission budget proposals together with related resources in cases where institution-building was an authorized component of a particular mission's mandate. Nothing in the current financial and budgetary framework precluded a proposal for either staff or non-staff resources in support of such objectives in a mission's budget request submitted for the General Assembly's approval. However, the Advisory Committee stressed the importance of proper planning efforts in order to minimize the frequency of resource deployments during budget execution.

34. He noted that efforts to develop a more systematic and coherent United Nations response to delivering institution-building results would be incorporated into existing organizational structures and business processes. Consequently, the stand-alone team in place since the outset of the initiative would be phased out by June 2014. The Advisory Committee also noted the Secretary-General's intention to discard the automated matching systems and to use instead the existing systems of the Departments of Field Support and Peacekeeping Operations to undertake workforce planning and outreach, but that no specific proposal for funding had been made in that regard.

35. Lastly, with regard to the Secretary-General's proposals to make further use of Government-provided personnel for time-limited, specialized functions not

readily available within the Secretariat, greater clarity was required in terms of the functions for which the use of such personnel might be appropriate. The General Assembly should provide updated guidance to the Secretary-General in that regard. The Advisory Committee intended to make additional observations and recommendations on the use of Government-provided personnel in its forthcoming report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations.

36. **Ms. Rios Requena** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group supported the initiative to strengthen civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict and stressed the importance of improving the Organization's support for civilian capacity development and institution-building in countries emerging from conflict. The fundamental principle of national ownership was an essential condition for sustainable peace.

37. The Advisory Committee had raised important questions about the administrative and budgetary implications of the conclusions and proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report; the Group looked forward to receiving more information. However, any changes to the current budget procedures, rules and format were subject to review and approval by the Committee. More clarity was also needed with regard to the use of joint delivery mechanisms and the concept of comparative advantage. Further clarification would also be sought of the proposal to align mission formulation with national decision-making cycles. In that regard, she would welcome concrete proposals on robust financing frameworks for institution-building.

38. Commending the intention of the Secretary-General to broaden the pool of civilian expertise for peacebuilding and to enhance regional, South-South and triangular cooperation, she said that the civilian capacity initiative must benefit from the experience of the global South in capacity-building and post-conflict transition. In that connection, the General Assembly should hold an in-depth discussion on the use of Government-provided personnel by the United Nations, in particular to ensure transparency in the selection of such personnel and to avoid past issues with regard to the use of gratis personnel.

39. **Ms. Power** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania

and Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Ukraine, said that the European Union strongly supported the basic principles of the civilian capacity initiative and welcomed the cross-cutting effort to improve support from the United Nations for capacity-building in countries emerging from conflict. Noting that the Secretary-General's report would be the last stand-alone report on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict and that the team would be disbanded by the summer of 2014, she welcomed the fact that its work would be incorporated into existing structures and business processes without requiring extra resources. She welcomed the progress made and the commitment by the Secretary-General to ensuring that the promotion of effective civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict and crisis remained a priority across the United Nations system.

40. **Mr. Dettling** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein and Norway, said that while progress had been made in strengthening institutional arrangements in different areas of civilian peacebuilding, the Secretary-General must apply the lessons learned in order to optimize effectiveness and efficiency in United Nations action in the aftermath of conflict. In that connection, the designation of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme as the global focal point for police, justice and corrections in maintaining the rule of law in post-conflict and other crisis situations represented an important step towards greater coherence and improved coordination of United Nations action, both in the field and at Headquarters. He hoped that the lessons learned would facilitate similar progress in other areas.

41. Noting with interest the lessons drawn by the Secretary-General, including the need to strengthen integration and coordination among the different United Nations entities involved in post-conflict settings, and the need to align their actions with the national decision-making cycles of the countries concerned, he welcomed the efforts of the civilian capacity initiative to bolster wider international partnerships in countries affected by conflict.

42. Other recommendations were that expected national institution-building outcomes and activities should be better defined in the planning of missions and in related budget proposals. In addition, appropriate provisions should be in place to respond to evolving requirements on the ground and to ensure that

the right mix of civilian skills could be made available at all times. He expressed support for the measures set out by the Secretary-General.

43. The work of the civilian capacity team had shown the breadth of expertise available from untapped sources, especially in countries in the global South. The United Nations should enhance that potential and strengthen its outreach activities as part of a comprehensive and forward-looking workforce planning strategy. As South-South and triangular cooperation also had an important part to play in the institution-building processes in post-conflict settings, the Secretary-General's efforts to offer more structured support to Member States involved in such partnerships, in particular through the work of the United Nations Development Programme, was welcome.

44. While he commended the civilian capacity team on its work, the task of enabling global capacities in support of national institutions remained as crucial as ever. The lessons learned should therefore continue to be shared and integrated into the Organization's structures and business processes. The conclusion of the team's work by June 2014 should not signal a reduction in the Organization's efforts in that area, but, rather, the beginning of a more systematic approach throughout the United Nations system. Lastly, as it was the second report that the Secretary-General had presented to the Committee on the matter, the Committee should take note of the findings of the two reports and not defer their consideration any longer.

45. **Mr. Lieberman** (United States of America) said that the report before the Committee was the culmination of years of work by the Secretariat on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict and, in particular, followed on from the report by the Senior Advisory Group on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict ([A/65/747-S/2011/85](#)), which took a holistic approach to the issue of civilian capacity, by considering how to overcome administrative hurdles, improve coordination, and leverage external sources of capacity, including through South-South cooperation, while ensuring that national ownership remained the guiding principle in post-conflict peacebuilding. Implementing the recommendations in that report had not been easy, but much had been accomplished and many of the lessons learned could be applied in future peacebuilding efforts. In that regard he commended the Secretariat on its transparent and inclusive consultation with Member States.

46. The agenda item under consideration was unusual in that it concerned a large number of intergovernmental bodies, including the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the General Assembly in plenary, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council. While the input of each intergovernmental body was important for the holistic consideration warranted, each body should confine its consideration to areas within its specific remit. His delegation therefore looked forward to examining the administrative and budgetary aspects. He noted that some questions raised in the Secretary-General's report would be discussed in greater detail at the second part of the resumed session.

47. **Mr. Warraich** (Pakistan) said that the information and recommendations on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict contained in the reports, including the lessons learned in the three key areas of improving support for institution-building grounded in national ownership, broadening and deepening the pool of civilian expertise for peacebuilding, and enhancing regional, South-South and triangular cooperation, would help the Committee's discussions to progress.

48. The Organization should find local solutions to local problems by identifying civilian capacities from within the region. Planning should be systematic from an early stage and linked to resources. The continuous assessment of evolving civilian capacity needs and the deployment of the right mix of civilian capacity-building expertise was also important. Lastly, missions and country teams should use the strengths of the United Nations system in a complementary manner so as to benefit from comparative advantages.

**Agenda item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (continued)**

*Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (continued)*

*Thematic cluster II: Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic (A/68/7/Add.25 and A/68/327/Add.9 and A/68/327/Add.9/Corr.1)*

49. **Ms. Casar** (Controllor), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed resource requirements for the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic (A/68/327/Add.9 and A/68/327/Add.9/Corr.1), said that for 2014 those

requirements amounted to \$1,476,100, net of staff assessment. That amount would cover the fees and official travel costs of the five members of the Panel, the cost of one P-3 Political Affairs Officer and one General Service Administrative Assistant, the official travel costs of staff, and other operational and logistical support. It was proposed that the requirements should be charged against the provision for special political missions approved under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015.

50. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/68/7/Add.25), said that the Advisory Committee welcomed the timely submission of the proposed resource requirements for the Panel of Experts; the proposed level of resources was consistent with other similarly constituted panels. The Advisory Committee recommended the approval of resources amounting to \$1,476,100, net of staff assessment, to be charged against the provision for special political missions approved under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015.

51. **Ms. Pacunega Manano** (Uganda), speaking on behalf of the African Group, welcomed the timely submission of the proposed resource requirements for the Panel of Experts in the wake of the mandates emanating from Security Council resolutions 2127 (2013) and 2134 (2014) and the appointment of the five members of the Panel in February 2014. In the light of the deteriorating political and security situation in the Central African Republic, the Committee should approve the resources proposed for the Panel so that the mandates of the Security Council could be implemented properly. It was anticipated that the Panel of Experts would cooperate with regional organizations and other sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels in performing its functions.

52. **Ms. Colín Ortega** (Mexico) said that her delegation would pay particular attention to all aspects of special political missions, particularly administrative and budgetary matters.

*The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.*