



Check Against Delivery

United Nations General Assembly Sixty-Eighth Session

Fifth Committee

Introduction of the Notes of the Secretary-General on the Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on “Review of individual consultancies in the United Nations system”, “Lump-sum payments in lieu of entitlements” and “Staff recruitment in United Nations system organizations: a comparative analysis and benchmarking framework”

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

I am pleased to introduce, on behalf of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), three notes of the Secretary-General conveying his comments and those of CEB members on reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, “Review of individual consultancies in the United Nations system”, found in document A/68/67/Add.1, “Lump-sum payments in lieu of entitlements”, document A/68/383/Add.1 and Staff recruitment in United Nations system organizations: a comparative analysis and benchmarking framework”, document A/67/888/Add.1.

Each of these reports focuses on a different aspect of workforce policy. While the topics largely do not overlap, some of the comments from agencies convey similar messages.

I begin with a report that

documentation of current practices and operations across the United Nations system, which they note will assist them in their continued efforts to improve recruitment. Agencies also generally support the recommendations contained in the report and confirm that they strive to ensure that their rules, practices and staffing processes adhere to the fundamental principles set out in the report, while taking into account directives of their governing bodies.

While supporting the principles embodied in the report, organizations caution that in some cases the benchmarks themselves can present an apparent conflict. As you can see in the Note of Secretary-General, agencies cite as an example benchmark 14, which encourages gender balance, and 15, which refers to equitable geographical distribution. While in both cases the benchmark recognizes “efficiency, competence and integrity” as the paramount employment consideration, agencies suggest that the inherent tension between the two benchmarks cannot always be resolved

t

analysis. While not all agencies may always agree or accept the recommendations, they do not dispute that the reports contain a wealth of information that allow agencies to make informed decisions.

At the same time, agencies have expressed concern that the recommendations do not always consider the environment agencies face today. In particular, with calls by member states for increased efficiencies, agencies strive to reduce overhead costs, and therefore have fewer funds to perform activities such as suggested by the Unit in recommendation 1 of the report on the lump-sum option. This recommendation calls for an in-depth analysis of the use of lump-sum for home-leave travel. Agencies agree that this would be useful, but they also note that these analyses can be costly to perform. We see this also in the report on staff recruitment, where some organizations believe that a