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Agenda item 15(b)

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## EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### (b) Joint Inspection Unit

#### Note by the Secretary-General

#### SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document provides information and comments on JIU reports received since C 106
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	1.1
<i>High-level action:</i>	1.1.2
<i>Planned output:</i>	1.1.2.14
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 23
<i>Related documents:</i>	None

#### INTRODUCTION

1 Since the 106th session of the Council in June 2011, the Secretary-General has received the following JIU reports, which contain recommendations addressed to him and the Council:

- .1 "Review of the Medical Service in the United Nations System" (JIU/REP/2011/1);
- .2 "South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the United Nations System" (JIU/REP/2011/3);
- .3 "Accountability Frameworks in the United Nations System" (JIU/REP/2011/5); and
- .4 "Business Continuity in the United Nations System" (JIU/REP/2011/6).

Copies of the aforementioned reports are available from the website of the JIU at [www.unjju.org](http://www.unjju.org).

2 The Secretary-General and the senior management have given due consideration to the reports and their recommendations, and the comments provided in the ensuing paragraphs are on those recommendations that are applicable and germane to the role and functions of the Organization.

## **REVIEW OF THE MEDICAL SERVICE IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (JIU/REP/2011/1)**

### **General**

3 The objective of this review was to assess the manner in which medical services in the United Nations system are provided, managed, supported and monitored, with a view to proposing improvements that will enable the United Nations to fulfil its duty of care with regard to the health and safety of staff. The Secretary-General has noted the result of this JIU review, which has culminated in the development of seven recommendations. The only recommendation addressed to IMO is Recommendation 3. No action is required for two recommendations, as IMO has developed and implemented an occupational health and safety policy for staff/organization. The other four recommendations are not applicable, as they are addressed specifically to the governing body, executive head and other officials of the United Nations, funds and programmes.

### **Recommendation 3**

***Executive heads of United Nations system organizations should implement systems enabling the electronic capture/archiving of staff members' medical records, if they are not already in place.***

4 The recommendation would be more applicable and useful for Organizations with heavy field presence and staff mobility. However, the Secretary-General believes that it makes little sense to implement this recommendation, as more than 90 per cent of IMO's staff members are based in London. The implementation of this recommendation in IMO would not bring any real or meaningful benefits, as the introduction of an electronic system for medical records would be expensive in terms of both equipment and staff training.

## **SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (JIU/REP/2011/3)**

### **General**

5 The objective of this review was to assess the existing institutional arrangements in support of South-South cooperation (SSC) and triangular cooperation within the United Nations system, drawing on and sharing lessons learnt, as well as identifying best coordination and collaboration for the preparation of the said framework. The review resulted in 11 recommendations addressed to legislative organs and executive heads. Two recommendations addressed or applicable to IMO are Recommendations 3 and 9. The other nine recommendations were addressed specifically to the High-level Committee on SSC and the Executive Head of a specific United Nations agency.

### **Recommendation 3**

***The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the Executive Heads to establish identifiable and dedicated structures, mechanisms and focal points tasked with developing agency-specific corporate policy and support strategy, and ensure coordination on South-South and triangular cooperation within their***

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***respective organizations and inter-agencies, through the reallocation of the necessary staff and resources for this purpose, as appropriate.***

#### **Recommendation 9**

***The legislative and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the Executive Heads to apportion a specific percentage – not less than 0.5 per cent – of core budget resources for the promotion of South-South cooperation (SSC) in their respective areas of competence, in consultation with programme countries; and to agree with donor countries to use a specific portion of extrabudgetary resources to finance SSC and triangular cooperation initiatives.***

6 The Secretary-General supports the institutionalization of promotional activities on South-South and triangular cooperation within the United Nations system and confirms that appropriate structures and mechanisms are present in IMO, within or subsumed under the existing technical co-operation programmes, with the Technical Co-operation Division (TCD), as the focal point. SSC is considered a cross-cutting delivery mechanism carried out at the programme and by subject/area levels. The SSC concept has been reflected in the Organization's High-level Actions. However, in the current economic climate, in which Member States expect the United Nations system to make budgetary cuts that have entailed freezing some posts, the Secretary-General does not consider the two recommendations feasible. IMO has an existing organizational structure that effectively handles issues of SSC and triangular cooperation using the five Geographical Focal Points supported by five field staff. This system works well for IMO and therefore there is no need to have it centralized by deploying dedicated staff/resources.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORKS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (JIU/REP/2011/5)**

#### **General**

7 The objective of this review is to map out and assess the existing (various) accountability frameworks in the United Nations system and to identify gaps where they exist. The report also analysed the components which exist in the organizations that do not possess a stand-alone formal accountability framework document. In addition, the report identified good/best practices in developing and implementing accountability frameworks/components of accountability.

8 The review resulted in seven (7) recommendations addressed to the legislative organs and executive heads. One recommendation was addressed specifically to the General Assembly and other legislative bodies for a follow-up evaluation on the implementation of the relevant accountability frameworks/systems. IMO welcomes the other six (6) recommendations contained in this report, which will enhance accountability, efficiency, transparency and dissemination of best practice, and ensure greater controls and compliance. Specific comments on the recommendations are provided in the succeeding paragraphs.

#### **Recommendation 1**

***Executive heads of the United Nations system organizations that have not yet developed stand-alone accountability frameworks should do so as a matter of priority inspired by the benchmarks contained in this report.***

**Recommendation 2**

***The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations, which have not yet done so, should take decisions based on a results-based management approach and ensure that the necessary resources are allocated to implement the organizations' strategic plans and results-based management.***

9 Although a stand-alone accountability framework has not as yet been developed for IMO, many of the elements or benchmarks identified as a measurement of the accountability frameworks are in place, operational and enforced in the Organization. These include internal control systems, the strategic planning process, results-based management, enterprise risk management, evaluations and internal oversight, policies on ethical conduct and standards of integrity, policies and guidelines on the investigation of fraud and prohibited conduct, delegation of authority, performance assessment and management, and accessibility of information through the enterprise resource planning system. However, it is recognized that the development and implementation of a stand-alone accountability framework would require a new planned output for IMO and additional resources. A policy decision should therefore be taken, as to whether the development of a **stand-alone accountability framework** is an urgent matter for IMO, as recommended in the report, taking into consideration the procedures for the assessment of outputs contained in resolution A.1013(26).

**Recommendation 3**

***Executive heads should incorporate evaluation, including self-evaluation results, in their annual reporting to legislative bodies.***

10 Impact evaluation on technical co-operation activities is carried out every four years and the result of the exercise is reported to IMO's governing bodies. Likewise, the External Auditor's report and certification of accounts are submitted to the governing bodies for approval and consideration. Consistent with its terms of reference, the Internal Oversight Services (IOS) performs internal audit functions covering the various operations of the Organization and ex-post evaluations of the training events. The work and activities carried out by IOS are reported by the Secretary-General to the governing bodies, as part of his periodic report on the work of the Organization. Although IMO may not have a formal self-evaluation process in place, the Secretary-General reports to the governing bodies transparently on what and how much work has been done and on what improvements need to be made.

**Recommendation 4**

***Executive heads of organizations which have not yet done so should inform their staff members on his/her decisions on disciplinary measures imposed on staff by publishing lists (in annexes to the annual reports and on a website) describing the offence and measures taken while ensuring anonymity of the staff member concerned.***

11 The Secretary-General notes this recommendation, which is intended to increase the awareness of staff on sanctionable offences imposed at all levels that are proportionate to the misconduct, create an accountability and transparency culture within the organization, and promote a positive perception among staff members regarding fairness of disciplinary measures. However, whether or not to inform the staff members through annual reports or a website on disciplinary measures is a sensitive matter, which requires careful consideration by the senior management together with the staff union.

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**Recommendation 5**

***Executive heads should instruct their human resources divisions to put mechanisms in place for recognizing outstanding performance by developing creative ways and means to motivate staff through awards, rewards, and other incentives.***

12 As part of his Review and Reform initiatives, the Secretary-General has established a group within the Secretariat on Human Resources and Office Structure which, in the context of developing a proactive, modern and holistic human resource management and development policy, is also looking into ways and means to motivate staff through awards, rewards and other incentives. Any measures developed or put in place should help promote a positive perception among staff regarding fairness in recognizing outstanding performance and rewarding good work, thereby increasing staff morale and improving productivity at work.

**Recommendation 6**

***The Executive heads should develop and implement an information disclosure policy to heighten transparency and accountability in their respective organizations as a matter of urgency in the event that they have not already done so and report to the legislative bodies accordingly.***

13 The above recommendation sees external communication as not limited to presenting reports to legislative bodies, rather as being towards all stakeholders, including Member States, beneficiaries, the general public and the media. The information disclosure policy must contain a detailed list of the type of organizational documents that should be made public and narrow conditions for non-disclosure, such as beneficiary data and information, and a process for external parties for requesting documents, a time frame for the request to be treated, and how to appeal if a request is denied. In this respect, the Council has approved a policy for the disclosure of IMO documents and their publication on the internet (annex to document C 101/4/1) and a policy and guidelines on the disclosure of internal audit reports are also already in place and implemented in IMO. The latter policy was approved by the Council at its 106th session in June 2011. The need to develop information disclosure policies on any other type of organizational documents will be assessed taking into account considerations of confidentiality, possible harm to individuals, security and legal matters.

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (JIU/REP/2011/6)****General**

14 The objective was to review: the existence of business continuity strategies/policies and plans within the United Nations system organizations, identifying commonalities and differences; experiences and best practices relating to their implementation; the liaison and coordination mechanisms among the United Nations organizations in the field of emergency preparedness and business continuity; and the functioning and staffing of specialized preparedness and business continuity units for emergency management, including their financing frameworks and funding mechanisms for their operation.

15 The report contains nine recommendations addressed to legislative organs and executive heads. Two of the recommendations are addressed specifically to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The seven recommendations applicable and addressed to IMO and other United Nations entities, together with comments thereon, are provided in the following paragraphs:

### **Recommendation 1**

***The Executive Heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not done so yet should develop business continuity policy/strategy, including the assignment of business continuity management with responsibility for implementation, to be submitted for information to the legislative bodies.***

16 A contingency plan comprising measures for business continuity (BC) and disaster recovery (DR) was adopted in 2004. This plan is currently under review, in light of significant changes in working practices and the IMO office environment.

### **Recommendation 2**

***Executive Heads should place business continuity management in the office of the executive head or the executive officer for management.***

17 While responsibility for BC/DR currently lies with the Director, Administrative Division, all managers are expected to contribute to the planning of and to implement those aspects of the overall contingency plan that affect their areas of operation.

### **Recommendation 3**

***The Executive Heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not done so yet should develop and approve a documented business continuity plan based on a risk assessment, identified critical functions and recovery time objectives.***

18 The contingency plan referred to above was based on an assessment of the Organization's core functions and the principal risks to those functions. Within the plan, the timetables for responding to disruptive or catastrophic events are proportional to the disruption caused.

### **Recommendation 4**

***Executive Heads should ensure that the scope of business continuity plans of the United Nations system organizations includes their field offices. Overseeing and control mechanisms should be in place to ensure the coherence and interoperability of the business continuity plan with the headquarters and the United Nations country team, where appropriate.***

19 Owing to IMO's limited field presence, BC/DR plans for its field offices are maintained locally, in conjunction with other United Nations system mechanisms at the relevant duty station.

### **Recommendation 6**

***Executive Heads should ensure that business continuity planning and implementation form part of accountability and performance evaluation of line managers.***

20 As overall responsibility for BC/DR lies within the Administrative Division, pertinent line managers within that Division are responsible for the coherent planning and implementation for the Organization's contingency plan, in conjunction with other relevant units (e.g. the Conference Division).

**Recommendation 7**

***Legislative bodies of the United Nations organizations should, on the basis of the executive heads' budget proposals, provide the necessary financial and human resources for the implementation, continuous monitoring, maintenance and updating of the approved business continuity plans developed on the basis of the organization's BC policy/strategy.***

21 The results-based budget provides for BC/DR principally with respect to the Secretariat's internal business network, the SAP system, GISIS and the Organization's internal and external websites. The ongoing review of the overall contingency plan includes consideration of such budgetary provisions and their adequacy for the purposes of ensuring timely business continuity and disaster recovery in all critical areas of IMO's work.

**Recommendation 8**

***Executive Heads should ensure that business continuity training be incorporated in the career and staff development courses, including induction training, and that periodic training be provided to critical staff in the organizations as an integral component of business continuity management.***

22 At a time of severe resource constraints, this is not considered a general training priority but staff engaged directly in the contingency plan process are kept updated.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE COUNCIL**

23 The Council is invited to take note of the information contained in this document and to consider and decide, as appropriate, on all the reports identified in paragraph 1 and the Secretary-General's comments therein.

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