

COUNCIL
108th session
Agenda item 3

C 108/3/3
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STRATEGY, PLANNING AND REFORM

Review and reform of the Organization

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document provides information on the review and reform mechanism established by the Secretary-General
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	4
<i>High-level action:</i>	4.0.1, 4.0.2, 4.0.3, 4.0.5
<i>Planned output:</i>	4.0.1.2, 4.0.1.4, 4.0.1.5, 4.0.2.1, 4.0.2.4, 4.0.2.8
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 12
<i>Related documents:</i>	C 108/5(e) and C 108/5(f)

Background

1 In setting the scene for his term of office as Secretary-General, the Council and Assembly were advised of the Secretary-General's vision for the future of the Organization and, in particular his plans to:

- .1 consult with Member Governments and other stakeholders;
- .2 enhance technical co-operation, capacity-building and implementation of IMO Conventions;
- .3 review and reform the Secretariat;
- .4 cost-consciously manage the available resources; and
- .5 develop the Secretariat's human resources.

This document reports on the work undertaken to date on the mechanism established by the Secretary-General to review and reform the Organization, taking into account the human and financial resources available in the current biennium.

The review and reform mechanism

2 The review covers all aspects of the work of the Organization and aims to provide a sound basis for any reforms necessary to address the significant challenges ahead with the limited resources available to both Member Governments and the Secretariat. In particular, how to improve the delivery mechanism to handle the ever-increasing workload as we seek to address newly emerging priorities ranging from our counter-piracy campaign through such issues as the transition to the mandatory Member State Audit and goal-based standards verification schemes and the ever-more complex environmental challenges.

3 In aiming to meet the Secretary-General's objectives of a forward-looking, efficient and cost-conscious specialized agency within the United Nations system with strengthened and knowledge-based authority in global standard setting, the review and reform mechanism has been focused on five key areas with small groups of key staff addressing:

- .1 budget and expenditure;
- .2 human resources and office structure;
- .3 meeting support arrangements;
- .4 technical co-operation; and
- .5 information technology.

These five groups are overseen by a small Steering Group comprised of the Secretary-General, three Directors and the Heads of the Secretary-General's Office and Policy and Planning Unit.

Progress to date

4 Each of the five groups has received briefing from the Steering Group on the aims and objectives of the review and a series of meetings have been held to monitor early progress and to determine the general approach to the work. In general terms, the work to date has reviewed some internal working practices to identify opportunities for streamlining and cost or resource reduction; opportunities for some rationalization of activities and enhanced use of information technology have been identified; possible cost-saving measures, both short and longer term have been given preliminary consideration; an analysis of technical co-operation capacity-building needs has commenced; and a fundamental review of the basic elements of a human resources strategy identified for further development.

5 In particular, the group on budget and expenditure has been requested, among other issues, to: review the 2012 and 2013 budget; develop the basis for the Secretary-General's study on a long-term plan for the future financial sustainability of the Organization; further strengthen the linkage between the Strategic Plan, High-level Action Plan and budget – including a possible priority setting mechanism; look into cost-saving initiatives and increased effectiveness; and consider how pay increases in the United Nations system should be addressed.

6 The group on human resources and office structure has been requested, among other issues to: consider the sustainability of the current policy of personal promotions; evaluate the merits and disadvantages of the current stringent office structure; consider ways of flexible deployment of resources to emerging needs; and develop a transparent staff career development policy.

7 The group on meeting support arrangements has been requested, among other issues, to: review current meeting support arrangements and identify opportunities for streamlining and cost/resource reduction; analyse current working arrangements vis-à-vis the meetings programme and possible changes to working practices and to make proposals for improvements to the current delivery mechanism

8 The group on technical co-operation has been requested, among other issues, to: consider establishment of country profiles for technical co-operation needs for each developing country; and consider ways to promote the establishment of national maritime transportation policies.

9 The group on information technology (IT) has been requested, among other issues, to: assess IT needs for Secretariat staff and meetings; and review the costs and benefits associated with the upgrading and updating of hardware and software.

10 As the work of each group has an impact on the work of the other groups, provisional agreement by the Steering Group of any proposals made has to be considered in the light of other proposals, particularly those related to financial and budgetary issues. The final outcome from the review process, with recommendations for related reforms, is anticipated to be presented to the Council's November session this year.

Future developments

11 The future implementation of new, proactive and transparent ways of handling our work and improvements to our existing working methods, will require effective human resource deployment and close cooperation between the Secretariat and Member Governments, particularly in respect of any longer term (i.e. the next biennia) fundamental reform of the delivery mechanism in conjunction with anticipated tight controls on budgets and expenditure. Various changes have been made in the senior management to support the work leading to a forward-looking Organization and the Secretary-General has expressed his confidence in the management qualities of senior staff and in the abilities of all IMO staff, all of whom are fully committed to play their part in an efficient and cost-effective Secretariat, as expected by the Membership.

Action requested of the Council

12 The Council is invited to note the information provided on progress with the Secretary-General's review and reform programme.
