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EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(b) Joint Inspection Unit

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides an update on actions taken for recommendations contained in a JIU review reported to C/ES.28 and information and comments on a separate JIU report received since C/ES.28

Strategic direction: 1.1

High-level action: 1.1.2

Output: 1.1.2.14

Action to be taken: Paragraph 20

Related documents: C/ES.28/10(b) and C/ES.28/D

Introduction

1 At its twenty-eighth extraordinary session in November 2015 (C/ES.28/10(b)), the Council considered the JIU report on the **"Review of activities and resources devoted to address Climate Change in the United Nations system organizations"** (JIU/REP/2015/5) and the comments provided by the Secretary-General thereon. The Council requested that the Secretary-General provide C 116 with an update on the actions taken for the recommendations contained in the report since C/ES.28.

2 The Secretary-General and the senior management have reviewed the aforementioned report and its recommendations. The comments provided in paragraphs 6 to 12 serve to update the Council on the actions taken for the recommendations contained within the report.

3 Since C/ES.28, the Secretary-General has received the JIU report on **"Public information and communications policies and practices in the United Nations system"** (JIU/REP/2015/4).

4 The Secretary-General and the senior management have given due consideration to the report and its recommendations and the comments provided in paragraphs 13 to 19 are on those recommendations that are applicable and germane to the role and functions of the Organization.

5 Copies of the aforementioned reports are available from the JIU website at <https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/Pages/reports.aspx>.

UPDATE ON ACTION TAKEN FOR RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES DEVOTED TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM ORGANIZATIONS

General

6 At C/ES.28, the Council requested that the Secretary-General provide C 116 with an update on the actions taken for the recommendations contained in the JIU report on the review of activities and resources devoted to address Climate Change in the United Nations system organizations. The five recommendations (recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6) addressed to IMO and other United Nations system organizations, together with comments providing an update on the actions taken in relation to the recommendations, are provided in the following paragraphs:

Recommendation 1

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should present to the governing bodies of their organizations a long-term United Nations system-wide climate change strategy responsive to the outcome of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21), and request its endorsement and the support necessary for its effective implementation, in order to achieve measurable interim results by 2020.

Recommendation 3

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations involved in areas with clear cross-linkages with climate change should elaborate and agree upon a common methodology to establish criteria to ensure the traceability of specific funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation, seeking consistency and coherence in the context of the climate change regime methodologies.

Recommendation 4

Executive heads of the member organizations of the CEB, under the leadership of the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chair of the CEB, should promote the development of a common information-sharing system for the measurement and monitoring of the United Nations system activities and resources aimed at addressing climate change, by sector and type of funding, so as to ensure the most cost-efficient and effective delivery of activities to tackle climate change.

7 The Secretary-General is supportive of recommendations 1, 3 and 4. The United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination's (CEB) High-Level Committee on Programmes – Working Group on Climate Change (HLCP – WGCC) has worked on the first phase of development of a system-wide climate change strategy. Following COP 21 in

December 2015, a Task Team, of which IMO is a member, was established under the HLCP – WGCC. In late February 2016 the Task Team drafted a set of shared system-wide common principles to serve as a foundation to guide and inform the United Nations system-wide strategy on climate action in the post-2015 period. The Task Team also produced a discussion paper that proposes strategic priorities through which the common principles could be operationalized. The principles underline the importance of an integrated approach to sustainable development aimed at fostering synergies and co-benefits within and across the agreements constituting the 2030 Agenda.

8 The draft "common core principles" were approved by the HLCP at its thirty-first session on 8–9 March 2016, and submitted to the CEB for endorsement at its first regular session of 2016. The CEB endorsed the "common core principles" at its latest session on 27 April 2016. The "common core principles" aim to support the second stage of the development of a system-wide climate change strategy, namely, the preparation of a roadmap towards a possible comprehensive system-wide strategy, under the leadership of the Assistant Secretaries-General of UNEP, UNDP, and DESA, who were requested to take into account the issues raised in the discussion paper.

9 With regard to recommendation 3, whilst a formal common methodology is yet to be established, one of the priorities for coordinated United Nations system action on climate change, as proposed in the discussion paper to be taken into account during the second phase of development of a United Nations system-wide climate change strategy, is to "collaborate on integrated and accountable use of climate finance".

10 With regard to recommendation 4, the HLCP at its thirty-first session strongly favoured making better and more effective use of existing coordination mechanisms, as opposed to creating a new heavy structure. At the same time, the value of providing a platform for knowledge and information exchange on climate change among United Nations system entities was underscored, as well as the need for innovative models for collaboration between the United Nations system and other stakeholders. The Secretary-General fully endorses efficient coordination of collaborative information-sharing, and will ensure IMO participates in any future common information-sharing system that is not cost prohibitive.

Recommendation 2

The governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should support and endorse the participation of their respective organizations involved in cross-cutting areas directly or indirectly related to climate change in a system-wide United Nations strategy to combat climate change, in a manner consistent with the outcome of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

11 The Secretary-General supported and the Council endorsed this recommendation at C/ES.28. Action taken in this regard has been highlighted in paragraphs 7 and 8 above.

Recommendation 6

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations involved in country activities in the UNDAF, should ensure that their organizations follow the UNDG guidance on integrating climate change in the UNDAF and build on existing good practices of engagement with the relevant UNFCCC bodies, for climate change assistance at the country and regional level, in close cooperation with the resident coordinators, to enhance and strengthen capacity-building assistance to developing countries through CCAs/UNDAFs.

12 No specific action has been taken to implement this recommendation because IMO is not involved in country activities in the UNDAF.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (JIU/REP/2015/4).

General

13 The objectives of this review were to provide a comparative assessment of respective public information and communications function arrangements within the United Nations system organizations; propose benchmarks for a strategic approach to communications; assess the current mechanisms of system-wide coordination among organizations; identify good practices for improving organizations' communications capabilities; and examine the use of social media as an emerging phenomenon in the information and communications domain.

14 The report contains six recommendations of which five (Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6) require action by IMO. Recommendation 1 is addressed to the legislative organs and the remaining four are addressed to the executive heads of the organizations. The five recommendations applicable and addressed to IMO, together with comments thereon, are provided in the following paragraphs.

Recommendation 1

The legislative/governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads to embrace the nine benchmarks proposed in the present report, in order to enhance the strategic role of the public information and communications function in contributing to the achievement of organizational goals and priorities, thereby promoting global support for their organization.

Recommendation 2

Starting from the forthcoming programme and budget cycle, the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should reinforce in a sustainable manner the strategic role of the public information and communications function within their organization, by adhering to the nine benchmarks proposed in the present report, as applicable.

15 The Secretary-General welcomes and supports these two recommendations and notes that IMO already adheres to most of the benchmarks presented in the report. An IMO Communication and Outreach strategy, recently adopted by the Senior Management Committee, is oriented towards supporting the Organization's strategic goals and priorities (benchmark 1), provides overarching principles of communication that pervades all departments and offices (benchmark 2), and underpins harmonized and coherent messaging

throughout the Organization (benchmark 4). Public information and communications training will be available as part of the strategy (benchmark 8). Multilingualism (benchmark 5) is being achieved through a multilingual public website and the availability of official literature in IMO's six official languages. Public information and communications activities are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis through monthly and quarterly reports to the Senior Management Committee (benchmark 9).

16 The Secretary-General recognizes the importance of continuing to develop the role of public information and communications within the Organization's overall strategy. In this regard, IMO will, in the future, further embed the public information and communications function into strategic planning decision-making processes (benchmark 1) by facilitating greater functional access to executive management (benchmark 3). The Secretary-General notes that the public information and communications function can be strengthened by adopting a long-term approach to staffing as opposed to an ad-hoc approach that currently sees 50% of staffing resources on temporary contracts, and will assess the adequacy of the existing resources available and ensure that the Office is adequately resourced to carry out effectively all its mandated functions (benchmark 6). A fundamental shift in approach and further resources would be required in order to achieve organizational integration of both internal and external communications into a holistic approach that recognizes the role of non-communication staff in public information and communications (benchmark 7).

Recommendation 4

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should take concrete measures to strengthen public information and communications capacity at the field level within their organizations, when applicable. This, in turn, would enable local UNCGs to conduct joint activities with due attention to local circumstances and organizations' mandated priorities, and reinforce the effectiveness and impact of those activities.

17 The Secretary-General accepts this recommendation and, whilst acknowledging the limited scope of IMO's field presence, this objective will be achieved to the fullest extent possible, by full implementation of the IMO Communication and Outreach Strategy.

Recommendation 5

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should develop an effective social media strategy that is based on updated guidelines and is properly aligned with the other respective policies and frameworks/strategies for public information and communications.

18 The Secretary-General agrees with this recommendation and notes that a clear social media strategy has been developed, approved and is fully implemented at IMO.

Recommendation 6

The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should strengthen the in-house capacity for social media management, with a view to creating specific content and maintaining organizational accounts, as well as to providing advice on the proper use of social media.

19 The Secretary-General agrees with this recommendation and notes that current in-house capacity for social media management is commensurate with existing requirements. The Secretary-General recognizes that, as the communication landscape continues to develop

and the balance between social media and traditional media continues to shift in favour of social media, it is expected that strengthening of capacity for social media management will be required in due course.

Action requested of the Council

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