

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 118
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	1.
<i>High-level action:</i>	1.1.1
<i>Output:</i>	1.1.1.1
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 7
<i>Related documents:</i>	None

INTRODUCTION

1 Since the 118th session of the Council in July 2017, the Secretary-General has received one Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system (JIU) report, on the Review of Air Travel Policies in the United Nations System: Achieving Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings and Enhancing Harmonization (JIU/REP/2017/3), which contains nine recommendations and information addressed to 28 United Nations system organizations. A copy of the full report is available on the JIU website at <https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/Pages/reports.aspx>

REVIEW OF AIR TRAVEL POLICIES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: ACHIEVING EFFICIENCY GAINS AND COST SAVINGS AND ENHANCING HARMONIZATION

2 The objective of the review was to assess relevant air travel regulations, policies and practices and examine their implementation across the United Nations system organizations with a view to: enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of travel management among JIU participating organizations; increasing accountability and transparency for managers who approve travel, taking into account the productivity, safety and security of travellers; promoting and increasing coordination and cooperation among the United Nations system organizations; and identifying good practices and lessons learned with a view to promoting, where possible, an appropriate degree of harmonization.

3 The report contains nine recommendations (see annex), five of which are shown as relevant for IMO to take action, as summarized below:

- establish by 2019 a consistent percentage cost threshold below which the most direct route may be selected in lieu of the most economic route, taking into account the time thresholds established in each organization's travel policy for the selection of the most economic routes (R1);
- abolish first class travel for all categories of staff and non-staff by January 2019 and permit its use only when business class is not available (R.2);
- take effective measures to enforce and monitor compliance with an advance purchase policy, including incorporation of advance planning rules and key performance indicators in travel policies that are regularly measured (R.4);
- schedule periodic monitoring and assessment to ensure conformity with the air travel policies, conduct periodic risk assessments and identify measures for further efficiency gains by the next budgetary cycle (R.5); and
- encourage the use of online booking tools for air travel, update the travel policies with guidelines for optimal use of such tools, and consider integrating them with the existing systems (R.6).

4 The Secretary-General welcomes the review of air travel policies and the recommendations contained in this report to improve the management of air travel and the effective and efficient utilization of air travel resources, and to promote the harmonization of air travel standards and the sharing of good practices across the United Nations system, which would contribute to achieving this objective.

5 The Secretary-General supports R.1 (percentage cost threshold for most direct route), R.4 (compliance with advance purchase policy), R.5 (conformity with air travel policies, risk assessment, and efficiency gains), and R.6 (online booking tools). The recommendations will be assessed and considered as part of the review of the current travel policies as provided in the IMO Travel Manual, and action will be taken to implement the recommendations whenever feasible and cost-effective.

6 The Secretary-General, while supporting R.2 (abolishment of first class travel), would like to note that in IMO, all categories of staff and non-staff travel either in business or economy class for official business travel and learning and development, except for the Secretary-General, and all staff and non-staff travel in economy class for other statutory or entitlement travel, including the Secretary-General.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE COUNCIL

7 The Council is invited to:

- .1 take note of the information on the recent JIU report, the associated recommendations excerpted therefrom as shown in the annex; and
- .2 consider and decide, as appropriate, on those recommendations addressed to the legislative bodies, taking into account the Secretary-General's comments and action plan.

ANNEX

REVIEW OF AIR TRAVEL POLICIES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: ACHIEVING EFFICIENCY GAINS AND COST SAVINGS AND ENHANCING HARMONIZATION (JIU/REP/2017/3)

Recommendation 1: The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request their executive heads, who have yet to do so, to establish by 2019 a consistent percentage cost threshold below which the most direct route may be selected in lieu of the most economic route, taking into account the time thresholds established in each organization's travel policy for the selection of the most economic routes.

Recommendation 2: The legislative bodies of all United Nations system organizations, if they have not already done so, should abolish first class travel for all categories of staff and non-staff by January 2019 and permit its use only when business class is not available.

Recommendation 3: The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to review Assembly resolutions 42/214, 45/248A and 53/214 and decisions 40/555 and 57/589 governing the standards of accommodation for air travel and to submit proposals by 2019 for updating and consolidating the policies, taking into consideration developments in information systems and technology, the air travel industry, as well as good practices in other United Nations system organizations.

Recommendation 4: The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, that have not yet done so, should ensure by 2019 that effective measures are taken to enforce and monitor compliance with an advance purchase policy, including incorporation of advance planning rules and key performance indicators in travel policies that are regularly measured.

Recommendation 5: The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should schedule periodic monitoring and assessment to ensure conformity with their own air travel policies, conduct periodic risk assessments and identify measures for further efficiency gains by their next budgetary cycle.

Recommendation 6: The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, if they have not already done so, should encourage the use of online booking tools for air travel, update their travel policies with guidelines for optimal use of such tools, and consider integrating them with their existing systems by 2020.

Recommendation 7: The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as the Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to review measures to promote the harmonization of standards of accommodation for air travel applied across the United Nations system organizations, as well as expenses related to air travel for both mission and statutory travel, and to report on the results to the General Assembly during the first part of its seventy-third resumed session.

Recommendation 8: The General Assembly should request the International Civil Service Commission to undertake a system-wide review of lump-sum entitlements for statutory travel focused on determining by 2019 a common methodology and percentage for its calculation that furthers harmonization, minimizes the risk of distortion and ensures equity and fairness among common system staff.

Recommendation 9: The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as the Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to submit a proposal on the feasibility of establishing a formal advisory committee on travel matters, for the consideration of the General Assembly during the first part of its seventy-third resumed session.