

Talking Points for Ms. Kane's Statement to the Fifth Committee on the Report of the Secretary-General entitled "Progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat" (A/66/692)

Tuesday, 13 March 2012

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

- I am pleased to introduce the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat". This report is submitted in response to Resolution 64/259, which requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of a number of accountability-related measures at the main part of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.
- The report highlights the progress made in the past two years to strengthen accountability in the Secretariat, in particular efforts to deepen a culture of accountability, to clarify and codify delegations of authority, to further implement human resources management reforms, and to lay the groundwork for enterprise risk management.
- I would like to mention five particularly noteworthy achievements over the past two years:
 - One year ago the Secretariat launched an intranet website dedicated to the topic of accountability. This serves as the cornerstone of a communications campaign to raise awareness and promote a culture of accountability among staff at all levels. It consistently ranks among the leading pages that provide original content on the Secretariat's intranet.
 - The Secretariat has completed a review of the delegations of authority related to human resources, financial and property management to establish clearly who has the delegated authority to take specific decisions and actions and identify the legal source of authority of each delegation.

- We have introduced a data-driven and goal-focused Human Resources Management Scorecard that delivers timely performance information relevant to the monitoring needs of managers and other stakeholders. This scorecard has been streamlined into the senior managers' compacts.
- We have reformed the performance appraisal system to strengthen managerial accountability and shift the focus from compliance to advisory support, with an emphasis on career and staff development.
- And we have promulgated and tested a policy for the Secretariat-wide implementation of enterprise risk management.
- I would also like to take this opportunity to share with you that much progress has been made towards strengthening our processes for ensuring that the recommendations of the oversight bodies are implemented.
- We have clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of the officials responsible for responding to these recommendations, and the Management Committee is now taking a more proactive role in monitoring implementation. Out of 16,694 recommendations issued by OIOS between 1999 and November 2011, 81 percent have been implemented and only eight percent are outstanding.
- A similar track record of effective implementation can be also reported in terms of the findings and recommendations of the Board of Auditors, and we are working closely with the Joint Inspection Unit to improve our implementation rate of its recommendations in the context of the JIU's upcoming web-based tracking system.
- In closing I would like to bring to your attention that the Joint Inspection Unit recently conducted a comparative analysis of various accountability frameworks in the United Nations system as well as several other prominent international public institutions and found

that the accountability framework of the United Nations Secretariat is the one that “includes most of the key components that must be part of an accountability framework.”

- With that said, however, and as the Secretary-General’s report notes, strengthening accountability is a continual work in progress, and more work remains to be done. An example is in the area of results-based management, where the Secretariat, including the Secretary-General’s Change Implementation Team, is developing a methodology and implementation strategy that is appropriate for the unique UN context.
- The Secretary-General is committed to working with all relevant stakeholders in identifying areas that need strengthening in a continuous process of improvement, for he understands that accountability is the cornerstone upon which an effective and trustworthy Organization is built.
- Thank you very much.