

New Zealand Mission to the United Nations



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Item 139: Review of efficiency: Accountability

Statement by Mr Paul Ballantyne on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand

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Mr Chairman,

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand (CANZ) on agenda item 129: Accountability.

I thank the Under Secretary-General for Management, Mr Yukio Takasu, for introducing the report of the Secretary General, and Mr Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing the corresponding report of the Advisory Committee.

Mr Chairman,

A great deal of progress has been made in the seven and a half years since the adoption of the World Summit Outcome document, where our leaders underscored the importance of establishing effective and efficient mechanisms for responsibility and accountability within the UN Secretariat. But as with any process of continuous improvement, there is still much work to be done.

As the Secretary-General highlights in his progress report, a culture of accountability goes far beyond the simple posting of a declaration of principles on a website. A culture of accountability comprises many elements, all of which require sustained commitment at the most senior levels of the Organisation. In this regard, we welcome the measures taken by the Secretary-General, including through the development of a "leadership dialogues" programme, aimed at promoting the commitment of managers to ethical leadership, and highlighting the direct relationship between individual actions and the overall reputation of the Organisation. Like the ACABQ, CANZ looks forward to receiving information on the specific impact of such measures in the next progress report of the Secretary-General.

Mr Chairman,

CANZ welcomes the completion of the comprehensive review and mapping of the current system of delegation of authority undertaken by the Secretary-General. We have also taken note of the Secretary-General's intention to further revise and adjust these mappings in the

context of the new common business models to be used across the Secretariat globally, following the implementation of Umoja. We remain concerned, however, at the lack of concrete detail in this regard – particularly the lack of a clear timeline for the completion of this work. In the absence of such information, it is difficult for us as Member States to hold the Secretariat accountable for the completion of this important work.

Mr Chairman,

The performance appraisal system of the Organisation is another area of concern for CANZ delegations. As the ACABQ points out, a system whereby only 1 per cent of staff either do not meet or only partially meet performance expectations, and where salary increments have only been withheld due to poor performance in 10 instances since 2007, simply cannot be taken seriously. It is our sincere hope that the Staff-Management Working Group will produce concrete proposals which will ultimately result in a revised rewards and recognition framework, and a robust system of sanctions to address underperformance that has the confidence of all stakeholders.

In closing Mr Chairman, CANZ delegations would again like to reiterate the importance we attach to the principles of accountability, a focus on results, transparency and efficiency throughout the United Nations system. We believe the Secretary-General and his senior team have a critical role to play in the on-going strengthening of the accountability framework of the organisation. This is to ensure that all stakeholders can be assured that the limited resources of the Organisation are being utilised in an effective and efficient manner, for the purposes they were provided.

CANZ delegations trust that our consideration of this important agenda item will be productive and focused. We sincerely hope that with the support of our partners, we as a Committee can focus on the specific reports before us, in an effort to produce a concise and action oriented text.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.