



United States Mission to the United Nations

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**Remarks by Stephen Lieberman,
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On Agenda Items 140 and 132: Report on OIOS Activities and the IAAC Annual Report
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States thanks Under-Secretary-General Ms. Carman Lapointe for her presentation of the annual report on the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). As evident in their report, OIOS continues to serve a vital role to the Member States and the Organization in providing the critical oversight needed to enhance the performance of the UN. Robust oversight is crucial to inspiring the confidence of those who fund the Organization's work. We further note the importance OIOS recommendations play in process improvement and cost savings and cost recovery.

We also thank the Chairman of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC), Mr. J. Christopher Mihm, for introducing the Committee's annual report to the Fifth Committee and for the insight the Advisory Committee provides on several important issues. We note the Advisory Committee's recommendations to OIOS particularly as they relate to procurement, enterprise risk management, and timeliness. We commend the Advisory Committee for raising awareness about the pending critical and longstanding recommendations to management that still need to be implemented. My delegation encourages the Advisory Committee to continue to provide Member States with unvarnished views of whether OIOS is performing to their full potential as well as the other matters the IAAC is mandated to review. An Advisory Committee is a key element of a strong and advanced oversight framework and enables Member States to properly act to enhance oversight of the Organization.

Mr. Chairman, turning back to OIOS, the role that the Office plays in bringing transparency, accountability, and effectiveness to the United Nations continues to be of utmost importance. By pursuing rigorous internal oversight, OIOS pushes the Organization to excel. Moreover, its focus on the responsible use of resources, and attention to waste, fraud, and mismanagement add tremendous value in furthering integrity and accountability in the United Nations.

The General Assembly over the last few years has tried to provide OIOS with the resources and tools needed to optimally perform and pursue their mandates which the United States has strongly supported. OIOS now has an Assistant Secretary General who is applying his excellent

management experience to assist the Under Secretary General to develop strategic goals and priorities. Enhancements have been made in the audit function by refining the ratings and analysis and focusing on key findings as well as building a forensic audit capacity. All OIOS divisions are seeking to further enhance their coordination with each other, and the Investigations Division has been restructured to be able to better respond to needs in the field and more vigorously pursue cases of fraud and mismanagement. USG Lapointe has vigorously filled key vacancies. The United States also commends her for launching the pilot program to publish internal audit reports on the OIOS website as approved by the General Assembly and for publishing the long awaited list of key oversight terms.

However, as in any Organization, there will always be challenges in pursuit of its goals and in particular for an oversight entity such as OIOS that is charged with auditing, investigating and inspecting. Along with the progress noted above, the United States sees continued challenges in OIOS' investigative capacity and willingness to proactively pursue investigations as they are mandated. We note that the external quality review commissioned by OIOS resulted in 91 recommendations that by any standard is excessively high. We urge the Investigations Division to implement those recommendations as quickly as possible. Other challenges we see are safeguarding OIOS' operational independence, which is of paramount importance to effective and credible internal oversight, and their ability to exercise greater budget autonomy. The United States believes it is crucial for OIOS' not to be constrained by funding sources in pursuit of their essential work.

In closing, as noted by the Under-Secretary-General in her foreword to the annual report, work continues to move OIOS toward the strong and independent oversight entity envisioned by Member States and the United Nations. We look forward to continuing to partner with Ms. Lapointe and colleagues in this Committee to do just that.

Thank you.