



JOINT INSPECTION UNIT
of the United Nations System

CORPS COMMUN d'INSPECTION
du Système des Nations Unies

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

72nd Session

Agenda Item: 142

**Report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2017 and Programme of Work for 2018
(A/72/34)**

14 March 2018

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

I have the honor to introduce the report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2017 and programme of work for 2018. As described in paragraphs 11 – 45, the Unit completed seven system-wide reviews, two management and administration reviews of individual organizations, as well as a management letter and a Note. The mix of products reflects our distinct mandate to apply a system-wide perspective, while continuing to support individual legislative bodies through organization-specific reviews. The thematic mix illustrates our enduring commitment to strengthening the framework for integrity and accountability in the UN system, our intention to contribute-- within our mandate-- to the realization of the 2030 agenda, and to identify opportunities to improve efficiency and coordination within the United Nations system.

The programme of work we carried out in 2017 varied from what had been presented in our annual report last year in the following respects. In consultation with the participating organizations most directly concerned, the envisaged review of the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in the work of UN system entities was deferred until this year, and replaced with the review of internship policies and practices in the UN system. We also added a system-wide review of whistleblower protection policies.

The programme of work for 2018 endeavours to reflect the thematic mix just described. The report before you describes nine new projects. Having learned after submission of the report for publication of the request made by the General Assembly, in its resolution 72/237, that the JIU submit a progress report on the recommendations it had made in 2011 on measures to further strengthen the United Nations office for South-



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South cooperation, we also added that report to the programme of work. Four projects initiated in 2017 will be completed this year as well.

In important respects, the Unit entered 2018 on a stronger footing in implementing its programme of work. The long vacant position of Executive Secretary had at last been filled, enabling stronger and forward looking leadership of the JIU Secretariat. Two senior vacancies provided an opportunity for the new Executive Secretary to update the descriptions of duties, which we view as a practical method of adapting the work of the Secretariat to current needs. Further, our professional and technical capacity will be augmented by two junior professional officers being provided by the United States and Germany, for which we are grateful. Happily, concerns voiced in past years about the financial sustainability of the hosting and maintenance of the JIU website and the web-based tracking system have been resolved by their migration to the UN Secretariat. As a first step toward strengthening our communications and outreach, the look, feel and functionality of our website has been improved.

The impact and added value of the work of the JIU is dependent on the consideration of its findings and the implementation of its recommendations. In this regard, the JIU report on the implementation of recommendations that is on the agenda for this resumed session draws attention to overall rates of acceptance ranging from 70 to 84 per cent, noting the higher acceptance rates for single organization reviews compared to system-wide reviews, as well as for recommendations made to Executive Heads, compared to those directed to legislative bodies. It also sheds light on the diversity of practice among legislative bodies on access to and consideration of JIU reports, and suggests good practices that should be commonly applied. The specifics can be taken up later, but the point to emphasize now is that consideration and action on recommendations made to legislative bodies of UN system organizations is less common than is premised in the JIU Statute. This applies also to the General Assembly.

Member States in this body and in the legislative organs of the other participating organizations make a substantial investment in our work and it should follow that they maximize the return on this investment. The arrangements in the Fifth Committee, under which our reports are considered in the context of related items, have proven to have the unintended effect of significantly constraining the ability of the General Assembly to consider and act on the outcome of our work. This is illustrated in the example of the JIU report on knowledge management having been considered in the context of human resources management, and the report on donor led assessments in the context of the OIOS item. The specificities of the human resource management issues crowded out serious consideration of the institutional issues raised in the knowledge management



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report, and the donor led assessments report embraced many issues that go beyond the scope of internal oversight.

There is a simple solution to this. As our reports are submitted under the JIU agenda item, they should be taken up that way, or at least those that are not a clear fit with a related item. This could assist the General Assembly in two important ways. Foremost being that JIU findings on complex policy and institutional matters can help to inform decision-making and the other is the feedback to us from the General Assembly and indeed other legislative bodies which is important and valuable. Feedback does not mean praise. Rather, it is by considering our reports that you come to a view on their merits and shortcomings which can only help us to produce future reports and recommendations that are better attuned to legislative requirements.

Mr. Chairman

The JIU fills a unique niche in the oversight arrangements of the United Nations system and is an opportunity for us to draw insight of value from the horizontal lens that no one else wears. We remain determined to realize that opportunity and expectation.

I look forward to answering any questions now or in the informal consultations.



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**Agenda Item 142 – Outcome of the review of the follow-up to the Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations by the United Nations system organizations”
(A/72/704)**

**STATEMENT BY INSPECTOR JORGE FLORES CALLEJAS
JOINT INSPECTION UNIT**

14 March 2018

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to introduce today the Report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) entitled “Outcome of the review of the follow-up to the Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations by the United Nations system organizations” (JIU/REP/2017/5), contained in document A/72/704.

The Unit welcomes the note of the Secretary-General reflecting his comments and those of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) on the recommendations provided in our report (A/72/704/Add.1).

The JIU review presents the results of the second phase of the review of the acceptance and implementation of the JIU recommendations included in the programme of work of the Unit for 2015 which was conducted over a two-year period. The review is system-wide and included all JIU participating organizations and the CEB.

The follow-up is based on the principle established by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/233 and reiterated time and again, that the impact of the JIU on the cost-effectiveness of the United Nations activities is a shared responsibility of the Unit, Member States and the secretariats of JIU participating organizations.

The first phase of the review ended in December 2016 with the issuance of 28 management letters to the executive heads of all JIU participating organizations and the CEB secretariat. As a result of the positive action taken by participating organizations based on the management letters, the number of recommendations that were pending for five years or more, significantly decreased and the rate of acceptance and implementation increased. The number

of organizations using the JIU's web-based tracking system (WBTS) increased from 24 to 27; the number of legislative bodies committed to considering JIU reports increased from 15 to 20 organizations; and the delays in the issuance of CEB comments on relevant JIU reports, were significantly reduced.

Building on the results of the first phase, the second phase of the review was intended to draw lessons from the issues affecting the follow-up process and identify good follow-up practices to enhance its functioning system-wide.

The review includes seven recommendations: two addressed to the General Assembly of the United Nations and other legislative bodies of organizations, and five to be acted upon by the executive heads. They are intended to enhance the effectiveness of the follow-up system, transparency and accountability, and cooperation and coordination in the implementation of JIU recommendations, and contribute to the dissemination of best practices.

The review concluded that the main factors affecting the effectiveness of the Unit's follow-up process are the lack or inadequate decisions on the reports/recommendations by the legislative bodies of some organizations, and the need to enhance the verification, monitoring and reporting process on the implementation of recommendations.

The report uses a maturity matrix which is designed to show the position of the different participating organizations based on factors such as their rates of acceptance and implementation of JIU recommendations; the processes in place to consider, take decisions, monitor and report on the implementation of recommendations; an assessment of their focal point function; their use of the WBTS and the existence of follow-up agreements.

I would like to stress the importance of appropriate follow-up of recommendations highlighting one of the recommendations addressed to the General Assembly of the United Nations (Recommendation 3) which emphasizes the need to enhance the legislative body consideration and decision-making process relating to JIU reports and recommendations.

I believe that the endorsement of the recommendations contained in this report will facilitate the JIU's objective to enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness and contribute to strengthening coordination across the United Nations system.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman