

15 March 2018

Agenda Item 136: Programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019

INTRODUCTION

**Report of the Secretary-General on
Standards of accommodation for air travel (A/72/716)**

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Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on standards of accommodation for air travel (A/72/716). You will recall that this report is typically submitted on a biennial basis, however, this present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/272 B, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on standards of accommodation for air travel for consideration by the General Assembly at the first part of its resumed seventy-second session.

In response to the Assembly's request and pursuant to the internal review of existing policies and procedures announced by the Secretary-General in his report on management reform (A/72/492), a review was conducted of the Secretariat's current travel policy with a view to leveraging Umoja technologies and ensuring further simplification and streamlining.

To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of travel management in the Secretariat, in this report the Secretary-General proposes:

- (a) a revised methodology for the determination of the standards of accommodation based on a single threshold, total travel time model, to enable the Secretariat to further streamline the travel administration process, thus paving the way for the Organization to more fully utilize the enabling nature of technology and benefit from its related efficiencies. A great deal of analysis and data modelling has been produced to support this proposal.

- (b) ending the interim measure for home leave lump sum travel to incentivise greater use of the cost-effective lump sum option, which has seen a decline in acceptance since the institution of the interim measure in 2013.

- (c) eliminating the policy for first class travel of Assistant Secretaries-General and Under-Secretaries-General when representing the Secretary-General.

In the previous report of the Secretary-General on standards of accommodation for air travel (A/71/741), the Secretary-General presented to the General Assembly updated information on air travel activities, as requested in Section IV, paragraph 10 of its resolution 69/274 A, and comprehensive information on the effects of the implementation of Umoja in travel administration. This report also included updated information, trends and analysis in all areas relating to air travel in the United Nations, as requested in Section IV, paragraph 14 of the same resolution.

The provision of comprehensive information was made possible by, and based on, data from the Umoja travel module, extracted through the business intelligence module reflecting the travel types/categories as defined in Umoja. For the current report, an interim update is presented for the period from July 2016 to June 2017.

These statistics also provide necessary context for the Secretary-General's proposals in this report to further rationalize and improve existing Secretariat travel policy.

Mr. Chairman, the Secretariat is ready to respond to any questions from the distinguished Delegates during the informal consultations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.