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Statement by Cherith Norman
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On Agenda Item 136: Umoja
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[As Delivered]

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We thank Under-Secretary-General for Management, Ms. Jan Beagle; the Chair of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu; and the Director of External Audit and Chair of the Audit Operations Committee of the Board of Auditors, Mr. Anand M. Bajaj, for introducing their respective reports. We also wish to extend our thanks to Mr. Chandru Ramanathan for his tireless efforts to implement such a complex and multifaceted reform initiative. We also acknowledge and commend the countless secretariat staff who have taken training and adjusted their work routines to support the standardization and streamlining of business processes that Umoja is delivering.

Umoja is a complete re-working of the way the United Nations Secretariat manages its administration, in both business processes and information technology solutions. The software replaces over 400 legacy systems used to manage procurement, accounting, payroll, and logistics. The United States views Umoja as an integral part of the management reform platform and welcomes the progress made such as the recent decommissioning of the UN's old supply chain management software Galileo, as also highlighted by the Board of Auditors.

My delegation also commends the work that has been done to reduce the operational costs of the project and the efforts to achieve both the quantitative and qualitative benefits outlined in the progress report. But the work is not done and we must continue to ensure these objectives are achieved.

Mr. Chairman,

Noting the implementation of the full scope of Umoja is scheduled for December 2018, my delegation recognizes the continued need for strong risk management as well as a highly skilled workforce through clear and advanced technical training, as further noted by the Board of Auditors. Looking forward, it is also imperative the organization ensures Umoja continues to be a catalyst for business transformation beyond 2018. Additionally, special attention is needed on implementing a smooth transition from Umoja deployment to post-implementation operations after 2018.

Umoja is a necessary tool to address the UN's complex global operations and it will help the UN be more transparent and more accountable not only to member states but to people around the world that benefit from its operations.

In closing, the United States looks forward to constructively engaging and working with member states on this important agenda item. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.