

Statement of the Chairman

Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

15 March 2021

Tenth progress report on the accountability:

strengthening accountability in the United Nations Secretariat

(ACABQ report A/75/804; related report of the Secretary-General: A/75/686)

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the report of the Advisory Committee on the Tenth progress report on the accountability: strengthening accountability in the United Nations Secretariat.

The Advisory Committee considers that the concept of an accountability system should represent a critical pillar of the Organization with a central role in all reform efforts, as well as in all organizational, administrative, and operational changes, and should be anchored by the definition of accountability which has remained in place since the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to focus future progress reports on the practical aspects of institutional and personal accountability. Future progress reports should therefore provide details on the specific outcomes and results of the processes and measures that are meant to promote accountability, and include quantitative and qualitative results, and associated costs, as they pertain to the various components of the accountability system.

The Advisory Committee notes that the indicator on the implementation of oversight bodies' recommendations in the compacts of senior managers will be strengthened and trusts this

will result in increased efforts by senior managers in implementing the recommendations of oversight bodies.

Mr. Chairman,

The Advisory Committee notes that linkage amongst the various activities, initiatives and pilot projects, and the development of a strong culture of accountability in the United Nations Secretariat is not clear. The Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide information how the various activities come together to form a sustainable and holistic system of accountability.

The Advisory Committee also recalls its view that it is essential to align workplans with approved programme activities arising from established mandates, while also monitoring the performance and accountability of individuals and entities against the implementation of mandated activities (A/75/765, paras. 27 – 28). The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide information, including how the implementation of the RBM and RBB and their potential alignment across the three related sources of funding can come together to form a sustainable and holistic system of accountability.

Mr. Chairman,

An evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services is currently underway and will be concluded in June this year. The Advisory Committee looks forward to the results, including with respect to the role and the functioning of the Business Transformation and Accountability Division of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance. The Committee expects that the findings will be presented in the eleventh progress report of the Secretary-General on the accountability system.

Mr. Chairman,

The General Assembly, in resolution 74/271, reiterated that the timely submission of documents is an important aspect of accountability, and requested the Secretary-General to ensure the continued inclusion in the senior managers' compacts of a related managerial indicator. The Advisory Committee considers that, although a high rate of timely submission has now been reported, this does not reflect the reality of the oftentimes delayed submission of documents by the Secretariat to the Committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.