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**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL
MARIA LUIZA RIBEIRO VIOTTI,
UNITED NATIONS CHEF DE CABINET**

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**A/75/201: REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT
REFORM**

New York, October 2020

Mr. Chair and distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the review of progress in the implementation of management reform.

I am joined this morning by Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, and Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support.

We look forward to answering any questions you may have regarding the implementation of management reform.

Three years ago, the Secretary-General set forth his vision for a more effective and accountable Secretariat based on the concept of aligning the responsibility for programme delivery with the authority to manage resources.

Last January, a new delegation of authority system was promulgated, a new management architecture at Headquarters was established and a new approach to presenting the programme budget on an annual basis was implemented.

In addition, a Management Client Board was put in place to ensure that the requirements of all types of entities in the Secretariat are taken into account in the development of policy and the delivery of centralized services.

This Board has also served as a valuable internal feedback mechanism on various aspects of reform implementation.

The Secretariat has established a benefits management framework to measure progress on realizing the expected benefits of all three tracks of reform, including management. The report before you presents an overview of progress and examples demonstrating—in both qualitative and quantitative terms—the improvements that have been realized.

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The report groups this ongoing work into a number of categories:

The empowering managers category covers the delegation of authority system and its associated accountability framework.

The enabling managers category addresses the tools and systems established to support managers through data, risk management and evaluation, as well as the new capacities in place to support the start-up of entities and partnerships with other organizations.

In some cases, some of this work was already under way prior to the reforms, but the new structures have allowed the Secretariat to approach this work in a more coherent and focused manner.

With respect to human resources management, the benefits in the area of getting the right people are aimed at strengthening workforce planning and reducing the timelines for recruitment and onboarding.

The learning and development area covers efforts to foster career development, provide training and enhance multilingualism.

It also covers our efforts to professionalize the human resources, finance and supply chain management disciplines, including through certification and skills enhancement programmes.

The reorganization of the management architecture has also allowed us to improve Secretariat efforts in addressing misconduct and in promoting occupational safety and health by reducing fragmentation that existed prior to the reform.

The strengthening of supply chain management has allowed the Secretariat to improve the timeliness and cost-effectiveness of its acquisition of goods and services, including by implementing a category management approach for the eight strategic business areas for which sourcing is consolidated at Headquarters.

The benefits related to enhancing the budget process include the implementation of the annual budget in 2020, improvements for 2021 and the streamlining of the peacekeeping budget process.

These efforts have been instrumental in facilitating the timely submission of budget reports to the Fifth Committee

Consolidation of previously separate information and communications technology capacities has allowed greater standardization and interoperability and the increased ability to address cybersecurity threats.

Finally, the management reform has also led to benefits from a standardized support architecture in the Secretariat that is facilitating greater consistency in business processes and standards.

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These measures have also allowed the Secretariat to take over the support to the resident coordinator system, which was transferred from the United Nations Development Programme to the Secretariat as part of the development system reform.

Mr. Chair,

I wish to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of the senior leaders and staff members of the two departments responsible for the progress to date.

All of the work of implementing the new framework, establishing the new departments, re-engineering processes and building capacity in newly-established functions was done not only without additional posts, but also in the midst of an acute liquidity crisis.

Of course, the COVID-19 pandemic has also significantly affected the work of the two departments—and of the United Nations as a whole.

While this has created an unexpected additional workload for the new management architecture, the response to the pandemic has also validated both the vision for reform and the structure of the two new departments.

The requirements of responding to COVID-19 have also accelerated the pace of change in a number of reform areas, including the streamlining of processes and the implementation of enterprise risk management.

Under the previous structure, the natural tendency was to focus on immediate operational requirements at the expense of strategic considerations.

Now, the clear delineation of roles for policy and operations between DMSPC and DOS ensured that both had dedicated resources and managerial attention.

In the area of human resources, DMSPC was able to work with other common system organizations to develop administrative measures applicable system-wide.

The delegation of authority framework, in turn, allowed each entity to act nimbly, with DOS available to provide tailored advice and help develop practical solutions where requested.

The consolidation of previously separate medical support capacities into a single division within DOS helped ensure consistency in medical advice throughout the pandemic.

DOS also chairs the task force that manages the system-wide COVID-19 medical evacuation framework, a cost-shared arrangement that ensures that United Nations system personnel, international NGO staff and eligible dependents in field duty stations have access to medical evacuation services.

Our integrated approach to supply chain management demonstrated its resilience under challenging circumstances, with no interruptions despite the various travel and cargo restrictions imposed by several countries.

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We were able to address the most urgent requirements for personal protective equipment and ventilators through existing stock in Brindisi, while the new supply chain arrangements allowed the Organization to obtain additional ventilators at rates well below reported market rates.

A critical enabler of business continuity throughout the pandemic has been the resilient systems and infrastructure in place under the unified Office of Information and Communications Technology.

The investments by the Organization in recent years to unify platforms and shift towards cloud applications and systems allowed the Secretariat to shift seamlessly to remote work arrangements.

It has also facilitated the work of intergovernmental bodies such as the Fifth Committee.

Since the start of the pandemic, OICT has also worked to facilitate access to Secretariat platforms for staff in the agencies, funds and programmes to facilitate collaboration and participation in virtual meetings.

Mr. Chair,

Today, three years after the Secretary-General first presented his reform proposals to the General Assembly, the vision for reform remains valid and the structures established to support the shift in management paradigm have proven their value.

No specific actions are requested at this time on the part of the General Assembly, as implementation of the reform is proceeding well and steady progress is being made in the realization of the expected benefits.

The Secretary-General is grateful for the ongoing support of Member States in this vitally important undertaking.

I thank you.