



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations

Statement by the delegation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations on shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations

28 October 2020

I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly, Volkan Bozkir, and Under Secretaries General, Catherine Pollard and Atul Khare, for joining us today. I would also like to thank the Chef De Cabinet, Maria Louisa Viotti, for presenting the Secretary-General's report on the Implementation of Management Reform.

The UK remains a strong supporter of the Secretary-General's reforms. We are pleased to see that, just under two years into their implementation, they are already delivering positive changes inside the United Nations.

As we all know, we are in challenging and unprecedented times. We are pleased that the reforms have helped the Organisation respond more effectively to the pandemic and mitigate some of its impacts. We understand that the new management architecture at Headquarters has allowed a more agile response. And, through the delegation of authority, which has shifted decision-making closer to the point of delivery, entities have, for example, been able to procure PPE faster and at a better price, than would have otherwise been the case.

The Secretary-General rightly notes that the pandemic has been a catalyst for positive change. Indeed, it is already making us think and work in different ways. We encourage the Secretariat to take advantage of these opportunities. For example, online training is not just more cost efficient, but more inclusive, more effective, and reduces the carbon footprint - helping address the biggest global challenge facing us all. We welcome the benefits already achieved in language examinations in this regard.

Mr Chair,

A more integrated and efficient UN family, with greater cooperation between its various parts, has to be the future if the United Nations is to thrive and deliver

sustainable progress on the 2030 agenda. The pandemic has demonstrated both the importance of this, as well as the many opportunities to go further. In that regard, we welcome how investment and improvements in ICT is increasing interoperability between the Secretariat and the agencies, funds and programmes. We welcome also the positive trend in supply chain management, and encourage further linkages in this and other areas, to maximise the benefits of interoperability and collaboration across the UN system.

Mr Chair,

Over the last three weeks we have heard repeated calls to ensure that the United Nations has the resources to deliver its mandates. Let us be clear, an effective budget process is a key part of that. The move to an annual budget is central in enabling the Organisation to be more responsive and have a greater focus on results. We welcome the positive feedback from programme managers on the annual budget. We hope all member states will continue to support this important reform initiative.

There are of course areas for improvement and further work. We would welcome greater clarity on the specific results and benefits against those forecast when the reforms began – and more can be done to capture evidence of progress. We will also have an opportunity in the first resumed session to support the Secretariat's efforts to enhance human resources management within the Organisation.

Mr Chair,

As the Secretary-General says, these reforms are a process, not an event. The cultural and behavioural changes required to realise the full benefits will take time, and there will naturally be some uncertainty while adjustments are made. The General Assembly has passed the resolutions needed to make the Secretary-General's reform vision a reality. It remains important that member states continue to deliver on that commitment and support the Secretary-General's vision during this 75th session.