

**REPERTORY OF PRACTICE OF UNITED NATIONS ORGANS
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ARTICLE 17(3)

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TEXT OF ARTICLE 17(3)

The General Assembly shall consider and approve any financial and budgetary arrangements with specialized agencies referred to in Article 57 and shall examine the administrative budgets of such specialized agencies with a view to making recommendations to the agencies concerned.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The structure of the present study, covering the period 2000-2009, follows that of the previous studies of Article 17 (3) in the *Repertory* and its *Supplements Nos. 1 to 9*. The other aspects of the coordination between the United Nations *and the specialized agencies are treated in the studies of this Supplement No. 10 concerning Articles 57, 58, 63 and 64.*

I. GENERAL SURVEY

2. A new specialized agency, the World Tourism Organization, joined the United Nations system to become the UNWTO. The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) was renamed the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Apart from approving the agreement with UNWTO, the General Assembly fulfilled its responsibilities under Article 17(3) with four comprehensive agenda items and a number of specific items such as the United Nations Pension system. These various developments are successively mentioned in this General Survey.

A new specialized agency

3. The Agreement between the United Nations and the World Tourism Organization was approved by the General Assembly in December 2003.¹ The number of specialized agencies thus rose to fifteen. The draft of this Agreement had been negotiated by the Committee on Negotiations with Intergovernmental Agencies of the Economic and Social Council and presented by the Council to the Assembly for approval.²

¹ General Assembly resolution 58/232 of 23 December 2003, Agreement between the United Nations and the World Tourism Organization.

² See Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/2 of 10 July 2003.

4. By Article 17 of this Agreement, “Budgetary and financial matters,” the World Tourism Organization “recognizes the desirability of establishing close budgetary and financial relationships with the United Nations in order that the administrative operations of the United Nations and the agencies within the United Nations system shall be carried out in the most efficient and economic manner possible, and that the maximum measure of coordination and uniformity with respect to their operations will be secured.” And, “in the preparation of the budgets of the World Tourism Organization, the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization shall consult with the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to achieving, in so far as possible, uniformity in presentation of the budgets of the United Nations and of the agencies of the United Nations system for the purpose of providing a basis for comparison of the several budgets, without precluding by each organization the use of different currencies to formulate its budget.”³

5. Moreover, the World Tourism Organization “agrees to transmit its proposed budgets to the United Nations no later than when the said budgets are transmitted to its members so as to enable the General Assembly of the United Nations to examine them and make recommendations in accordance with Article 17, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations.” By Article 7 of the Agreement, the World Tourism Organization agrees to “submit to the United Nations regular reports on its activities.” By Article 16, it agrees “to accept the statute of the International Civil Service Commission, to participate in the Joint Staff Pension Fund, and accepts the jurisdiction of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal.”⁴ It might be mentioned that, two years after this Agreement, the General Assembly adopted, upon recommendation from the Second Committee, the “Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.”⁵

The ACC becomes the CEB

6. The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) was created in 1946. It became the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in 2001. Counting the World Tourism Organization, the CEB brought together, twice a year, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the heads of fifteen specialized agencies, ten United Nations funds and programmes, and of the World Trade Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Three committees were established to support the Board: the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), the High Level Committee on Management

³ GA resolution 58/232, Annex, Articles 17 (1) and (5).

⁴ Ibid, Articles 17 (6), 7, 16 (1),

⁵ See GA resolution 60/190 of 22 December 2005, Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

(HLCM), and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). The HLCM was in turn supported by five technical networks in the areas of human resources, information and communication technology, finance and budget, legal matters, and procurement.

Comprehensive agenda items of the Assembly of relevance to Article 17(3)

7. Between 2000 and 2009, the Assembly had four comprehensive agenda items potentially relevant to Article 17(3): Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency; Programme planning; Strengthening of the United Nations system; and System-wide coherence.

Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

8. The item “Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency” has been on the agenda of the General Assembly since the mid-1970s.⁶ It is the most directly related to the second part of Article 17(3), according to which the Assembly “shall examine the administrative budgets of such specialized agencies with a view to making recommendations to the agencies concerned.” From the beginning, the Assembly had relied on the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to fulfill this task.⁷ On the basis of reports produced by the Advisory Committee, the Assembly adopted short resolutions generally praising the ACABQ for its work, making a few comments, and requesting the Secretary-General to transmit to all concerned, including the External Audit and the Joint Inspection Unit, the comments and recommendations of the ACABQ.

9. This changed radically at the beginning of the 1990s: the report of the ACABQ was replaced, at the request of the Advisory Committee itself, by a statistical report of the ACC presented every other year to the Assembly;⁸ and the resolutions of the Assembly were

⁶ On 15 December 1975, the General Assembly decided to consider in depth the item entitled “Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency” normally in off-budget years (as reported in resolution 36/229 of 18 December 1981, Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, second preambular paragraph).

⁷ One of the main functions of the ACABQ is precisely “to examine on behalf of the General Assembly the administrative budgets of the specialized agencies and make proposals for financial arrangements with such agencies.” (see GA resolution 14(1) of 13 February 1946)

⁸ See *Repertory*, Supplement No. 8 (1989-1994), Article 17(3), paragraph 3.

replaced by simple decisions taking note of the information received.⁹ Such was the situation during the period under review. At its 55th, 57th, 59th, 61st and 63rd sessions, the General Assembly received a note by the Secretary-General transmitting the statistical report of the ACC (then of the CEB).¹⁰ These reports contained data on the regular and extra-budgetary resources of the organizations of United Nations system, on the expenditures of these organizations, on the assessed contributions they received, and on their working capital funds.¹¹ Conceived for information rather than for debate, they were simply noted by the Assembly.¹²

10. The ACABQ, however, kept direct contacts with the specialized agencies and the United Nations funds and programmes located outside the New York headquarters. During the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly, for example, it had short sessions in Geneva, The Hague, Addis-Ababa, Nairobi, Paris, and in the headquarters of several peace-keeping operations in Africa. The Advisory Committee reported to the Assembly on its main observations gathered through these meetings in its report entitled “Activities of the Advisory Committee during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, First report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions” (A/57/7, 18 October 2002).¹³ Observations were, for instance: “The Advisory Committee once again stresses the desirability of coordination among the specialized agencies in such areas as security, printing and procurement.” Or: “Delegations of authority and the granting of increased flexibility to programme managers continue to be issues of concern throughout the system.”¹⁴ A similar report was presented to the 55th session of the Assembly. After the 57th session, there is no evidence that the Advisory Committee continued to provide written information to the Assembly on its conversations with the specialized agencies.

Programme planning

⁹ See *Repertory*, Supplement No. 9 (1995-1999), Article 17(3), paragraph 19.

¹⁰ See A/55/525, A/57/265, A/61/203, A/63/185. This last report, presented at the 63d session of the Assembly, was the tenth report of this type and the fourth produced by the CEB.

¹¹ Over time these statistical reports of the ACC/CEB presented more data, notably on the extra-budgetary resources received by the organizations of the UN system. The last report of the period under review, A/63/185, had 107 pages. It was available on the website of the CEB.

¹² See for instance decisions 55/472, 57/558 and 61/548.

¹³ This report was presented to the General Assembly under three agenda items: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003; and Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

¹⁴ A/57/7, paragraphs 9 and 11.

11. Programme planning was on the agenda of the General Assembly at each of its sessions for the period 2000-2009, and resolutions with the same title were regularly adopted.¹⁵ As these resolutions deal with reports of the CEB and the CPC, some explanations on the nature and content of these reports are first necessary.

12. Following the practice of the ACC, the CEB reported annually on its activities to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly through the Committee for Programme and Coordination.¹⁶ The Economic and Social Council generally took note through a simple decision of both the report of the ACC/CEB and the report of the CPC.¹⁷ The CPC, in its annual report to the General Assembly, had a part entitled “Coordination questions” with a section A, “Annual overview report of the (ACC and then CEB)”, a section B generally devoted to system-wide activities concerning the development of Africa, and an occasional section C

¹⁵ See GA resolutions 55/234 of 23 December 2000, 57/282 of 20 December 2002, 58/268 of 23 December 2003, 59/275 of 23 December 2004, 60/257 of 8 May 2006, 61/235 of 22 December 2006, 62/224 of 22 December 2007, 63/247 of 24 December 2008, and 64/229 of 22 December 2009. At its 56th session, the Assembly did not adopt a resolution on Programme planning, but treated the issue in a section of its resolution 56/253 entitled “Questions on the proposed programme-budget for the biennium 2002-2003.”

¹⁶ These reports were entitled “Annual overview report of the (ACC and, from 2001, CEB.)” See E/2000/53, E/2001/55, E/2002/55, E/2003/55, E/2004/67, E/2005/63, E/2006/66, E/2007/69, E/2008/58 and E/2009/67. The tables of content of these reports provide an overview of the evolution of the issues of interest to the United Nations system. For instance, the seven parts of the ACC report for 1999 (E/2000/53) are the following: I Enhancing interactions between the ECOSOC and the ACC; II Meeting the challenges of globalization; III Follow-up to conferences; IV Peace and sustainable development in Africa; V HIV/Aids; VI Administrative questions; VII Assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter; VIII Elements of the programme of work of ACC for 2000. Part VI, Administrative questions, had two short paragraphs on the functioning of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and on United Nations staff security and safety. As to the CEB report for 2008-2009 (E/2009/67), its parts and sub-parts are as follows: I Introduction; II Challenges facing the UN system in 2008-2009: A Global financial and economic crises; B Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty; C Climate change; D UN development system working together; E Working together in crisis and post-crisis countries; F Security and safety of staff; G Business practices; III Other significant issues on the agenda of CEB in 2008-2009: A Evaluation; B Regional coherence; C Campaign to end violence against women and girls; D Contribution of the UN system to the Economic and Social Council; E Disaster risk reduction; F Science and technology; G International public accounting standards; H Knowledge sharing; I Human resources; J Procurement; K Collaboration with the JIU; L Coordination among the pillars of the CEB; IV Looking ahead to 2009-2010. The “business practices” of the UN system listed in sub-part G of part I are human resources, information and communication technology, finance and budget, and procurement. A “plan” for the “harmonization” of these “business practices” is announced, with the proviso that it will be contingent upon the availability of extra-budgetary resources. A sum of \$270,000 was contributed in 2008 by New Zealand “to fund a project on developing a common framework to deal with suspect vendors.” (see E/2009/67, p. 14, paras 25 and 26).

¹⁷ See for instance ECOSOC decisions 2005/225, 2006/257, 2007/222, and 2008/221. In 2004, however, the decision of the Council on the annual overview report of the CEB was more elaborated. In paragraph (a) the Council “welcomed the progress in the work of the Chief Executives Board (...) particularly as it related to harnessing the activities of the system in support of the integrated follow-up to conferences and the Millennium Declaration (...)” In paragraph (b), the Council “looked forward to strengthening its dialogue with the members of the (CEB) on all relevant aspects of the work of the system (...)”

concerning other system-wide efforts.¹⁸ Section A of these annual reports of the CPC contained a summary of the discussion on the item and a number of “Conclusions and recommendations” addressed to the General Assembly and, less frequently, to the Economic and Social Council.

13. These “conclusions and recommendations” of the CPC, though usually of a general character, covered a large range of issues. For example, in its report of 2000, the Committee “emphasized the need for considering the establishment of an intergovernmental process to study the cooperation between the United Nations and the private sector.”¹⁹ In its report of 2002, the Committee “recommended that the Chief Executives Board should facilitate the exchange of information on practices in measuring programme performance and results, in measuring productivity in service functions and in collaborating on conference management.”²⁰ As a last example, the CPC, in its report of 2007, “noted the fact that the Chief Executives Board had raised the issue of increasing the level of resources for its Secretariat. In that context, attention was drawn to the relevance and importance of more control by intergovernmental bodies over CEB activities, as well as improvements in accountability and transparency.”²¹

14. In most of its resolutions on Programme planning, the Assembly simply “endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the CPC regarding the Annual overview report of the (ACC/CEB),” without further elaboration.²² This practice was already prevalent in the second part of the 1990s.²³ In the resolutions adopted at its 57th, 60th and 61st sessions, however, the Assembly highlighted the activities of the United Nations system in support of the development of Africa.²⁴ And, in 2002, the Assembly stressed that “inter-agency coordination in the field of management should be further strengthened” and recommended “that progress in that regard be reflected in further reports” of the CEB.²⁵ In 2007, the Assembly declared that the CPC “should enhance its coordination role through improved cooperation with the Secretariat of the

¹⁸ See A/55/16, A/56/16, A/57/16, A/58/16, A/59/16, A/60/16, A/61/16, A/62/16, A/63/16 and A/64/16.

¹⁹ See A/55/16, Part III A, paragraph 292. At its same 40th session, held in July-August 2000, the CPC considered a report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) entitled “Private sector involvement and cooperation with the United Nations system” (A/54/700). One of the conclusions of the CPC was the following: “The envisaged increase in relations between organizations of the United Nations system and the private sector should take into account the integrity, independence and international character of the former. The Committee emphasized that cooperation with the private sector should be strictly in accord with the relevant regulations and rules of the Organization and decisions of the General Assembly.” (See A/55/16, Part IV, para. 78)

²⁰ See A/58/16, Part IV A, para. 580.

²¹ See A/62/16, Part IV A, para. 107.

²² See GA resolutions 55/234, section III; 58/268, para. 4; 59/275, para. 26; 63/247, para. 6; and 64/229, para. 5. It should be noted that these last two resolutions on programme planning adopted by the Assembly in 2008 and 2009 were extremely short.

²³ See *Repertory*, Supplement No. 9 (1995-1999), Article 17(3), paragraph 19.

²⁴ See GA resolutions 57/282, section IV, paras 1 and 2; 60/257, paras 16 and 17; and 61/235, para. 18.

²⁵ See GA resolution 57/282, section IV, para. 3.

CEB and the JIU, in order to increase planning efficiency and effectiveness so as to continue to ensure the timeliness of the implementation of, and prevent duplication and redundancy in, the action of the Organization.”²⁶

Strengthening the United Nations system

15. The item “Strengthening the United Nations system” was on the agenda of every session of the General Assembly between 2000 and 2009.²⁷ For the 55th and 56th sessions, however, no documentation was submitted by the Secretary-General under this item, and the Assembly simply decided to keep it on its agenda.²⁸ The outcome of the 57th session was a resolution referring to various aspects of coordination in the United Nations system, including the launching of inter-agency efforts in the field of protection of human rights, but ignoring budgetary or administrative questions.²⁹ The 58th, 59th, 60th and 61st sessions produced, under this item, resolutions on subjects only remotely related to inter-agency affairs.³⁰ And, starting with the 62d session, the Assembly did not have an identifiable debate on the item as it considered it jointly, in plenary, with other items pertaining to the follow-up of the Millennium Summit or the follow-up to the coordination of United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social field.³¹

System-wide coherence

16. As this last comprehensive item on the agenda of the Assembly during the period under review, having *a priori* a relation with Article 17(3), found its origins in the reform of the United

²⁶ See GA resolution 62/224, para. 8.

²⁷ It was noted in the previous review covering the period 1995-1999 that the General Assembly, in its resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997, had adopted the report of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations system, a group it had created by its resolution 49/252 of 14 September 1995. It was also noted that this report was strongly concentrated on the United Nations itself. Its main relevance to the system was in its request to the Secretary-General to elaborate further on ways to strengthen system-wide coordination. (See *Repertory*, Supplement No.9 (1995-1999) paras 10 and 11.)

²⁸ See GA decisions 55/458 and 56/479.

²⁹ See GA resolution 57/300 of 20 December 2002, Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change.

³⁰ At its 61st session, for example, the two resolutions adopted under this item were 61/256 on strengthening of the capacity of the Organization to undertake peace-keeping operations and 61/257 on strengthening of the capacity of the Organization to advance the disarmament agenda.

³¹ At its 63d session the Assembly debated item 120, Strengthening the United Nations system, jointly with three other items, including item 117, United Nations reform: measures and proposals. See the Annotated preliminary list of items for the agenda of the 64th session of the General Assembly, which include references to the 62d and 63d sessions (A/64/100).

Nations launched by the Secretary-General in 1997, it is appropriate to evoke the United Nations system's dimension of the main steps of this reform.

17. In the Millennium Declaration, Member States pledged "to ensure greater policy coherence and better cooperation" between the different entities of this system in order to achieve "a fully coordinated approach to the problems of peace and development."³² In its resolutions on the follow-up to this Millennium Summit, the General Assembly also remained at the level of broad affirmation of principles.³³ Typically, the Assembly invited "the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, the Bretton-Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, and encourage(d) other parties, including the civil society and the private sector, to continue to pursue vigorously the achievement of the objectives and goals contained in the Millennium Declaration."³⁴

18. These "objectives and goals," further elaborated by the Secretariat, became in 2001 the Millennium Development Goals, or MDGs, which, from their inception on the international scene, acquired an enormous political visibility and generated an unprecedented level of cooperation among the organizations of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and, beyond, among governments, non-governmental organizations and parts of the private business sector. For the years to come, most resolutions adopted upon the recommendation of the Second Committee of the General Assembly and most resolutions of the Economic and Social Council referred to the MDGs and particularly to the target on the elimination of extreme poverty. The annual report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization gave, in its successive issuances, a prominent place to the MDGs.³⁵ These goals and targets, and the cooperation they were generating, figured also prominently in the annual report of the ACC/CEB.³⁶

19. Thus, the Millennium Development Goals represent a perfect example of the "development of priorities with a view to concentration of efforts and resources", which is the title of section D.7 of this review. At the same time, however, the MDGs were essentially a central but diffuse element of the United Nations system's doctrine on cooperation for

³² See GA resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, Millennium Declaration, Annex, ninth sub-paragraph of paragraph 30. And see *Repertory*, Supplement No.9 (1995-1999), Volume II, Article 17 (3), General Survey, paras 10 to 20, for a review of the UN system's dimension of the reform of the Organization launched by the Secretary-General in 1997.

³³ See GA resolutions 55/162 of 14 December 2000, 56/95 of 14 December 2001, 57/144 of 16 December 2002, all entitled "Follow-up to the Outcome of the Millennium Summit."

³⁴ GA resolution 57/144, para. 3.

³⁵ See for instance A/57/1.

³⁶ See for instance E/2004/67.

development that emerged at the end of the 1990s. The Fifth Committee of the General Assembly never considered a resolution on the budgetary or administrative aspects of the Millennium Development Goals, or on the coordination of policies in the system that their achievement would call for. The financial and budgetary arrangements of the United Nations with the specialized agencies were not modified by the MDGs. For these reasons, in spite of their high political and substantive importance in the life of the organizations of the system during the first decade of the 2000s, the Millennium Development Goals are essentially absent from this review of Article 17 (3).

20. The text adopted by the 2005 World Summit was more elaborate than the Millennium Declaration in its pledges and prescriptions concerning the working of the United Nations system.³⁷ In Part I, devoted to “values and principles,” Member States pledged “to enhance the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system” and declared that this was their “shared responsibility and interest.”³⁸ Then, in a section entitled “system-wide coherence,” Member States recognized that “the United Nations brings together a unique wealth of expertise and resources on global issues” and supported “stronger system-wide coherence” through measures in the domains of overall policy, operational activities, humanitarian assistance and environmental activities.³⁹ One of the policy measures was “coordinating our (*i.e.* Member States) representatives on the governing boards of the various development and humanitarian agencies so as to ensure that they pursue a coherent policy in assigning mandates and allocating resources throughout the system.” For activities of the United Nations system on the environment, Member States agreed, *inter alia*, “to explore the possibility of a more coherent institutional framework.”⁴⁰

21. Highlighted by this 2005 World Summit, the notion of “system-wide coherence” became the umbrella under which the General Assembly treated issues of coordination and cooperation in the United Nations system: annual resolutions with this title were adopted by the 62nd, 63rd and 64th sessions.⁴¹ In these resolutions, the Assembly focused its attention on United Nations agencies, funds and programmes “delivering as one” at country and regional levels, on the

³⁷ GA resolution 60/1, 16 September 2005, 2005 World Summit Outcome. The convening of this Summit had been decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/291 of 6 May 2004, Follow-up to the outcomes of the Millennium Summit and integrated and coordinated implementation of, and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.

³⁸ *Ibid*, part I, para. 15.

³⁹ *Ibid*, paras 168 and 169.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, para. 169, second sub-paragraph of section titled “Policy” and sub-paragraph of section titled “Environmental activities.”

⁴¹ See GA resolutions 62/277 of 15 September 2008, 63/311 of 14 September 2009 and 64/289 of 2 July 2010, all entitled “System-wide coherence.”

related need for “harmonization of business practices,” on the funding and governance of operational activities, and on “gender equality and the empowerment of women.”⁴² Regarding the latter issue, at its 64th session the Assembly decided “to establish, as a composite entity, to be operational by 1 January 2011, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to be known as UN Women, by consolidating and transferring to the entity the existing mandates and functions of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat, as well as those of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, to function as a secretariat and also to carry out operational activities at the country level.”⁴³

22. On matters more directly related to financial and budgetary arrangements with specialized agencies, the Assembly, at its sixty-third session, requested the Secretary-General to propose “modalities for the establishment of an independent system-wide evaluation mechanism to assess system-wide efficiency, effectiveness and performance, bearing in mind the evaluation functions carried out by respective United Nations organizations, the Joint Inspection Unit and the United Nations Evaluation Group.”⁴⁴ This request was renewed by the sixty-fourth session, while being “limited” to operational activities: the Secretary-General was requested “in consultation with the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Joint Inspection Unit, to commission a comprehensive review of the existing institutional framework for the system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and to submit a report with recommendations to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.”⁴⁵

23. Also, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General “to create a central repository of information on operational activities for development, including disaggregated statistics on all funding sources and expenditures, building on the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development.”⁴⁶ This “statistical analysis” referred to the Annual report on financial statistics submitted annually by the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council. At its sixty-fourth session, the Assembly requested the Secretary-

⁴² See for example GA resolution 62/277, para. 3.

⁴³ GA resolution 64/289, paragraph 49.

⁴⁴ GA resolution 63/311, para. 8. The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) was established in 2003, to replace the Inter-Agency Working-Group on Evaluation that existed since 1984. UNEG brings together the various units responsible for evaluation of programmes and activities in the United Nations system. In 2005, UNEG published the UNEG Norms and Standards.

⁴⁵ GA resolution 64/289, para. 12.

⁴⁶ GA resolution 63/311, para. 16.

General to include in the report “information on all existing multi-donor trust funds and thematic trust-funds, including on their mandates, performance and governance structures (...) with a view to further improving the participation of Member States in their governance.”⁴⁷

Specific agenda items of the Assembly of relevance to Article 17(3)

24. The question of the “Common system” for the salaries and benefits of the staff of all organizations of the United Nations system, and the related question of the report of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) were, as before, considered by the Assembly every year.⁴⁸ Developments in this domain during the period 2000-2009 are evoked in section D.1. The topic “common services” is also mentioned in section D.1.

25. Regarding the “United Nations Pension system,” comprehensive resolutions so entitled were adopted every other year by the General Assembly.⁴⁹ The main elements of these resolutions are treated below in section D.6.

26. Questions of audit and oversight, which gained increasing importance during the period – not only in the United Nations itself but also in the United Nations system – are mentioned in section D.2.

27. With regard to the priorities that the United Nations system embraced during this period 2000-2009 – apart from the already mentioned all-encompassing focus on the Millennium Development Goals – the improvement of the status of women in the system and the development of Africa continued to receive special attention from the General Assembly and are evoked in section D.7.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ GA resolution 64/289, para. 37.

⁴⁸ See GA resolutions 55/223 of 23 December 2000; 56/244 of 34 December 2001; 57/285 of 20 December 2002; 58/251 of 23 December 2003; 59/268 of 23 December 2004; 61/240 of 22 December 2006; 62/227 of 22 December 2007; 63/251 of 24 December 2008; and 64/231 of 22 December 2009. All these resolutions were entitled “United Nations Common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission.” At its 60th session, the Assembly treated the report of the ICSC in section XI of resolution 60/248 of 23 December 2005, Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

⁴⁹ See GA resolutions 55/224 of 23 December 2000, 57/286 of 20 December 2002, 59/269 of 23 December 2004, 61/240 of 22 December 2006, and 63/252 of 24 December 2008, all entitled “United Nations Pension system.”

⁵⁰ On the status of women, see GA resolutions 56/127 of 19 December 2001, 57/180 of 18 December 2002, and 58/144 of 22 December 2003, all entitled “Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system.”

28. Resolutions debated in the Second Committee of the General Assembly on operational activities for development are noted in section D.8, as they contained financial and administrative provisions of relevance to the United Nations system.⁵¹

29. As was done in the previous review, the relevant aspects of the annual resolutions of the General Assembly on the reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency⁵² are mentioned in section D.9. Also mentioned in this section are issues pertaining to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which, though a United Nations fund, and not a specialized agency, was singled out by the Assembly for special attention during the period under scrutiny.⁵³

II. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF PRACTICE

****A. Nature and scope of the financial and budgetary arrangements with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency**

****B. The phrase “administrative budgets” of the specialized agencies**

****1. Transmission of the budgets of the specialized agencies to the United Nations**

**** 2. Consultation in the preparation of the budget**

****3. Coordination of the form of the budget**

****C. Nature and scope of examination of administrative budgets**

D. Financial and budgetary arrangements: analysis of recommendations made by the General Assembly to the specialized agencies

⁵¹ See GA resolutions 56/201 of 21 December 2001, 59/250 of 23 December 2004, 62/208 of 19 December 2007, all entitled “Triennial policy (or “comprehensive”) review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system” and 63/232 of 19 December 2008, 64/220 of 21 December 2009, entitled “Operational activities for development of the United Nations system.”

⁵² See GA resolutions 55/244 of 16 March 2001; 56/94 of 14 December 2001; 57/9 of 11 November 2002; 58/8 of 4 November 2003; 59/18 of 1 November 2004; 60/6 of 31 October 2005; 61/8 of 30 October 2006; 62/2 of 29 October 2007; 63/6 of 27 October 2007; and 64/8 of 2 October 2009. All these resolutions were entitled “Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.”

⁵³ See GA resolutions 56/193 of 21 December 2001, 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 December 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005, 61/205 of 20 December 2006, 62/195 of 19 December 2007, 63/220 of 19 December 2008, and 64/204 of 21 December 2009, all entitled “Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its (x) session.”

1. Adoption of common financial and administrative regulations

** (a) Common financial regulations

(b) Common staff regulation and salary system

30. In all its resolutions on the United Nations common system and the reports of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the General Assembly reaffirmed two basic principles: the first was “its commitment to a single, unified United Nations common system as the cornerstone for the regulation and coordination of the conditions of service of the common system”; the second was the “the statute of the Commission and the central role of the Commission in the regulation of the conditions of service of the United Nations common system.”⁵⁴ A third principle, which was proclaimed in the same resolutions until the 61st session in 2006 and then disappeared, read as follows: “(The Assembly was) convinced that the common system constitutes the best instrument through which to secure staff with the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity for the international civil service, as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations.”⁵⁵

31. Traditional subjects treated in these resolutions included pay and benefits system, recognition of language knowledge, education grant, the Noblemaire principle and its application, dependency allowances, separation payments, mandatory age of separation, and conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited categories. Less traditional subjects also treated during this decade were mobility of staff,⁵⁶ hardship allowance and hazard pay⁵⁷ and gender balance in the system.⁵⁸ On the latter, at its 64th session in December 2009, the Assembly “[n]ote(d) with disappointment the insufficient progress made with regard to the representation of women in the organizations of the United Nations common system, and in particular their significant underrepresentation at senior levels.” The Assembly, *inter alia*, “encourage(d) the Commission (the ICSC) to consider further issues relating to the retention of female staff.”⁵⁹

⁵⁴ See for example GA resolution 57/285, second and fourth preambular paragraphs, and resolution 63/251, third and fourth preambular paragraphs.

⁵⁵ See for example GA resolution 55/223, third preambular paragraph, and resolution 61/239, fifth preambular paragraph.

⁵⁶ See GA resolutions 57/285, part I, section B, 58/251, part I, section C, 59/268, part I, section C, 61/239, part I, section A3, and 63/251, part B, item 4.

⁵⁷ See GA resolutions 57/285, part I, section D, 58/251, part I, section D, 59/268, part I, section D, 61/239, part I, section C.

⁵⁸ See GA resolutions 59/268, part III, section B, 61/239

⁵⁹ See GA resolution 64/231, part A, section 3, paras 1 and 6.

32. There were five relatively new issues considered by the Assembly during this period 2000-2009 that ought to be mentioned. The first was the development of a “Framework for human resources management.” Such framework was requested by the Assembly from the ICSC in December 1996.⁶⁰ One year later, the Assembly expressed its conviction that “the Commission must play a lead role in the development of innovative approaches in the field of human resource management as part of the overall reform currently taking place in the organizations of the common system.”⁶¹ The ICSC completed its work in 2000 and the Assembly “welcome(d) with appreciation” this work, “endorse(d) the conclusions of the Commission”, requested the same Commission “to use the integrated framework as a guide to its future programme of work” and “encourage(d) the organizations of the United Nations common system to use the integrated framework as a basis for their future work in human resources policies and procedures and to bring it to the attention of their governing bodies.”⁶² Described in the report of the ICSC, this framework identified guiding principles for and linkages between six areas of human resources strategies: (a) Ethics/standards of conduct for the international civil service; (b) Compensation and benefits; (c) Employment; (d) Career management; (e) Good governance; and (f) Human resources information management.⁶³

33. The second and related issue was the establishment of “Standards of conduct for the international civil service.” In September 1998, in the context of its consideration of a report of

⁶⁰ See GA resolution 51/216, section XI, State of the United Nations Common System. The Assembly requested the ICSC “to take the lead in analyzing new approaches in the human resources management field so as to develop standards, methods and arrangements that will respond to the specific needs, especially regarding future staffing, of the organizations of the United Nations common system, including consideration of flexible contractual arrangements, performance-based pay and the introduction of special occupational pay rates, and to report to the General Assembly thereon at its 53d session.”

⁶¹ See GA resolution 53/209, part V, preambular paragraph.

⁶² See GA resolution 55/223, part I, section A, paras 1 to 4.

⁶³ See A/55/30, Report of the International Civil Service Commission for the year 2000, Chapter III, part A, paras 10 to 19, and Annex II, Framework for Human Resources Management. In this report, the ICSC mentioned the views of the organizations and the views of the staff representatives on this Framework for Human Resources Management. The organizations of the system, through the Secretary of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ), expressed their particular interest for the “linkages between the different elements of human resources management so that it could be seen how action in one area would impact on others.” Also, “the Framework was a dynamic instrument which would need to be updated as issues, events and the body of knowledge relevant to the profession evolved over time.” (paragraph 12). The staff representative (President of the CCISUA) “fully supported the Framework (...) She was of the view that the current dispersed career management system did not promote a culture of creativity or an environment in which staff could feel the satisfaction of working for a higher purpose (...) The United Nations should build on its reputation as a global body with a noble calling and the notion of public service. Idealism still drew many young men and women to the Organization (...) In meeting the challenges, there was need to reinforce the noble objectives and intent of the founding fathers. It must be insured that the established principles of Noblemaire and Flemming would continue to govern the conditions of service of staff and were fully respected and maintained.” (para. 13)

the Secretary-General on a Proposed United Nations Code of Conduct,⁶⁴ the General Assembly had noted that the ICSC “had decided to include in its work programme the updating of the 1954 Standards of Conduct in the International Civil Service of the International Civil Service Advisory Board in consultation with the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions and looks forward to the results of this review.”⁶⁵ Two years later, the Assembly “urged organizations to reach consensus on the draft (...) so as to enable the Commission (the ICSC) to finalize the text to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session” and emphasized that “the proposed standards should ensure that the staff uphold the principles of integrity, impartiality and independence.”⁶⁶ The ICSC reached an agreement in 2001 and, in its resolution 56/244, the Assembly “welcome(d) the standards of conduct as set out in annex II to the report of the Commission.”⁶⁷ Subsequently, the ICSC reported every year on the implementation of these standards of conduct.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ This proposed United Nations Code of Conduct, subsequently named Draft system-wide code of ethics for United Nations personnel, was still in a draft form in 2009. It was worked out by the Ethics Committee, a body chaired by the Director of the United Nations Ethics Office and comprising the heads of ethics offices of the United Nations and of several funds and programmes. One of the unresolved issue was the relationship between this future system-wide code of ethics and the standards of conduct developed under the aegis of the ICSC (see A/64/30, paras 24 to 30).

⁶⁵ See GA resolution 52/252, para. 13.

⁶⁶ See GA resolution 55/223, part I, section B, second paragraph. The report of the ICSC for the year 2000 echoed the difficulties encountered in the revision of the 1954 text. The representative of the CCAQ stated that “there was serious concern about going forward with the current text. Some organizations preferred to retain the 1954 text and others wished to develop a revision of their own.” The staff representative considered “that the general tone and approach of the document was not inspirational but rather dictatorial and induced prohibitions. In the same vein the poetic language of the 1950s had been replaced by a text of a more pragmatic and retrospective nature (...) ICSC should not only ensure a common system approach to issues related to staff management but should also provide a set of guiding principles for all organizations to follow.” (A/55/30, paras 21, 24 and 25.)

⁶⁷ See GA resolution 56/244, part I, section A, second paragraph. The report of the ICSC for the year 2001 is document A/56/30. In his Introduction to the text “Standards of conduct for the international civil service”, the Chairman of the ICSC wrote that “this new text aims at providing for the international civil service standards that, like those of 1954, become an indispensable part of the culture and heritage of the organizations and are of similarly enduring quality.” The text itself has 50 articles divided in 15 sections and a conclusion. Article 7 reads as follows: “International loyalty means loyalty to the whole United Nations system and not only to the organization for which one works; international civil servants have an obligation to understand and exemplify wider loyalty. The need for a cooperative and understanding attitude towards international civil servants of other United Nations organizations is obviously more important where international civil servants of several organizations are serving in the same country or region.”

⁶⁸ In its report for 2009, the ICSC indicated that “all organizations, except the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have implemented the standards as recommended by ICSC. Many have incorporated them into their rules and regulations and/or included the standards in their human resources manual and referred to them in administrative issuances. The three above-mentioned organizations, which have not promulgated the standards as recommended by the ICSC, have developed their own codes of conduct, which, in

34. Thirdly, was the question of “Performance management.”⁶⁹ Having decided to review possible new approaches to the way staff of the organizations of the United Nations system are paid, the ICSC launched a “pilot study on pay for performance and broad banding” on 1 July 2004.⁷⁰ The organizations that volunteered for this study were the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the UNESCO International Center for Theoretical Physics.⁷¹ Difficulties with this project abounded and after four years of efforts the ICSC concluded that “the pilot project had not met the Commission’s criteria for success and had lost direction in all of the pilot organizations.” It therefore decided “to discontinue the broad-banding/pay for performance pilot as it was originally conceived.”⁷² At the same time, the ICSC decided “to keep performance management under continuing review” and requested its secretariat “to upgrade the performance management guidelines set out by the Commission in 1997, with emphasis on the culture and environment and the leadership that must come from the top level of each organization.”⁷³ The General Assembly, in December 2008, reiterated “the importance of developing mechanisms for better differentiating levels of performance”, welcomed the work of the Commission “in benchmarking innovative practices in the area of performance management” and requested

essence, are extensions of the standards of conduct but have been adapted to suit their particular organizational needs.” Also, the report noted that “organizations identified gaps and ethical challenges not addressed by the present standards of conduct. These included issues surrounding conflicts of interest, post-employment restrictions, the issue of accountability, the protection of whistle-blowers from retaliation, abuse of authority, disclosure of information and negligence in the management of the organization’s assets and resources.”

(A/64/30, paras 22 and 23).

⁶⁹ In the Glossary of technical terms that accompanies each report of the ICSC, “performance management” is defined as follows: “The process of optimizing performance at the level of the individual, team, unit, department and agency. In its broadest sense, effective performance management is dependent on the effective and successful management of policies and programmes, planning and budgetary processes, organizational structure, work organization and labour-management relations and human resources.” (See for example A/55/30, p. ix).

⁷⁰ “Broad banding: A method of providing greater flexibility to reward individual performance and contribution. The term describes the action of combining and replacing several classification levels by a single, broader classification level (called a “band”). A broad-banded system is characterized by a limited number of wider bands and ranges and a bigger salary overlap between bands.” (see A/55/30, Glossary of technical terms, p. vii). This definition disappeared from the Glossary of the ICSC report when the project was abandoned in 2008.

⁷¹ See A/59/30 (Vol.1), para. 9.

⁷² See A/66/30, Chapter III, part A., paras 11 and 25. The report of the ICSC includes a comprehensive analysis of the reasons for the failure of the project. For instance, “a credible performance evaluation system that enjoyed the confidence of both staff and management was the absolute prerequisite for introducing performance pay” and such system was still lacking. Also lacking was “a credible basis for distinguishing among the performances of individuals.” Further, the Commission recognized that “managing performance was a complex issue that went beyond the question of pay. Equally important were a range of other measures related to general conditions of service, the work environment, organizational values and culture, and providing an enabling environment for the staff of the common system.”(A/66/30, paras 12 and 19).

⁷³ Ibid, chapter III, part B, para. 35.

the Commission “to work closely with organizations to identify workable means of rewarding performance” and to submit “an updated performance management framework to the General Assembly.”⁷⁴

35. The fourth issue that emerged during the period under review was the creation of a “Senior Management Service” in the United Nations common system. The idea of such a Service, small and composed of senior managers across the system, emanated from the CEB in the context of the reformist wind that, at the beginning of the 2000s, was still blowing across the United Nations. It would have had five objectives: “(a) To strengthen managerial and leadership capacity (...) (b) To build a common corporate culture and encourage diversity at the senior level(...) (c) To facilitate the devolution of responsibility and accountability in relation to core managerial functions; (d) To enhance inter-agency cohesion and coordination and to promote increased mobility and learning across the system; and (e), To signal a commitment to the professionalization of the management function in terms of the criteria for selection, individual development and career management.”⁷⁵ There was “a need to develop common system-wide tools and strategies to attract and develop more creative, versatile and multi-skilled managers who are client-oriented, team-builders, can think strategically and are less risk-averse.”⁷⁶

36. The ICSC first considered this idea of a Senior Management Service in 2002 and was not unanimously supportive. “Some members found merit in the establishment of a Senior Management System” said its report. “The Commission noted that the proposal to introduce the Service raised a number of issues (...) The Commission emphasized that no special pay and benefit provisions or other privileges would need to be established for this group of staff. However, some members were not convinced of the merit of establishing a Senior Management Service (...)” In its conclusion, the ICSC found “merit” in the idea and assented this judgment with eight provisos, including that “posts would be identified for inclusion based on criteria approved by the ICSC” and that “it would monitor the implementation of the modalities and report to the General Assembly in this regard.”⁷⁷ The Assembly, upon consideration of this report of the ICSC, requested the Commission to **review the decision contained in paragraph 80 of its report** (*i.e.* the concluding paragraph) (emphasis added), including the question of whether the Senior Management Service should be dealt with in the framework of the of the

⁷⁴ See GA resolution 63/251, part A. section 2, paras 1 to 4. In its resolution 61/239, the Assembly had noted with concern that “a project manager had yet to be selected in accordance with the terms of reference of the pilot project.”

⁷⁵ See A/57/30, Report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2002, para. 62.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, para. 63.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, para. 80.

review of the pay and benefit system, in view of the intention of the General Assembly to consider the question at its fifty-eight session.”⁷⁸

37. In 2003 and 2004, work on the Senior Management Service continued in the CEB, but, as the Assembly had demanded, outside the framework of the pay and benefit system, and the ICSC was kept informed. In December 2004, the Assembly took again this subject and adopted a number of decisions. It recognized that “measures to improve management capacity and performance among senior staff are highly desirable.” It affirmed that the ICSC was “the only body responsible for recommending to the General Assembly the establishment of a separate category of staff for the common system.” It requested the ICSC “to continue to monitor the project (...) and to advise and make recommendations to the General Assembly as appropriate.” And, it requested the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the CEB, **“to redesignate the Senior Management Service to reflect its character as a set of collaborative efforts to enhance the managerial capacity and performance of senior staff by respective heads** (emphasis added) and to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, clarifying the scope and content of such efforts, for consideration and action if it deems it necessary.”⁷⁹

38. Such change was made: the Senior Management Service became the Senior Management Network. The Assembly took note and requested the ICSC “to continue to monitor the project regarding the improvement of management capacity and performance among senior staff by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and to advise and make recommendations to the General Assembly as appropriate.”⁸⁰ But, as reported by the ICSC, “work on the Senior Management Network made little headway” and the CEB was focusing its efforts on the development of a “leadership programme” designed by the United Nations System Staff College in Turin, Italy.⁸¹ Renamed “United Nations Leaders Programme: Developing Strategic Leaders,” this training programme was providing an

⁷⁸ See GA resolution 57/285, part I, section A, para. 5.

⁷⁹ See GA resolution 59/268, part III, paras 5 to 8.

⁸⁰ See GA resolution 61/239, part II, Conditions of service of staff in the Professional and higher categories, section C. Senior Management Network, para. 3.

⁸¹ The United Nations System Staff College was created in 1999/2000 and its statute was approved by the General Assembly by its resolution 55/278 of 12 July 2001. In December 2005, the Assembly adopted a resolution on this College in which it decided that “article IV, paragraph 5, of the statute of the Staff College should be amended so that the biennial reports on the activities of the College are submitted to the Economic and Social Council rather than to the General Assembly.” (resolution 60/214 of 22 December 2005, United Nations Staff College in Turin, Italy, paragraph 8). In the same resolution , the Assembly encouraged the College “to continue to provide strategic leadership in order to increase operational effectiveness, promote inter-agency collaboration and strengthen management culture by its own example, including the development of new systems of performance management, flexible and collaborative work structures and cost effective means of delivering services to clients and beneficiaries.” (para. 5).

opportunity for programme managers to network in a structured and continuous manner (...) Thus the “aims and objectives of the Senior Management Network were expected to be achieved through the process of the United Nations Leaders Programme.” Accordingly, the Human Resources Network reported to the ICSC that the involvement of the CEB in managing a separate network was no longer required, and the ICSC “decided to report to the General Assembly that CEB had decided to discontinue further work on the Senior Management Network.”⁸² The General Assembly, in December 2009, noted the decision of the CEB “to discontinue work on the Senior Management Network.”⁸³

39. Lastly, under the item “Strengthening of the international civil service,” the Assembly considered the functioning of its own subsidiary organ, the ICSC. A review of this Commission, including its mandate, membership and functioning in order to increase its effectiveness in meeting the challenges facing the United Nations system of organizations” had been recommended by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly in his first major report on the reform of the United Nations issued in July 1997.⁸⁴ The Assembly decided “to examine” this recommendation.⁸⁵ The Secretary-General followed up with a note entitled “Review of the International Civil Service Commission,” in which he reported the support of the ACC for his initiative and proposed terms of reference for the review group⁸⁶. The Assembly took no action.⁸⁷ The Secretary-General presented a second note, also entitled “Review of the International Civil Service Commission”, proposing the names of ten persons that would

⁸² See A/64/30, chapter VII, section A, paras 120 to 130.

⁸³ See GA resolution 64/231, part C, section 1, para. 1. In the second paragraph of this section of its resolution the Assembly requested the ICSC “to monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of measures aimed at improving management capacity and performance within the common system and to report to the General Assembly on these matters, as appropriate”.

⁸⁴ See A/51/950, para. 233, Box on “Recommendations.” This recommendation was made in part VI of the report, entitled “Enhancing support capacities,” section B, Management, Strategy 1: Strengthening the staff of the United Nations. In paragraph 232, the Secretary-General stated the following: “Some issues go beyond the United Nations Secretariat and need to be considered in the context of the wider United Nations system. For example, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) has primary responsibility for determining conditions of service in the United Nations system that affect the Organization’s ability to attract and retain staff of the requisite competence and caliber. It is essential that the staff of the United Nations be fairly compensated and that the conditions be determined in an objective manner. A reexamination of the composition, mandate and functioning of ICSC will contribute to the success of reform measures being undertaken by the organizations of the common system.”

⁸⁵ See GA resolution 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, section H, para. 22.

⁸⁶ See A/53/688, Review of the International Civil Service Commission, Note by the Secretary-General. The proposed terms of reference for the review-group, contained in a one-page annex to the Note, are in the spirit of the initial recommendation for the review and of the far-reaching reform agenda initiated in July 1997 by the Secretary-General.

⁸⁷ In its resolution 53/209 of 18 December 1998, the Assembly decided to revert to a number of issues related to the Commission “in the context of its consideration of the recommendation by the Secretary-General for the review of the Commission at the resumed fifty-third session of the General Assembly.” (section IV, para. 4).

compose the review group.⁸⁸ The Assembly, emphasized that “the review process should be impartial and transparent and that the Commission shall participate fully in the process.” It requested more information from the Secretary-General, including the “concrete and specific reasons, if any, for such a review” and the “identification of specific problems, if any, to be addressed.”⁸⁹

40. The next step was the issuance by the Secretary-General in October 2000 of a report covering the same subject but entitled “ Strengthening the international civil service. ”⁹⁰ The reasons for a review were restated but the criticism for the Commission was considerably tone down. The goal was “to reinforce and modernize the common system and, in that context, to determine how the contribution of the Commission to these objectives can best be maximized.”⁹¹ At its 55th session, the Assembly deferred consideration of this report and of the note issued in October 1999.⁹² At its 56th session, the Assembly requested from the Secretary-General, “in close consultation” with the Chairman of the ICSC, to submit “a timetable for the implementation of the review.”⁹³ On 14 November 2002, the Secretary-General submitted a two-page report with drastically revised terms of reference for the review⁹⁴ and an equally drastically different composition of the group (now called “panel of eminent persons”) that was to conduct this review.⁹⁵ The Chairman of the Commission was now participating in the Panel as

⁸⁸ See A/54/483 of 20 October 1999, Review of the International Civil Commission, Note by the Secretary-General. The ten names were: Agnes Y. Aggrey-Orleans (Ghana), Isabelle Bassong (Cameroun), Imre Hollai (Hungary), Enrique Iglesias (Uruguay), Ismat Kittani (Iraq), Alister Mc Intyre (Grenada), Jean-Bernard Merimee (France), Laetitia Ramos Shahani (Philippines), Ernst Sucharipa (Austria) and Franklin Thomas (United States of America).

⁸⁹ See GA resolution 54/238, section V, paragraphs 1 to 3.

⁹⁰ A/55/226 of 27 October 2000, Strengthening the international civil service, Report of the Secretary-General.

⁹¹ Ibid, para. 36. Also: “The review should be an independent one, carried out under the aegis and authority of the General Assembly. It should serve to enhance the leadership role of the General assembly as the legislative organ for the common system and the role of the ICSC in ensuring that the strength of the common system is maintained, as well as ensuring that ICSC has the necessary capacity and technical expertise to provide timely advice and guidance to its constituents on a range of matters impacting on organizational change.” (para. 37).

⁹² See GA resolution 55/223, section IV.

⁹³ See GA resolution 56/244, section III, second paragraph.

⁹⁴ See A/57/612 of 14 November 2002, Strengthening of the international civil service, Report of the Secretary-General. The terms of reference were set in three short paragraphs. “The review should be a focused process firmly set in the context of the Commission’s statute and clearly aimed at further strengthening the Commission (...) The panel of eminent persons should consider ways of better equipping the Commission, within the framework of the Statute, with tools to implement its tasks, while further ensuring the Commission’s independence, impartiality and effectiveness. The panel should study and report on ways of enhancing the Commission’s capability to reinforce, modernize and thereby strengthened the international civil service to meet new and complex challenges” (paras 4 to 6).

⁹⁵ Ibid, paragraph 7. The new panel had only four members: Mary Chinery-Hesse (Ghana), Philippe Rochat (Switzerland), Ernst Suchapira (Austria), Anatoly V. Torkunov (Russian Federation). Mohsen Bel Hadj Amor (Tunisia), Chairman of the Commission since a number of years, participated in the Panel as an ex-officio member.

an ex officio member. Also, secretariat support to the Panel was to be provided jointly by the secretariats of the CEB and the Commission.⁹⁶ The Assembly endorsed the terms of reference of the panel, requested it “also to comment on the role and main characteristics of the international civil service” and invited the Commission “to comment on the findings and recommendations of the panel (...) together with the report of the Secretary-general.”⁹⁷

41. The report of the Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service was submitted on 1 October 2004.⁹⁸ In the part entitled “Context of the Panel ‘s review”, it concluded “that the basic principles on which the Charter of the United Nations is based not only retain all their validity but acquire even greater relevance in the new international environment in which the United Nations system is presently operating. Indeed, in relation to the international civil service, the Charter principles of independence (Article 100) and of the “highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity” (Article 101) should be the overriding values to which all efforts at advancing a modern international civil service, responsive to the changing demands and requirements of the new century, should be geared.”⁹⁹ Under eight headings,¹⁰⁰ nineteen recommendations were made. These were referring to general and technical aspects of the work of the ICSC (for instance the knowledge of best management’s practices in the public and private sectors, the Noblemaire principle, performance-based pay, or work-life balance)¹⁰¹, or to general principles applicable to its functioning (for instance that “trust between the Commission and the administration and staff of each organization”),¹⁰² or to the selection and terms of office of its members.¹⁰³ The report

At the beginning of 2007, Kingston P. Rhodes (Sierra Leone) became Chairman of the ICSC. The Chairmanship and Vice-Chairmanship of the ICSC are permanent positions, at Headquarters in New York.

⁹⁶ Ibid, para. 6.

⁹⁷ See GA resolution 57/285, section IV, paras 1 to 4.

⁹⁸ A/59/153, 25 June 2004, Report of the Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service, Note by the Secretariat.

⁹⁹ Ibid, para, 12.

¹⁰⁰ The eight headings, or sections, were: A. Role of the International Civil Service Commission and the international civil service in changing times; B. Functioning of the Commission; C. Mission of the Commission; D. Working methods of the Commission; E. Criteria and process for the selection of Commission members; F. Length of term of office of Commission members; H. Implications for the work of the Commission secretariat; I. Enhancing the Commission’s capacity to strengthen the international civil service.

¹⁰¹ See recommendations 9 (para, 43), 10 (para, 49), 11 (para, 52) and 13 (para, 53).

¹⁰² See recommendation 1(b) (para, 23).

¹⁰³ For the selection of members of the ICSC, the Panel recommended a strict application of articles 3 and 4 of the Statute of the Commission, plus the introduction of “specific criteria” that it outlined in annex II of its report. These criteria pertained to “experience”, specifying the meaning of “substantial experience”, for instance that this can mean “executive function in a large private sector multinational enterprise” and to “knowledge”, which was needed in four domains: “(a) Human resources management principles and practices; (b) Organizational design and change management concepts and practices; (c) Leadership and strategic planning concepts and practices; (d)

of the Secretary-General conveying the views of the organizations of the United Nations system on these recommendations of the Panel was globally supportive and presented particularly elaborate comments on these questions of selection and term of office of the members of the ICSC.¹⁰⁴

42. Only in December 2006, at the very end of the second mandate of the Secretary-General who had initiated the process of reform of the United Nations, including of the ICSC,¹⁰⁵ the General Assembly did take action on this item “Strengthening of the international civil service”. It decided “to institute a limit of two full terms for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission” and also decided that this provision “shall apply to Chairs and Vice-Chairs appointed after 1 January 2008.” Besides this, the Assembly reaffirmed that the staff of the United Nations “is an invaluable asset of the Organization”, emphasized that “the capacity of the Commission as a source of technical expertise and policy advice should be further strengthened”, stressed that “the work of the Commission shall be given the attention it deserves” and restated some principles and guidelines for the selection of the members of this Commission. Also, the Commission was encouraged “to continue to consider its working methods, in consultation, where appropriate, with representatives of the staff and the organizations of the common system.”¹⁰⁶

43. Subsequently, at its 62d and 63d sessions, the Assembly devoted a few paragraphs of its resolutions on the report of the ICSC to this item, *inter alia* welcoming the steps taken by the Commission “to strengthen its role and improve its functioning” and requesting it “to closely monitor the developments in the organizations of the United Nations common system in order to ensure the effective regulation and coordination of the conditions of service in the common system.”¹⁰⁷

International and global issues – political, social and economic.” (see Recommendation 5, paragraph 38, and Annex II, page 17. For the length of term of office of Commission members, the Panel recommended that “the General Assembly **introduce the understanding that future appointments to the Commission would normally be limited to two terms** (emphasis added). Such an understanding should be put in practice in a gradual and deliberate manner that preserves the continuity in the work of the Commission and allows for a smooth transition. As part of these transitional arrangements, the eligibility of current members for reappointment for another term should not be excluded.” (see Recommendation 6, paragraph 39).

¹⁰⁴ See A/59/399, 1 October 2004, Report of the Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service, Note by the Secretary-General. For the selection of members of the ICSC and their term of office, see paras 15 to 21, pp. 5 and 6.

¹⁰⁵ GA resolution 61/207, entitled “Tribute to Mr Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations” was adopted on 14 December 2006.

¹⁰⁶ See GA resolution 61/239, part III, Strengthening of the international civil service, preambular paragraph and paras 1 to 8.

¹⁰⁷ See GA resolutions 62/227, section II, para. 2, and 63/251, section E, para. 3.

(c) Common services

44. In March 2001, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) issued a report entitled “Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the United Nations system common services at Geneva, part II, Case studies (ICC, JMS, TES, DPS, JPS).”¹⁰⁸ Part I of this report had been produced in 1998 and had been endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/255.¹⁰⁹ The overall conclusions and recommendations of this Part II were the following: “the relative success of some of the services studied in this volume amply demonstrate the feasibility of developing, subject to appropriate improvements, similar cooperative arrangements for many other administrative support functions now performed internally by each organization”; “despite that attractive potential for significant cost-reduction across the board, organizational attitudes towards common services at the Geneva duty station are far from encouraging (...) Centrifugal trends seem to be ascendant as some agencies have either pulled out of existing common services or have given notice of their intent to do so”; “the case studies underscore the findings of Part I of the report with respect to the need for high-level, proactive leadership and strategic direction for Geneva Common services.”¹¹⁰

45. The General Assembly, in a resolution devoted to this report of the JIU, took note of the recommendations, and, in a language broadly similar to the one it had used in its resolution on Part I of the report, reiterated that “the use of common services in Geneva should be one of many tools available to organizations and managers to obtain good and services in the most efficient and effective manner” and encouraged the organizations concerned, “in their continuing efforts further to expand areas of cooperative arrangements, to give priority to those services that lend themselves to common delivery using the criteria of efficiency, productivity and cost effectiveness (...) bearing in mind the distinct mandates, roles, tasks and rules of each individual organization.” Further, the Assembly noted “the efforts made to-date

¹⁰⁸ A/55/856, 27 March 2001, Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the United Nations system common services at Geneva, Note by the Secretary-General. The scrutinized organizations were the International trade Center (ITC), the Joint Medical Services (JMS), the Training and Examination Section (TES), the Diplomatic Pouch Service (DPS) and the Joint Purchase Service (JPS).

¹⁰⁹ See *Repertory*, Volume II, Supplement No.9 (1995-1999), Article 17(3), paras 29 to 32. It was noted in this review that the General Assembly, in resolution 54/255, had endorsed both the recommendations of the JIU and the comments of the Secretary-General, although the former was advocating a “unified, comprehensive and centralized common services entity” in Geneva and the latter was favorable to a “decentralization of functions” and a “corresponding delegation of authority to programme managers” in the Geneva-based organizations. (see para. 31).

¹¹⁰ A/55/856, page VI, third, fourth and fifth paragraphs.

by the Geneva-based organizations of the United Nations system for the enhancement of common services, and encourage(d) them to pursue” their efforts.¹¹¹

46. It may be mentioned under this rubric that, also at its 56th session, the Assembly adopted a resolution on another report of the JIU entitled “Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on policies and practices in the use of the services of private management consulting firms in the organizations of the United Nations system.”¹¹² The Assembly “endorsed the elements contained” in a number of recommendations, including: “A prior cost-benefit analysis of the objectives to be attained by the organization, including new expertise to be acquired by its staff, should be drawn up when engaging management consulting firms (Recommendation 1 (b)); “The need for strict terms of reference defining, among other things, the level and range of new skills to be transferred to the organization, should be borne in mind (Recommendation 1 (d)); “The organizations should conduct *ex post facto* evaluations of the performance and extent of implementation of the recommendations of management consulting firms (...) (Recommendation 3); “The organizations should reinforce system-wide cooperation and coordination in the use of management consulting firms (...)” (Recommendation 4). With regard to “the issues raised” in other recommendations, the Assembly “invited the Secretary-General and participating organizations (...) to fully take into account the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 55/232 and 55/247.”¹¹³ These resolutions dealt, respectively, with outsourcing practices and procurement reform.¹¹⁴

2. Establishment of a joint audit procedure

47. In December 2006, the General Assembly adopted a resolution entitled “Comprehensive review of governance and oversight within the United Nations and its funds, programmes and specialized agencies.”¹¹⁵ This was the title of a report written under the responsibility of a

¹¹¹ See GA resolution 56/279, 27 March 2002, Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the United Nations system common services at Geneva, paras 1,2,3 and 5.

¹¹² A/54/202, 29 December 1999, Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on policies and practices in the use of the services of private management consulting firms in the organizations of the United Nations system, Note by the Secretary-General.

¹¹³ GA resolution 56/235 of 24 December 2001, Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on policies and practices in the use of the services of private management consulting firms in the organizations of the United Nations system, paragraphs 1 and 2.

¹¹⁴ GA resolutions 55/232 of 23 December 2000, Outsourcing practices, and 55/247 of 12 April 2001, Procurement reform.

¹¹⁵ GA resolution 61/245, 22 December 2006, Comprehensive review of governance and oversight within the United Nations and its funds, programmes and specialized agencies.

Steering Committee appointed by the Secretary-General¹¹⁶ to fulfill the request of the Assembly in its resolution on the 2005 World Summit Outcome that an independent external evaluation of the auditing and oversight system of the United Nations be conducted within the context of a comprehensive review of governance arrangements.¹¹⁷ The technical work for the report had been carried out by consultants from private companies.¹¹⁸ The report consisted of five volumes.¹¹⁹ In its resolution, the Assembly took note of this report and of the various other reports attached to it and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the ACABQ on this “comprehensive review.” Also, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General for five additional reports on subjects of relevance to the United Nations itself.¹²⁰ The United Nations system was concerned by this “comprehensive review” only to the extent that the study overseen by the Steering Committee contained information on the practices of the specialized agencies on matters of oversight and auditing.

48. The continuing preoccupation of the General Assembly with the issue of cooperation between United Nations internal and external oversight bodies took an added dimension with the Office of Internal Oversight Advice (OIOS) acquiring its full operational capacity. In his notetransmitting, in October 2000, the report of the OIOS to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General wrote the following: “The continuing efforts of the OIOS to improve its relationships with management and with all Member States, and to coordinate its programme with other oversight bodies, including the Board of External Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit are noted with appreciation.”¹²¹ At the end of the decade, the General Assembly reaffirmed “the independence and the separate and distinct roles of internal and external oversight mechanisms”, recalled that the OIOS “shall exercise operational independence under

¹¹⁶ The report was issued on 10 July 2006, under the symbol A/60/883 and Add.1 and 2. The steering committee was composed of Mervyn E. King (South Africa, Chairman), Guy Almeida Andrade (Brazil), Jean-Pierre Halbwachs (Mauritius), Shinji Hatta (Japan), Andrew Likierman (United Kingdom) and Kamlesh S. Vikamsey (India).

¹¹⁷ See GA resolution 60/1, para. 164 (b) and (c).

¹¹⁸ Pricewaterhouse Cooper, supported by Dalberg Global Development Advisors. See the report of the ACABQ on the review (A/61/605), para. 3.

¹¹⁹ Volume I: executive summary and project scope, background and context; Volume II: governance and oversight principles and practices, gap analysis and recommendations; Volume III: governance: current United Nations practices, gap analysis and recommendations; Volume IV: oversight: current United Nations practices, gap analysis and recommendations; Volume V: review of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. See the report of the ACABQ on the review (A/61/605), para. 5.

¹²⁰ See GA resolution 61/245, para.s 1 to 44. The reports requested from the Secretary-General were: Revised terms of reference for the Independent Audit Advisory Committee; Strengthening of the Office of Internal Oversight Services; Enterprise risk management and internal control framework; Results-based management; and Accountability framework.

¹²¹ See A/55/436, 2 October 2000, Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, Note by the Secretary-General, para. 3.

the authority of the Secretary-General relating to the performance of its internal oversight functions, in accordance with the relevant resolutions” and encouraged “United Nations internal and external oversight bodies to enhance the level of their cooperation with one another, such as joint work planning sessions, without prejudice to the independence of each.”¹²²

49. Also at its 64th session, the Assembly adopted a comprehensive resolution on the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). It reaffirmed its statute and its “unique role as the only external and independent system-wide inspection, evaluation and investigation body.” It took note “with appreciation” of its report for 2009 and programme of work for 2010. It reiterated its request “to the executive heads of the participating organizations to fully comply with the statutory procedures for consideration of the reports of the Unit (...)” It also reiterated its request to the Secretary-General and the other executive heads of the participating organizations” to fully assist the Unit with the timely provision of all information requested by it.” Further, it reiterated its “invitation to the legislative organs of the participating organizations to fully consider and take concrete action on the relevant recommendations issued by the Unit.” It welcomed the “coordination of the Unit with the Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat, and encourage(d) those bodies to continue sharing experiences, knowledge, best practices and lessons learned with other United Nations audit and oversight bodies (...)”. Moreover, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General “to reflect relevant resource requests (for the Unit) in the context of future proposed programme budgets.”¹²³

3. Development of a common form of the budget

50. Work to develop common approaches to budgetary and administrative matters among the organizations of the United Nations continued during the decade to be undertaken by the ACABQ, the CPC and ACC/CEB. For the latter, the Technical Network on Finance and Budget replaced the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (the CCAQ of the ACC). Issues on the agenda of these bodies during these years were the setting of international accounting standards, the implementation of auditing and oversight mechanisms, the prevention of fraud, the elaboration of a capital based budgeting system, the determination of

¹²² See GA resolution 64/232, 22 December 2009, Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Service on its activities, paragraphs 3 to 5.

¹²³ See GA resolution 64/262, 29 March 2010, Report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2009 and programme of work for 2010, fourth preambular paragraph and paras 2,9,10,11, 13 and 15.

programme-support costs, the development of a project of a system-wide financial statistics database of the CEB, the idea of a common Treasury for a number of organizations of the system, and, most prominently, the implementation of results-based management and results-based budgeting ideas and techniques.

51. Regarding the latter, the JIU prepared in 2004 a series of reports on results-based management in the United Nations system and developed a “benchmarking framework” for implementing this approach. The CPC endorsed this framework and the General Assembly approved the conclusions and recommendations of the CPC. In 2006, the JIU issued a comprehensive report entitled “Results-based management in the United Nations in the context of the reform process.” A conclusion of this report was the following: “at the United Nations and most of the specialized agencies, the Inspectors found the approach to results-based management to be fragmented rather than coherent and holistic. It focused largely on budgeting and programming aspects, and failed to take into account or emphasize at the outset the scope of changes required in other management areas for the new system to work. In some instances, the shift was mainly in the vision and format rather than in the methods of work or support by the administrative, financial and information system in the Organization. The process became mainly a “learning by doing” exercise.”¹²⁴

52. Overall, in 2002, members of the CPC expressed the view that “the level of inter-agency coordination in the budgetary field had decreased recently and that effective and immediate measures should be taken by the Chief Executives Board to address that problem.”¹²⁵ Similar remarks were made in subsequent reports of the CPC.¹²⁶

****4.Consideration of a consolidated budget**

****5.Establishment of a common approach towards the financing of the budgets of the specialized agencies**

6. Establishment of a Joint pension Fund and a common system of social security for staff

¹²⁴ A/61/805, 19 March 2007, Results-based management in the context of the reform process, Note by the Secretary-General. The report of the JIU transmitted by the Secretary-General is JIU/REP/2006/6. See p. 4, para. 18, for the quoted conclusion. The other information mentioned in this paragraph is also taken from this report, notably Introduction, paras 2 and 3.

¹²⁵ See A/57/16, Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its forty-second session, Part IV, Coordination Questions, para. 309.

¹²⁶ See in particular A/58/16, para. 584; A/59/16, para. 431; A/60/16, para. 207; and A/61/16, paras 400 and 401.

53. The International Criminal Court (ICC) became a member of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) on 1 January 2004. In a special resolution, the General Assembly, “having considered the note by the Secretary-General on the admission of the International Criminal Court to membership in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions”, decided “to admit the International Criminal Court to membership in the United Nations Joint Staff pension Fund in accordance with Article 3, paragraph (b) and (c) of the Regulations of the Fund, with effect from 1 January 2004.”¹²⁷ One year before, the Assembly had noted that “the Board considered the possible application of the International Criminal Court to become a member of the Fund as a formal application would be submitted to the Standing Committee in 2003, with possible membership to take effect on 1 January 2004.”¹²⁸

54. The second new member of the UNJSPF was the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). In December 2004, the Assembly decided that “upon the affirmative recommendation of the Board, the Inter-Parliamentary Union shall be admitted as a new member organization of the Fund, effective 1 January 2005.”¹²⁹

55. Two years later, the Assembly admitted a third new member to the UNSJPF: the International Organization for Migration (IOM). In terms similar to those it had used for the IPU, the Assembly decided “upon affirmative recommendation of the Board, that the International Organization for Migration shall be admitted as a new member organization of the Fund, effective 1 January 2007.”¹³⁰ At its 59th session, the Assembly had decided “to consider at the meeting of its Standard Committee in 2005 the possible application for membership in the Fund of the International Migration Organization and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas.”¹³¹

56. The fourth and last organization to be admitted to membership of the Pension Fund during the first decade of the 2000s was the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. In December 2008, the Assembly decided “upon the affirmative recommendation of the Board, that the Special Tribunal for Lebanon shall be admitted as a new member organization of the Fund, effective 1 January 2009.”¹³²

¹²⁷ GA resolution 58/262, 23 December 2003, Admission of the International Criminal Court to membership in the United Nations Joint Pension Fund, first and second paragraphs.

¹²⁸ GA resolution 57/286, section VIII, para. 4

¹²⁹ GA resolution 59/269, section I, para. 6.

¹³⁰ GA resolution 61/240, section I, para. 7.

¹³¹ GA resolution 59/269, section VI, para. 1(c).

¹³² GA resolution 63/252, section III, para. 11.

57. By the end of 2009, the United Nations Staff Joint Pension Fund had 23 member organizations.

58. In December 2000, the Assembly approved, with effect from 1 January 2001, “an amendment to article 6 of the Regulations of the Fund which would set the terms of office for the elected members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee at four years instead of three years.”¹³³

59. In the same resolution, the Assembly also approved, with effect from 1 January 2001, “an amendment to article 14 of the Regulations of the Fund (...) which would set the frequency for audits of the operations of the Fund to be annual and for audit reports on the accounts of the Fund by the Board of Auditors to be submitted to the General assembly every two years.”¹³⁴

60. The Assembly, at its 63d session, welcomed “the information that all committees of the United Nations Joint Staff pension Fund had been presented and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board had approved a declaration of conflict of interest, which referred to the mandate and the focus of each committee and covered the status, conduct and accountability of the members of the Investments Committee, the Committee of Actuaries and the Audit Committee.”¹³⁵

61. In December 2006, the Assembly noted that the Board of the Pension Fund had “decided to revert to annual sessions as from 2007 with the aim of completing its work within five working days; the focus of the Board during the odd-numbered years will be on the budget of the Fund.”¹³⁶ Sessions of the Board in 2007 and 2008 gave rise to resolutions of the General Assembly on the Fund.¹³⁷ The session of 2009 was acted upon by the Assembly in its resolution on Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011.¹³⁸

62. The administrative expenses of the Pension Fund increased significantly during the ten-year period under review. In December 2001, the Assembly approved “expenses chargeable directly to the Fund totaling 74.3 million dollars” for the biennium 2002-2003.¹³⁹ In December

¹³³ GA resolution 55/224, part VII, para. 4.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, para. 5.

¹³⁵ GA resolution 63/252, section III, para. 10.

¹³⁶ GA resolution 61/240, section VI, para. 7.

¹³⁷ See GA resolutions 62/241 and 63/252.

¹³⁸ See GA resolution 64/245, 24 December 2009, Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011, section II, Administrative expenses of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund.

¹³⁹ See GA resolution 56/255, 24 December 2001, Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003.

2009, approved expenses amounted to 109.7 million dollars.¹⁴⁰ Through the same resolution, the Assembly decided “to establish 5 out of the requested 14 posts in the Secretariat of the Fund.” These posts were one D1, Chief Finance Officer, two P4, of which one for a Risk Management Officer, and two General Service.¹⁴¹

63. As had been traditionally the case, all resolutions of the General Assembly on the Pension Fund were adopted by consensus. There was, however, one exception. In December 2007, the General Assembly adopted a resolution entitled “Questions related to the United Nations Joint Staff pension Fund” by 140 votes, one against and one abstention.¹⁴² A separate vote on the contentious paragraph of this resolution had gathered 95 votes, one against and 45 abstentions. This contentious paragraph 10 read as follows: “(The Assembly) Approves the ad-hoc measure recommended by the Board to address adverse, unprecedented consequences of the dollarization of Ecuador as an ad-hoc, one time, ex-gratia, exceptional payment.”¹⁴³ United Nations pensioners of Ecuador had suffered a significant cut in their pensions when their country had adopted the United States dollar as its own currency. The Member States having voted against or abstained in the votes on this resolution argued that they were most concerned about the creation of a precedent.¹⁴⁴

7. Development of priorities with a view to concentration of efforts and resources

64. The focus of the United Nations and the United Nations system on the Millennium Development Goals, particularly during the first half of the decade, are mentioned above in the General Survey.

65. The advancement of women in the world and the improvement of their status in the organizations of the United Nations system continued, as in the previous decade, to be issues with some visibility on the international agenda. For example, in 2001 the General Assembly expressed concern “that there are currently no women acting as special representatives or envoys” and noted “that the statistics on the representation of women in the organizations of the United Nations system are not fully up to date.” The Assembly “strongly encourage(d)

¹⁴⁰ See GA resolution 64/245, section II, para. 4.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, para. 3.

¹⁴² GA resolution 62/241, 22 December 2007, Questions related to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. The vote against was from the United States of America and the Member State that abstained was Canada. (see A/62/PV.79, General Assembly, Official Records, 79th Plenary meeting).

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, para. 10.

¹⁴⁴ See the debate in A/62/PV.79, pp. 24 and 25. The Member States that abstained on the vote for paragraph 10 included all the developed countries.

Member States (...) to identify women candidates for assignment to peacekeeping missions and to improve the representation of women in military and civilian policy contingents” and “to identify and nominate more women candidates for appointments or election as judges or other senior officials in international courts and tribunals.”¹⁴⁵ There was a debate in the Security Council on “women, peace and security.”¹⁴⁶ Member States were urged “to support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at senior and policy-making levels (...)”¹⁴⁷ In 2001, the Economic and Social Council decided to establish a regular sub-item entitled “Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system.”¹⁴⁸

66. The development of Africa was also a continuing priority for the organizations of the United Nations system. The “United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990” became the “New Partnership for Africa’s Development” and, in 1999, the “United Nations system support for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development.”¹⁴⁹ The CPC, at the end of the decade, “recognized the adverse impact of the global financial and economic crisis on African countries and recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to emphasize mitigation of the impacts of the crisis on African countries when ensuring better coordination among United Nations system organizations.” Also, the Committee “reiterated its previous recommendation that the General Assembly request the Office of the Special Adviser for Africa to ensure that United Nations support for NEPAD moves from debate, assessments and recommendations to tangible actions and results in respect of NEPAD projects across the African continent.”¹⁵⁰

8. Coordination of budgets procedures in relation to technical assistance and other extra-budgetary programmes involving voluntary contributions

67. In 2001, the General Assembly noted “with serious concern the overall decline or stagnation in core-resources available to many United Nations funds and programmes, in particular the United Nations Development Programme” and stressed that “core-resources, *inter alia*, because of their untied nature, are the bedrock of the operational activities of the

¹⁴⁵ See GA resolution 56/127, last two preambular paragraphs, paragraph 10 (b) and (d).

¹⁴⁶ See S/2002/1154, S/PV.4589, and GA resolution 57/180, fifth preambular paragraph.

¹⁴⁷ See GA resolution 58/144, para. 10 (a).

¹⁴⁸ See Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/41, para. 1.

¹⁴⁹ See for instance the reports of the CPC for the 55th, 58th and 64th sessions of the General Assembly (A/55/16, A/58/16, A/64/16) and their parts on Coordination.

¹⁵⁰ A/64/16, paras 141 and 144.

United Nations system.”¹⁵¹ Three years later, the Assembly noted “with appreciation that core contributions to United Nations funds and programmes have begun to increase again over the last three years.” Also noted by the Assembly was “the increase in non-core resources as a mechanism to supplement the means of operational activities for development.” These non-vital for the coherence and harmonization of operational activities for development.” Overall, the United Nations system had “not benefited commensurately from recent increases in official development assistance, despite the additional tasks entrusted to the United Nations system in the implementation of and follow-up to internationally agreed goals.”¹⁵²

68. The next triennial review, undertaken in 2007, prompted the Assembly to note “with concern that the **share of core contributions** (emphasis added) to United Nations funds and programmes had declined in recent years.” Organizations needed to address “on a continuous basis the imbalance between core and non-core resources.” In addition, “the increased use of restrictively earmarked non-core resources reduces the influence of the governing bodies and can lead to the fragmentation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and can thus constrain their effectiveness.” Another source of concern for the Assembly was that “based on assessed contributions, **the regular budgets of many specialized agencies have been stagnating** (emphasis added).” Member States were invited “to consider increasing their contributions to the budgets of the specialized agencies in order to enable the United Nations development system to respond in a more comprehensive and effective manner to the demands of the United Nations development agenda.”¹⁵³

69. In December 2008, the General Assembly decided to hold its comprehensive review of the United Nations system’s operational activities for development every four years instead of triennially. Accordingly, the next such review was to take place in 2012.¹⁵⁴

9. Other recommendations

70. Following a long standing practice, the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency was considered every year by the Assembly and the resolutions that ensued were essentially devoted to substantive issues. In 2001, however, the Assembly “encourage(d) all States Members of the Agency that have not yet done so to ratify the amendment of article XIV A of the statute of the Agency recalling the adoption by the General Conference of the Agency of

¹⁵¹ GA resolution 56/201, para. 14.

¹⁵² GA resolution 59/250, paras 16, 17 and 20.

¹⁵³ GA resolution 62/208, paras 18, 21 and 25.

¹⁵⁴ See GA resolution 63/232, paras 18 and 19.

resolution GC (43) RES 8 on the amendment of article XIV A of the Statute, which will provide for biennial budgeting by the Agency.” The same encouragement was repeated in 2002. Also in 2001, the Assembly “welcomed the measures and decisions taken by the Agency to strengthened and fund its operational activities, which should contribute to achieving sustainable development in developing countries, and called upon States to cooperate in contributing to and implementing the measures and decisions pursuant thereto.”¹⁵⁵

71. It might be noted that, from 2003 and until the end of the period under review, the resolutions of the Assembly on the report of the AIEA became much shorter than before. Also, from the 56th session to the 60th session included, these resolutions were adopted with a vote.¹⁵⁶ Through resolution 60/6, the Assembly welcomed the appointment of Mr Mohamed ElBaradei as Director General of the Agency until 30 November 2009 and also welcomed the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the agency and its Director General. Through resolution 64/8, the Assembly extended its best wishes to Mr Yukiya Amano, the incoming new Director General of the IAEA, and paid tribute to Mr ElBaradei for his twelve years of service.¹⁵⁷

72. In the resolutions that the General Assembly adopted on the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) during the period 2000-2009, two issues that were raised, although both unconclusively, need to be mentioned in this review. The first was the question of an increase of the funding of UNEP by the regular budget of the United Nations. The Assembly, in December 2001, noted the proposal of the Secretary-General to that effect, specifically “for the cost of servicing the Programme secretariat and the Governing Council.” In the same resolution the Assembly requested the Secretary-General “to keep the resources needs of the Environment Programme and the United Nations Office in Nairobi under continuous review and to make proposals as needed in the context of the United Nations regular budget, with a view to strengthening the Programme and the Office.”¹⁵⁸ This request to the Secretary-General was repeated at most sessions of the Assembly, including the 64th session.¹⁵⁹

73. The second issue concerned the composition of the Governing Council of UNEP. In December 2002, the Assembly recalled that “in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (of

¹⁵⁵ GA resolutions 56/94, paras 4 and 9, and 57/9, para. 4.

¹⁵⁶ See GA resolutions 57/9, 58/8, 59/18, 60/6, 61/8 and the relevant official records of the General Assembly, for instance A/51/PV.47 for the 57th session and A/61/PV.43 for the 61st session. The Member State casting the negative vote was the Democratic Republic of Korea. The abstentions varied between none and two (Angola and Vietnam for resolution 57/9).

¹⁵⁷ See GA resolutions 60/6, paras 4 and 5, and 64/8, para 3.

¹⁵⁸ GA resolution 56/193, paras 5 and 6.

¹⁵⁹ See GA resolution 64/204, para 14.

the World Summit on Sustainable Development) the General Assembly was invited to consider, at its fifty-seventh session, the important but complex issue of establishing universal membership for the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme.” Having underlined its “unique role “ in giving consideration to this issue, the Assembly invited “Member States, the Governing Council (of UNEP) and the relevant bodies of the United Nations system to submit to the Secretariat their comments (...) and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report incorporating those views to the General Assembly before its sixtieth session.”¹⁶⁰

74. At its 61st session, the Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General, also took note of the continued discussion of this issue in the Governing Council of UNEP, and decided “to consider, if necessary, the issue of universal membership at its sixty-fourth session, while noting the differences in views expressed on this important but complex issue.”¹⁶¹ And, at its 64th session, the Assembly took note “of decision 35/4 of 20 February 2009 of the Governing Council (...) by which the Governing Council established a consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives, with the purpose of preparing a set of options for improving international environmental governance for the consideration of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session, with a view to providing inputs to the General Assembly.”¹⁶²

****E. Role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the economic and Social Council**

****F. The powers of the General Assembly under article 17(3)**

¹⁶⁰ GA resolution 57/251, fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs, and para. 4.

¹⁶¹ GA resolution 61/205, paras 2,3 and 12.

¹⁶² GA resolution 64/204, fifth preambular paragraph.