



**JOINT INSPECTION UNIT**  
of the United Nations System

**CORPS COMMUN d'INSPECTION**  
du Système des Nations Unies

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**STATEMENT BY INSPECTOR M. DEBORAH WYNES**  
**CHAIRPERSON**  
**JOINT INSPECTION UNIT**

Agenda item numbers 47 and 113 – Governance and oversight review  
Fifth Committee, sixty-first session

12 December 2006

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to introduce today, on behalf of the Joint Inspection Unit, its report, Oversight Lacunae in the United Nations System, contained in document A/60/860, which covers 19 United Nations system entities, that is to say, the United Nations, its funds and programmes, the specialized agencies and IAEA.

The report was conceived at a time in which there were many reports in the press calling into question the efficiency of the operations of the United Nations system, the integrity of its management, and the effectiveness of the mechanisms created to oversee its operations.

The objective of this report is to provide Member States with a comprehensive vision of the state of oversight in the United Nations system in terms of the structures, mandates and resources allocated to the oversight function, as well as some of the modus operandi.

Our report concludes that while there is nothing intrinsically deficient with either the design or mandates of the overall system of oversight in the United Nations system,

important issues remain to be addressed particularly with respect to the level and type of resources, working practices and independence of the systems in place.

The philosophy behind this report is to strengthen the role of Member States, the “shareholders” of the United Nations. The recommendations are designed to close the gaps we found in external and internal oversight, thereby strengthening the role of Member States in the oversight process and guaranteeing the necessary independence of both internal and external oversight mechanisms.

These recommendations range across the spectrum to include the need to establish term limits for the heads of internal oversight and the external auditors, financial disclosure statements for certain staff, including elected officials, whistleblower protection, and an ethics function. Some of these the United Nations and a number of agencies have already put in place but other agencies have not. Recommendations also relate to the need to buttress the investigation function in the organizations, to fix the budget process for internal and external oversight entities, to ensure there is peer review of ACABQ, ICSC and JIU, to assure consistent follow-up and implementation of recommendations, and to consolidate audit, inspection, investigation and evaluation functions into a single unit, under the head of internal oversight reporting directly to the executive head. Our report recommends the establishment of an independent external “Oversight Board”, somewhat analogous to the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, composed of expert members nominated and elected by Member States to represent the collective interests of all Member States.

The report also provides, in an annex, some suggested standards to allow some comparison on the adequacy of current structures and resources allocated to oversight throughout the system. As the report clearly states, they are not “metrics” by which to judge the requirements of agencies and programmes that are varied in their nature and mandates, but rather a set of ranges that indicate where a thorough look into a particular unit might be called for.

We are confident, Mr. Chairman, that our recommendations will receive the consideration and support of the various legislative organs of the United Nations system.

Mr. Chairman; the Joint Inspection Unit takes a markedly different philosophical approach to oversight from that of the Steering Committee. We believe oversight is a function of Member States, and that it is a holistic and unitary function that goes substantially beyond internal audit. We do not see oversight as a function of management alone, which itself is the subject of that oversight.

The Steering Committee's report provides important recommendations, e.g., the establishment of an ethics function, term limits for the head of OIOS, transfer of management consulting out of OIOS, and establishment of an oversight board (again the IAAC), some of which parallel, in concept, recommendations in our Oversight Lacunae report. But, Mr. Chairman, we have major concerns going to the heart of the Steering Committee's report itself; these concerns relate to their lack of proper and timely consultation, their very limited understanding of how the United Nations system operates, and their lack of analysis, with conclusions based on face value statements rather than facts. Recent reports issued by OIOS (A/60/901) and ACABQ (A/61/605) express some of these very same concerns. Our concerns are explained in detail in our comments on the Steering Committee's report that you have before you in document A/60/1004, which we are confident will also be considered by the Member States during the forthcoming informal consultations on governance and oversight.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and the members of this committee, and will be pleased to receive your comments and to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.