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Strategic management, budgetary and administrative questions: work of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice****Twenty-eighth session**

Vienna, 20–24 May 2019

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda**

Strategic management, budgetary and administrative questions: work of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**Work of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note has been prepared pursuant to Economic and Social Council decision 2017/236, in which the Council renewed the mandate of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime until the part of the sessions of the Commissions to be held in the first half of 2021, as well as Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolutions 52/13, 54/10, 54/17, 56/11, 58/1 and 60/3 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolutions 18/3, 20/1, 20/9, 22/2, 24/1 and 26/1. The present note covers the work of the working group between 4 October and 30 November 2018. Information on the work of the working group during the preceding period can be found in document [E/CN.7/2018/3/Add.1-E/CN.15/2018/3/Add.1](#).

* [E/CN.7/2019/1](#).** [E/CN.15/2019/1](#).

I. Deliberations

1. From 4 October to 30 November 2018, the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) held three informal meetings.

2. The working group continued to consider issues under the items of the agenda approved by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 2017/236 and by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in its resolution 52/13 and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in its resolution 18/3 and in accordance with the terms of reference annexed to those resolutions, as well as with provisions contained in Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolutions 54/10, 54/17, 56/11, 58/1 and 60/3 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolutions 20/1, 20/9, 22/2, 24/1 and 26/1.

3. At the meeting held on 4 October, the working group was briefed on the United Nations reform and its implications for UNODC. It was anticipated that, as part of the management reform, a number of central support functions would be transferred to global service centres and common back-office facilities would be established in the field. With regard to the United Nations development system reform, UNODC was expected to contribute to the funding of the United Nations resident coordinator system through the 1 per cent coordination levy on tightly earmarked non-core contributions, estimated at between \$1 and \$1.5 million a year, as well as through the United Nations Development Group cost-sharing among United Nations development system entities. UNODC was considering how to meet the requirements of and opportunities emerging from the United Nations development system reform, including through the funding of a temporary surge capacity in the field. The working group was also updated on the financial situation of the Office, including on the evolution in the general-purpose, special-purpose and programme support cost funds that had taken place during the period 2012–2019. It was informed that, overall, there had been a decrease in special-purpose fund implementation and related programme support cost fund income, and that the trend in general-purpose contributions continued to be worrying. The use of general-purpose savings to fund research was noted with appreciation by the group. Some speakers noted that programme support cost funds should be used mainly in support of the field office network.

4. Also at the meeting, the working group considered the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the practices, policies and programmes of UNODC, and was informed of the adoption of the United Nations Office at Vienna/UNODC Strategy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The working group expressed encouragement for the approach adopted by the Office to gender mainstreaming. The topic of gender-responsive evaluations in support of the above-mentioned Strategy was also considered. A representative of UNODC provided an update on the regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries. She explained that the programme was part of an integrated approach, which also included the Paris Pact, and that it was connected to other regional and global programmes and country programmes in Central Asia. An update on the UNODC programmes on drug prevention and treatment was also provided. Some participants noted that those programmes were among the most results-based and field-oriented global programmes of UNODC and had achieved impressive results in spite of limited funding.

5. At the meeting held on 5 November, the working group was updated on the United Nations development system reform, including the new resident coordinator system and its structure and funding. UNODC was counting on the support of Member States, through their permanent missions in both Vienna and New York, to ensure that the critical issues of security, justice and countering corruption and transnational organized crime were part of the United Nations development system reform process. As part of UNODC efforts under the reform, a surge capacity had been approved to strengthen the positioning of the Office and temporarily reinforce operational

capacity on the ground and in selected thematic areas. The impact on UNODC of the United Nations reforms relating to counter-terrorism and migration was also touched upon at the meeting. Some participants expressed their support for the surge initiative, as part of the adaptation by UNODC to the reform of the United Nations, but it was observed that the specific mandates of UNODC relating to drugs and crime did not fully coincide with those of other members of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group. Participants were briefed on the draft annual programme implementation plan for 2020 for UNODC that had been developed by the Programme Planning and Budget Division for all Secretariat entities. UNODC had prepared a draft document that was to be circulated to delegations for written comments and then reviewed by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at their joint meeting on 6 December 2018, during their reconvened sessions.

6. Also at the meeting held on 5 November, a presentation was made on mainstreaming gender into anti-corruption reforms, including aspects such as vulnerabilities to corruption, and integrating gender into multi-stakeholder approaches to implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. A representative of UNODC drew the attention of participants to the report of the Executive Director on gender balance and geographical representation within UNODC ([E/CN.7/2018/15-E/CN.15/2018/17](#)), which had been made available in advance of the meeting. Some participants noted that the representation of developing countries was low. UNODC was asked to continue its efforts to improve geographical representation, while respecting the necessity of securing the highest standard of efficiency, competence and integrity of staff, as established in Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations. The working group was also briefed about the alternative development programmes implemented in Colombia by UNODC, together with the Government of Colombia, and received updates on the work of the Terrorism Prevention Branch and on the work of the Office to address HIV among drug users and in prison settings.

7. At the meeting held on 30 November, the working group concluded its consideration of the draft resolutions contained in the report of the Executive Director on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2018–2019 for UNODC ([E/CN.7/2018/14-E/CN.15/2018/16](#)) and reviewed the draft annual programme implementation plan for 2020 for UNODC ([E/CN.7/2018/CRP.11-E/CN.15/2018/CRP.8](#)), prior to their consideration by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at their joint meeting on 6 December 2018, during their reconvened sessions.

II. Organizational and administrative matters

8. Under the guidance of the Co-Chairs, the working group held three informal meetings, on 4 October and on 5 and 30 November 2018. A formal meeting of the working group was planned for 23 January 2019.

9. In the period under consideration, the working group also held seven informal consultations, on 4 October, 5, 15 and 30 November and 3, 4 and 5 December 2018, on the draft resolutions contained in [E/CN.7/2018/14-E/CN.15/2018/16](#).

10. A lunch-time presentation was made to the working group on 4 October 2018 by the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division on the changes to the proposed programme budget document and the processing thereof by the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

11. On 25 October 2018, a briefing was conducted by a representative of UNODC on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2018–2019 for the Office.

12. An informal meeting was held on 15 November on the draft annual programme implementation plan for UNODC for 2020.
 13. The Secretariat continued to provide documents and information to the working group by electronic means and in hard copy, including through a web page accessible to the public (www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/FINGOV/FINGOV-index.html) and a secure web page for Member States (www.unodc.org/missions/en/wggf/index.html), set up and maintained by the Secretariat for the use of the working group.
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