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Draft report

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Addendum

Strategic management, budgetary and administrative questions

1. At the 1st meeting of the reconvened twenty-sixth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held jointly with the reconvened sixtieth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on 7 December 2017, and at the 2nd meeting, on 8 December 2017, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice considered agenda item 3, which read as follows:

“Strategic management, budgetary and administrative questions:

“(a) 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;

“(b) Directives on policy and budgetary issues for the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme;

“(c) Working methods of the Commission;

“(d) Staff composition of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other related matters.”

2. For its consideration of item 3, the Commission had before it the following:

(a) Note by the Secretariat on the 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 ([E/CN.7/2017/3/Add.2-E/CN.15/2017/3/Add.2](#));

(b) Report of the Executive Director on the consolidated budget for the biennium 2018–2019 for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ([E/CN.7/2017/12-E/CN.15/2017/14](#));

(c) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the consolidated budget for the biennium 2018–2019 for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ([E/CN.7/2017/13-E/CN.15/2017/15](#));



(d) Report of the Executive Director on gender balance and geographical representation within the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (E/CN.7/2017/14-E/CN.15/2017/16);

3. The Director of the Division for Management of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) made an introductory statement. The observer for Egypt, in his capacity as co-Chair of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, also made an introductory statement.

4. Statements were made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), the observer for Angola (on behalf of the Group of African States), the representative of Thailand (on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States), the observer for Argentina (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States) and the observer for Estonia (on behalf of the European Union and its member States). Statements were also made by the representatives of Guatemala, Ecuador, Japan, Brazil, the United States of America, Chile, Mexico, Pakistan, Colombia, China and the Russian Federation.

5. The observers for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Indonesia and Peru also made statements.

A. Deliberations

6. Several speakers expressed appreciation for the crucial role and work of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the financing and governance of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in enhancing the transparency and accountability of the Office and strengthening cooperation and trust between Member States and UNODC. Several speakers underscored the crucial importance of UNODC country, regional and global programmes and emphasized that the growing contributions to UNODC for those programmes were a clear sign of trust and confidence in the important role played by UNODC as a reliable deliverer of technical assistance, which also required a stable field presence. In that context, the importance of ensuring appropriate resources and support for UNODC operations was stressed. It was noted that the working group served as a useful forum for regular consultations and review, including on matters related to UNODC programme development and implementation, financial, administrative and other issues. Several speakers welcomed the extension of the mandate of the working group until 2021 and expressed appreciation to the co-Chairs for their work.

7. Several speakers expressed regret that the consolidated budget for the biennium 2018–2019 was not presented to Member States one month prior to its submission to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as stipulated in paragraph 19 of Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 58/12 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolution 24/3. Several speakers emphasized that they had not been able to comment meaningfully on the consolidated budget prior to its finalization and submission to the Advisory Committee and that their comments, provided during meetings of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the financing and governance of UNODC, had not been adequately taken into account. UNODC was requested to ensure that the budgets for future budget cycles were submitted in full compliance with the relevant resolutions, and not later than one month prior to their submission to Advisory Committee, in order to ensure advance consultations and discussions.

8. Several speakers reiterated the importance of adequate, predictable and stable funding for UNODC in order, inter alia, to ensure the continuity of the provision of technical assistance, in particular to developing countries, upon request, and the sustainability of its thematic, global and regional programmes. The need for UNODC to enhance the effectiveness of its technical assistance programmes and activities, in close consultation with and guidance from Member States, was underscored.

Moreover, it was noted that UNODC should hold consultations with relevant stakeholders, including the host countries, in advance of changes to its field presence.

9. Several speakers called for an increase in contributions to enable UNODC to deliver its core mandates and expressed concern regarding the financial situation of UNODC, in particular the decrease in general-purpose funding, which could affect both the technical assistance delivery and the normative functions of UNODC. One speaker noted that the use of general-purpose funding for field offices with programmatic shortfalls was not a sustainable solution and expressed regret that the secretariat had not provided to Member States details on the income and expenses of some field offices and strategies to overcome financial challenges.

10. Several speakers expressed serious concern regarding the proposed change in the funding structure of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch, as well as of the Justice Section. It was noted that the work of that Branch was an essential part of UNODC activities and a core function that required sustainable funding to guarantee its continuity and impartiality. The importance of ensuring the future funding of the Branch was highlighted by several speakers, and it was noted that the Branch should not bear the impact of the shortfalls in general-purpose funding. In relation to the activities of that Branch, several speakers emphasized the need for regular dialogue and consultations between Member States and UNODC regarding the Branch's ongoing and planned research activities, which should be based on mandates and policy guidance from the governing bodies.

11. UNODC was encouraged to review the proposed distribution of programme support cost funds between divisions and between headquarters and field offices, as well as the transfer of the remaining programme support cost resources to UNODC headquarters, rather than using such funds for field offices affected by short-term financial challenges. In that regard, it was also noted that such a review would allow the Office to release to the Research and Trend Analysis Branch some general-purpose funding that was currently allocated to field offices.

12. One speaker expressed the view that while the full cost recovery model would ensure high-quality programmes and a sound financial future for field offices, UNODC should properly evaluate and report on its implementation. Another speaker expressed the view that in the recent past, an increasing number of developing and middle-income countries were providing financial contributions to the work of UNODC in support of activities in their own countries, and noted that programme support costs and full cost recovery, taken together, had become an increasing source of income to UNODC by diverting a significant portion of resources from programme implementation to general administrative support. UNODC was requested to provide additional information on criteria for exceptions to the 13 per cent programme support cost rate, which was very high for developing and middle-income donor countries, and to ensure that income created was also channelled back as appropriate directly to the related projects.

13. With reference to United Nations reform, it was mentioned that improvements should be sought in four key areas: leadership, efficiency, accountability and performance, and UNODC was encouraged to implement the Secretary-General's vision, while also taking steps to improve management processes in the future.

14. Several speakers expressed their appreciation for the clear progress made by UNODC in achieving gender parity, including at the senior level, while noting that more remained to be done in that regard. Several speakers welcomed the implementation of the system-wide programme on gender parity. Appreciation was expressed by several speakers for the efforts of UNODC to mainstream gender into its activities and programmes. With regard to the forthcoming finalization and publication of the UNOV/UNODC Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, several speakers made reference to the need for updates on the implementation and impact of that project. The Executive Director was requested to report to the Commission on measures to improve gender parity, in particular at the senior and policymaking levels.

15. Several speakers stressed that gender parity and equal geographical representation should be two equally essential pillars of the human resources policy of UNODC. It was emphasized by a number of speakers that developing countries had qualified professionals with the required technical capacity and practical experience. UNODC was requested to establish concrete measures to correct the imbalance in geographical representation, including by reaching out to candidates from developing countries through, inter alia, its field office network. A number of speakers stated that merit and competence should be the basis of recruitment, while due regard should be paid to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible, in accordance with article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations.

16. Several speakers noted that concrete and sustainable efforts were needed to increase the representation of developing countries, in particular from unrepresented and underrepresented countries, in the staff composition of UNODC. Several speakers called upon the Executive Director of UNODC to undertake meaningful efforts to ensure equitable geographical representation, including at the professional, senior and policymaking levels, and to report on the progress made to the Commission. They also stressed the need for a standing item on the agenda of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in order to review, on a regular basis, the progress made by the Secretariat in ensuring equitable geographical representation. UNODC was requested to continue to provide updated disaggregated data on gender and the geographical composition of the Secretariat.

17. Furthermore, it was noted that the working methods of the Commissions could and should be improved and that the Commissions could approve two procedural points through their extended bureaux, namely to establish a date for opening the list of speakers and to differentiate only between speakers at the ministerial level and other speakers.

B. Action taken by the Commission

18. At the joint meeting, on 7 December 2017, the Commission took note of Economic and Social Council decision 2017/236, in which the Council decided to renew 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 sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to be held in the first half of 2021, and elected Ignacio Baylina Ruíz (Spain) and Moataz Khaled Aly Abdelhady (Egypt), as co-Chairs of the working group in accordance with the procedure set out in Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 52/13 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolution 18/3.
