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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****Thirtieth session**

Vienna, 17–21 May 2021

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 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 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, 60/3 and 62/9 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolutions 18/3, 20/1, 20/9, 22/2, 24/1, 26/1 and 28/4. The present note covers the work of the working group between 5 October 2020 and 27 January 2021. Information on the work of the working group during the preceding period can be found in document [E/CN.7/2020/3/Add.1-E/CN.15/2020/3/Add.1](#).

* E/CN.7/2021/1.

** E/CN.15/2021/1.



I. Deliberations

1. From 5 October 2020 to 27 January 2021, 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 four 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, 60/3, 62/9 and 63/6 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolutions 20/1, 20/9, 22/2, 24/1, 26/1, 28/4 and 29/1.
3. At the meeting held on 5 October 2020, the working group received an update on the development of a revised longer-term vision or strategy for the Office and of the draft proposed programme plan for 2022 and programme performance for 2020 for UNODC. Member States also discussed the unedited, advance version of the report on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for UNODC. In particular, information was provided on the involvement of UNODC in the implementation of the United Nations development system reform and the United Nations management reform. Participants were presented with a breakdown of the income and expenditure estimates for the biennium by fund and received a more detailed overview of the special-purpose, general-purpose and programme support cost funds, including the cost-saving measures envisioned under those funds. An update was also shared on the Office's funding model and on the budget situation of the International Narcotics Control Board.
4. At the same meeting, a representative of the Secretariat provided participants with an overview of the Global Programme on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in the United Nations Office at Vienna and UNODC. A presentation was given on the activities undertaken by the Terrorism Prevention Branch to integrate gender into its work. A representative of UNODC shared an update on the human resources management situation, in particular with regard to equitable geographical representation, gender balance and work to prevent and respond to prohibited conduct. Finally, Member States received information on the outcome of the independent in-depth evaluation of the Global Maritime Crime Programme.
5. At the meeting held on 13 November, the Executive Director of UNODC presented the revised text of the longer-term strategy for the Office. The Executive Director explained that the strategy had been drafted with a view to incorporating the priorities and needs identified by Member States and on the basis of the feedback received by Member States. Further, she explained that it had been prepared in close consultation with UNODC staff in Vienna and in the field, building on examination of the previous strategies of UNODC and those of other United Nations entities. The strategy, covering the period 2021–2025, included, for the first time, key outcomes and outputs and was also aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the comprehensive Secretariat-wide reforms launched by the Secretary-General.
6. At the same meeting, Member States also discussed matters related to the involvement of UNODC in the implementation of the United Nations management and development system reforms; the report on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the Office; and the draft proposed programme plan for 2022 and programme performance for 2020. A representative of the Secretariat provided an update on the status of implementation of Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolution 28/4, entitled “Budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund”, and Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 62/9, entitled

“Budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme”.

7. The briefing on the human resources management situation at UNODC included data on the percentage of women in the Office’s workforce and on the development of the staff composition in terms of regional groups since December 2019, as well as information on challenges, new working methods and key achievements with regard to human resources management in 2020. A presentation was then given on the enhanced institutional mechanism, which ensured a corporate approach to gender mainstreaming in UNODC programming, and on the corporate evaluation of gender equality and empowerment of women at UNODC and the United Nations Office at Vienna. Finally, Member States received an overview of the main upcoming global publications and the research briefs related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). They also discussed the Office’s regular and ad hoc research activities and the ongoing work related to methodology and data-collection development.

8. At the meeting held on 26 November, an update was provided on the engagement of the UNODC field office network in support of the United Nations development system reform, as well as on the status of implementation of Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolution 28/4 and Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 62/9. The working group continued discussing the report on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the Office. The representative of the Secretariat gave a briefing to the meeting participants on the Office’s work to explore the gender dimensions of corruption, highlighting the forthcoming publication entitled *The Time is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*; the forthcoming gender analysis of the 2016 and 2019 Nigeria corruption survey data; the gender webinar series launched under the Office’s global programme on strengthening criminal justice cooperation along trafficking routes; and the thematic brief on gender and corruption in Myanmar.

9. At the same meeting, Member States discussed the report of the Executive Director on gender balance and geographical representation within the Office (E/CN.7/2020/17-E/CN.15/2020/17), which provided a detailed description of the activities of the Office during 2019 and the first half of 2020 to strengthen gender parity and geographical diversity and enhance an enabling work environment. A representative of the Secretariat also shared an overview of the finalized and ongoing independent project evaluations and in-depth evaluations and provided information on the work undertaken by the Office in the wider evaluation realm, for example, meta-syntheses of evaluation results relating to crime prevention and webinars and training to enhance evaluation capacity, with a focus on the COVID-19 response. Presentations were then given on the Office’s normative work to assist Member States in implementing the three international drug control conventions, including assistance to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in organizing its treaty-based, normative work relating to the scope of control of substances; assistance in implementing the conventions on the basis of the United Nations standards and norms on crime prevention and criminal justice; and legal and legislative assistance, including through the field offices, with regard to drug control and criminal law.

10. At the meetings held on 5 October, 13 November and 26 November 2020, Member States also discussed, under a dedicated agenda item, the review of the functioning of the working group in the light of a possible extension of its mandate beyond the first half of 2021. As a result of the discussions and on the basis of the proposal made by the Co-Chairs of the working group, a draft decision to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council on extending the mandate of the group until the end of 2021 was tabled jointly by the Chairs of the two Commissions. On 4 December 2020, during their respective reconvened sessions, the two Commissions recommended the adoption by the Economic and Social Council of the draft decision.

11. At the meeting held on 27 January, the working group was presented with an update on the status of implementation of the longer-term strategy for the Office for

the period 2021–2025. A representative of the Secretariat provided participants with an overview of the preliminary expenditure under the special-purpose, general-purpose and programme support cost funds for 2020, as well as with an outlook for the revised estimates for expenditure and income for 2021. Another representative of the Secretariat gave a briefing to Member States on the contributions of UNODC to the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, focusing on the key achievements made in the period 2017–2020, the areas for improvement and the actions planned for 2021.

12. At the same meeting, Member States discussed matters related to evaluation and oversight, focusing, *inter alia*, on the review of the UNODC evaluation policy for the period 2020–2021, finalized and ongoing evaluations, and activities conducted with regard to knowledge development and capacity-building. A representative of the Secretariat gave a briefing to participants on the human resources management situation, in particular with regard to geographical diversity, gender parity and cases of prohibited conduct during the period 2019–2020. Information was also provided on active initiatives and planned outreach activities of the Human Resources Management Section, with a particular focus on the activities related to disability inclusion. The working group also discussed the draft provisional programme of work of the group for the period January–December 2021.

II. Organizational and administrative matters

13. Under the guidance of the Co-Chairs, the working group held four informal meetings, on 5 October 2020, 13 November 2020, 26 November 2020 and 27 January 2021.

14. Informal briefings conducted on 5 November and 12 November 2020 were focused on the report on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for UNODC. The draft proposed programme plan for 2022 and programme performance for 2020 were also discussed at the informal briefing held on 5 November 2020.

15. In the period under consideration, the working group also held informal consultations, on 18 and 19 November 2020, on the draft resolutions contained in the report of the Executive Director on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2020–2021 ([E/CN.7/2020/16–E/CN.15/2020/16](#)).

16. On 27 January 2021, immediately after the suspension of the informal meeting, the working group held the first round of informal consultations to review the functioning of the working group in the period beyond 2021.

17. The Secretariat continued to provide documents and information to the working group, 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), which had been set up and maintained by the Secretariat for the use of the working group.