



FOR INFORMATION

TENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Matters relating to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU): Report on its activities for the year ended 31 December 2005 and other reports*Contents*

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Report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2005 and programme of work for 2006

1. This report¹ consists of two chapters: annual report for 2005 (Chapter I) and work programme for 2006 (Chapter II). The first chapter covers the reform of the JIU, reports issued in 2005, follow-up to recommendations, relationship with other oversight bodies, and administrative and other issues of concern. The second chapter presents 11 studies to be undertaken in 2006.
2. The report also provides, in its annexes, the composition of the JIU, list of participating organizations and their percentage share in the cost of the JIU in 2005, and status of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 59/267 aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the JIU.

Other JIU reports

3. The Governing Body reaffirmed the ILO's relationship with the JIU at its 294th Session (November 2005), and requested the Director-General "to continue to submit to it, on a yearly basis, a summary of the reports and recommendations of the JIU following the receipt of comments from the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), it being understood that where the reports related specifically to the ILO they should be submitted in full".² The Office therefore has only summarized reports containing recommendations addressed to the governing/legislative bodies or executive heads of United Nations system organizations, and not those addressed to the General Assembly or Secretary-General.
4. The summary is brief, in response to the request from the Governing Body to streamline documentation. Copies of the full reports have been furnished by the JIU and are made available in the Governing Body room. The number of copies and languages depend on the report. In addition, all JIU reports are available in English, French and Spanish through its Internet site. In the interests of economy, the ILO does not print additional copies of the JIU reports, but the URL is provided in the footnote for each report mentioned.
5. No reports were received that relate specifically to the ILO. Five reports contain recommendations, addressed in part to the ILO, and are summarized in this paper:
 - (a) JIU/REP/2004/10, "Harmonization of the Conditions of Travel throughout the United Nations System";³
 - (b) JIU/REP/2005/2, "Some Measures to Improve Overall Performance of the United Nations System at the Country Level";⁴

¹ United Nations General Assembly, Official Records, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 34 (A/61/34) http://www.unjiu.org/data/en/annual_reports/wp2006en.pdf.

² GB.294/PV, para. 210.

³ http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2004/en2004_10.pdf.

⁴ Part I: http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2005/en2005_2I.pdf, and Part II: http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2005/en2005_2II.pdf.

- (c) JIU/REP/2005/3 and Corr.1, “Policies of United Nations System Organizations towards the Use of Open Source Software (OSS) in the Secretariats”;⁵
- (d) JIU/REP/2005/8, “Further Measures to Strengthen United Nations System Support to the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)”;⁶
- (e) JIU/REP/2006/2, “Oversight Lacunae in the United Nations System”.⁷

In addition to reports, the JIU issues notes that are “addressed to the executive heads of the participating organizations when decisions on recommendations can be made by the executive heads concerned, without Governing Body authorization”.⁸ Such notes are not commented on by the CEB; however, the following note is exceptionally submitted to the Governing Body because of its possible interest.

- (f) JIU/NOTE/2005/2, “Review of the Management of the United Nations Laissez- Passer”.⁹

(a) “Harmonization of the Conditions of Travel throughout the United Nations System”
(JIU/REP/2004/10 and A/60/78/Add.1)

6. The objectives of this report are “to conduct a comparative analysis of various elements of travel – categories, class and means of travel, stopovers, subsistence allowances, terminal expenses, lump sum option – of officials travelling at the expense of the United Nations, and propose measures aimed at harmonizing travel policies and practices throughout the organizations of the United Nations system”.
7. The CEB members generally welcomed the report and agreed on the importance of achieving greater harmonization, where possible, for increased leverage and cost-effectiveness and for ensuring the health and welfare of staff members of the United Nations system.
8. The recommendations addressed to the executive heads of United Nations system organizations relate to: a single benchmark of the lump-sum amount for home leave, family visit and education grant travel; reduced requirements for evidence of travel under lump-sum option; use of alternative, more cost-effective modes of transportation; simplified processing of travel claims; increased threshold for the granting of stopovers for rest purposes; and best practice provisions on reverse education travel, travel of breastfeeding mothers, travel of single parents, choice of an alternative place of home leave, minimum number of days to be spent in the country of home leave.
9. The Office confirms that the CEB comments represent its views on the report on the whole. It will continue to work with the rest of the United Nations system on harmonization, due account being taken of the costs incurred and the possible implications for health and security of staff.

⁵ http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2005/en2005_3.pdf.

⁶ http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2005/en2005_8.pdf.

⁷ http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2006/en2006_2.pdf.

⁸ “JIU standards and guidelines” (A/51/34/Annex I).

⁹ http://www.unjiu.org/data/notes/2005/NOTE2005_2.pdf.

(b) “Some Measures to Improve Overall Performance of the United Nations System at the Country Level”
(JIU/REP/2005/2 and A/60/125/Add.2-E/2005/85/Add.2)

10. This report makes recommendations on measures to improve overall performance of the United Nations system at the country level. The CEB members welcomed the report overall, while noting that the issues and the recommendations in the report are, in general, covered by the General Assembly in other contexts, such as the 2004 triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.¹⁰
11. The recommendations that concern the Office relate to: a strong joint statement to enhance cooperation, collaboration and coordination; common training opportunities and optimal use of the United Nations Staff College; simplification and harmonization within the system; staff mobility; field grade structure; and reports on progress.
12. The Office welcomes the overall direction of the report. It will take the recommendations into consideration as part of its continuing collaboration within the United Nations system on reform, coherence and harmonization. However, the Office notes that other recommendations, such as those of the United Nations High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence to be discussed by the General Assembly, as well as the views expressed in the Governing Body, will also guide its work in this area.

(c) “Policies of United Nations System Organizations towards the Use of Open Source Software (OSS) in the Secretariats”
(JIU/REP/2005/3 and A/60/665/Add.1)

13. This report aims “to contribute to raising awareness of the increasing use of open source software (OSS) by public administrations worldwide and to highlight some of the requirements to be met by United Nations system organizations in creating an enabling environment if they intend to make more use of OSS as indicated in the new system-wide United Nations information and communication technologies (ICT) strategy”.
14. The CEB members found that the report lacked sufficient attention to the issues surrounding the implementation of OSS, requiring further in-depth analysis to properly develop a system-wide direction on this topic. They note that the issues addressed in the report go outside the scope of a study on OSS use, notwithstanding the acknowledgement of the usefulness of OSS per se and of the importance of the topic.
15. The recommendations that concern the Office relate to: alignment of existing ICT strategies with a new system-wide strategy, and implementation of a United Nations Interoperability Framework; and assessment of the total cost of ownership of current platforms, measurement of the total economic impact of their IT investments and a report on the findings.
16. The Office considers that the CEB comments satisfactorily reflect its views. Being a major implementer of open source solutions, it finds that this report does not contribute anything substantially new to the ILO.

¹⁰ “Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system” (A/RES/59/250), 17 Dec. 2004.

(d) **“Further Measures to Strengthen United Nations System Support to the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)”**
(JIU/REP/2005/8 and A/61/69/Add.1)

17. This report aims “to identify factors inhibiting effective regional collaboration of the United Nations agencies in Africa, in particular through the regional consultations meetings convened by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and to propose specific measures to enhancing effective coordination and collaboration in support of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)”.
18. The CEB members generally concurred with the recommendations in the report. They considered that it has captured the main hindrances to effective collaboration of the United Nations agencies in supporting NEPAD, a programme of the African Union (AU), and appreciate its recommendations on practical measures to strengthen the collaborative work of United Nations agencies to enhance partnership with the AU. They noted, however, that the report could have provided a more critical examination of the existing coordination arrangements among United Nations agencies working in the region, with specific recommendations on the improvement of interagency cooperation and collaboration in support of NEPAD.
19. There is one recommendation that concerns the Office, which relates to increased support for the agreed joint programmes/projects of the United Nations regional consultation clusters.
20. The Office agrees with the CEB comments and with the recommendation. It wishes to note that the ILO’s Regional Office in Africa is in regular contact with the ECA on this subject, among many other issues, and participates in all relevant cluster and communication meetings.

(e) **“Oversight Lacunae in the United Nations System”**
(JIU/REP/2006/2 and A/60/860/Add.1)

21. This report aims “to establish whether internal mechanisms were in place to review allegations of wrongdoing against officials from the highest echelons of the organizations, to assess the adequacy of such mechanisms that did exist, and to determine where the final responsibility for the outcome of such cases should lie”. Furthermore, it examines the external oversight bodies of the United Nations system, and assesses the “capacity of existing oversight mechanisms to deal with major risks that may arise in the United Nations system”.
22. The CEB members welcomed the report for its detailed and comprehensive nature as a valuable contribution to the ongoing discussion on this issue in the United Nations system. They noted, however, that the report should be considered in conjunction with an independent external evaluation of the auditing and oversight system of the United Nations, including specialized agencies, commissioned by the United Nations Secretary-General at the request of the General Assembly. Other general comments include: the uncertainty regarding the way a uniform standard proposed in the report would function across the United Nations system, with differences in structures and mandates; and lack of acknowledgement of the standards of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) adopted by the United Nations system in 2002, which are more acceptable than the standards formulated by the JIU.
23. The recommendations that concern the Office relate to: establishment of an independent external oversight board; a uniform regime to restrict the appointment of the members of United Nations oversight bodies in United Nations system organizations; term limits for

the external auditors, and restrictions on the appointment of former auditors to executive functions in United Nations system organizations; consolidation of oversight functions into a single unit; ensuring minimum in-house investigation capacity, authority to initiate investigations without interference and independent reporting procedures; policies and procedures to protect against retaliation for reporting misconduct; rules and procedures for recruitment, appointment and contract termination of the head of internal oversight; minimum standards on internal oversight reporting; timely follow-up of oversight recommendations, and its monitoring and reporting; independent quality assessment of internal oversight entity; a standard on the resource size of United Nations organizations, which justifies the establishment of an internal oversight unit; ethics function, position and training; confidential financial disclosure requirement; and an effective mechanism for system-wide coordination, and cooperation among the external and internal oversight bodies.

24. The Office welcomes the report as a contribution to the ongoing discussion on this subject. The ILO already applies some of the recommendations and has recently taken steps in areas such as ethics. In addition to this JIU report, the Office is considering the findings of the other system-wide external evaluations mentioned in paragraph 22 above to identify further courses of action that can be proposed to the Governing Body.

(f) ***“Review of the management of the United Nations laissez-passer”***
(JIU/NOTE/2005/2)

25. This note is included in this document on an exceptional basis, as mentioned in paragraph 5(f) above. The objective of this note is to assess the management of the United Nations laissez-passer (UNLP) with the view to ensuring effective and consistent policies, procedures and practices regarding issuance, use, safe keeping, renewal and retrieval of these documents. In the light of enhanced controls and security, the note recommends to the United Nations Secretary-General to urge the ILO Director-General to cede the issuance of ILO UNLPs to the United Nations. The other recommendations that directly concern the Office relate to: strict criteria and procedures for the issuance of duplicate UNLPs; inclusion of updated information on the use of UNLPs and UNLP holders' obligations in all UNLPs; discontinuation of safe keeping of UNLPs, and withholding of part of separating staff members' salary until their UNLP is returned for cancellation; reporting on lost or stolen UNLPs to the United Nations and Interpol, as well as to Member States that have issued visas in those UNLPs; and audit by internal audit units on the administration of UNLPs.
26. The Office considers that the security needs emphasized in the note could be addressed without ceding the issuance of ILO UNLPs to the United Nations, by following the other recommendations or taking alternative measures. The main recommendations have long been applied by the Office. The Office has an alternative and effective means of ensuring the return of UNLPs without withholding salary, a practice that has legal and ethical drawbacks. The Office does not report on lost or stolen UNLPs to Interpol for reasons of both practicality and confidentiality of information on staff members.

Geneva, 25 September 2006.

Submitted for information.