

**Conclusions of the Thirty-Third Session of the
High Level Committee on Management (HLCM)****(Ministry of Agriculture, Budapest, 30-31 March 2017)****TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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Executive Summary

1. The thirty-third session of the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) was co-hosted in Budapest on 30-31 March 2017 by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The meeting was chaired by the HLCM Vice-Chair, Ms. Jan Beagle (UNAIDS).
2. The session focused on developing innovative business models as key enablers of the integrated approaches required by the 2030 Agenda, and contributing to the review of the United Nations Development System being conducted by the Deputy Secretary-General.

Major decisions taken

3. Following a careful review of the mandates included in the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review resolution, HLCM adopted its Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and the corresponding Results Framework, subject to further adjustments, particularly in light of any additional direction that may be provided by the Secretary-General, and of the outcome of the review of the United Nations Development System.
4. The General Assembly last year asked CEB to develop **a single agreed definition, across the United Nations system, of what constitutes fraud, as well as cases of suspected or presumptive fraud**. This was considered essential to develop effective counter-fraud policies to ensure compatibility and comparability of related data across entities and to improve overall transparency. In Budapest, HLCM adopted common definitions of Fraud and Presumptive Fraud, which are aligned to the UN Secretariat's definitions as included in the Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework presented by the Secretary-General last year, and which CEB can now endorse.
5. New technologies open entirely new horizons to re-shape the operational models of UN organizations. We also believe that adopting internationally recognized standards, such as IPSAS and IATI, adds to the transparency and credibility of the UN system. Informed by these principles, **HLCM adopted a United Nations Common Documentation Standard based on Extensible Markup Language (XML)**. The UN Common Documentation Standard represents a strategic achievement. Its adoption will lead to considerable efficiencies in document management processes, and it will preserve unity of intent across the UN system in the critical domain of information and knowledge management. This is an important step towards the Digital UN System that the Secretary-General advocates for.
6. Member States are unanimously calling for a higher degree of integration, coordination, accountability, and transparency in the UN system. **The operational infrastructure and the business models of organizations are key enablers in the pursuit of the integrated approach that Agenda 2030 calls for**. The choice of Budapest as the venue to the HLCM session was made to foster a discussion aimed to further develop the organizations' collective knowledge and analysis of the UN system's experience in global service centres, to **start building the bases for a leap frog in this area**.
7. HLCM is now leading the thinking and discussions towards further consolidation and streamlining of service delivery. Towards this objective, **HLCM decided to:** a) consolidate a summary of different approaches and best practices in Global Service Delivery, including governance and risk management options; b) develop an inventory of needs for operational services and an availability and capacity assessment of potential service providers; c) conduct a review of cost recovery, cost sharing and pricing models, per service or service line; d) propose approaches to maintaining and sharing Key Performance Indicators for comparability among organizations and transparency with stakeholders; e) consolidate a list of Service Level Agreements with internal and external customers, for comparability among organizations; and, f) propose approaches to inter-agency learning and sharing of best practices between service centres. HLCM also encouraged organizations to take initiatives towards agency-to-agency service provision.
8. HLCM laid the first brick for the joint provision of selected HR services by deciding to **establish a Joint HR Facility for Job Classification and Reference Checking – a major bottleneck to speedy and efficient recruitment**.

9. Success in streamlining and integrating business operations is still contingent on strong leadership at all levels, including the RC and the UN Country Team. Together with HLCP and UNDG, HLCM has **finalized and is now ready to implement** (after CEB's endorsement) **a new system-wide Leadership Framework**, which also aims to enhance leadership accountability for collective results at country level.
10. HLCM aims to **make clear progress towards achieving diversity, including gender parity, in particular in senior leadership positions**. We think increased staff diversity with regard to gender, nationality, age, and culture, is a matter of equity and also a programmatic enabler. We are therefore ready to help the Secretary-General make his forthcoming Gender Parity Strategy a reality across the entire UN system.
11. HLCM re-affirmed the CEB Common Principle n. 11 "The organizations of the UN System will preserve and foster the health and wellbeing as well as safety and security of their staff – while remaining committed to stay and respond to the ever-increasing demand for their services, despite the often deteriorating conditions in which those services are being delivered", and **adopted a comprehensive programme of work to improve Duty of Care for UN system personnel in high-risk duty stations**.
12. HLCM is **designing and putting in place the building blocks in order to achieve the goal of establishing a "global UN system workforce"**, including mechanisms to support system-wide mobility and cross-fertilization of skills and to amalgamate specializations, expertise, and training opportunities across the entire system. In pursuing this goal, the Committee committed to actively engage in the second phase of the ICSC comprehensive compensation review – that focusing on the conditions for locally recruited staff categories - with the aim to developing adequate, flexible tools that allow organizations to better and more flexibly engage local talent, and to respond in an agile and cost-effective way to their specific challenges in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.
13. Finally, HLCM took note of the outcome of the current round of place-to-place cost-of-living surveys and its expected negative impact on a large number of European duty stations. The Committee requested that the implementation of the survey results be carefully planned and prepared, in particular through appropriate communication by the ICSC well in advance of an implementation date, and that such implementation should be phased in a gradual manner in order to mitigate negative impact on staff.

Introduction



Documentation:

- ✓ *CEB/2017/HLCM/1/Rev.1 – Provisional Agenda*
- ✓ *CEB/2017/HLCM/1/Add.1 – Programme of work*
- ✓ *Checklist of Documents*

14. The thirty-third session of the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) was co-hosted in Budapest on 30-31 March 2017 by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The meeting was chaired by the HLCM Vice-Chair, the Deputy Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Ms. Jan Beagle.
15. The agenda adopted by the Committee is reflected in the table of contents. The complete list of participants is provided in Annex I. The checklist of documents is in Annex II. All documents related to the session are available on the website of CEB.¹
16. In her opening remarks, the HLCM Vice-Chair informed participants that the HLCM Chair, Ms. Irina Bokova, would have very much liked to be in Budapest, but there had been an unfortunate coincidence of dates as she had to participate in the ministerial forum of the G7 in Florence (30/31 March), which was the first ever G7 dedicated to cultural heritage. This meeting also came as a direct follow up to the adoption of the historic resolution 2347 by the UN Security Council (24 March 2017) on the protection of heritage in situation of conflict. The HLCM Chair’s participation in the G7 in Florence was part of the global movement spearheaded by UNESCO to bring together partners at the highest level to harness the potential of heritage as a force for peace, security and reconciliation.

A. HLCM Strategic Plan 2017-2020



Documentation:

- ✓ *CEB/2016/HLCM/15 –HLCM Strategic Plan 2017-2020*
- ✓ *CEB/2016/HLCM/15/Add.1/Rev.1– Results Framework - Strategic Plan 2017-2020*

17. The approval by HLCM and subsequent endorsement by CEB at their fall 2016 sessions of the Committee’s Strategic Plan 2017-2020, were made with the provision that “... both the Plan and the attached Results Framework would be further reviewed for any adjustments in the spring of 2017, on the basis of the inter-governmental mandates that would be provided by the new QCPR Resolution and of the vision for management reform that may be formulated by the new Secretary-General”. The Committee reviewed the Strategic Plan and Results Framework for any adjustments.
18. The HLCM Secretary summarized the adjustments made to the outcomes, outputs and activities in the Results Framework since the October 2016 session. Output C.7. “A UN system Gender Parity Strategy is developed and adopted”, was added in anticipation of the finalization of the Gender Parity Strategy by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. As the Strategy was still being developed, the Committee would postpone this discussion until more information on its status and planned next steps would become available.
19. Upon suggestion by the ICT Network, Activity F.3.b. “Review and propose refinements and enhancements to Topics 1 and 5 of the CEB-endorsed UN System Internal Coordination Plan on Cybersecurity and Cybercrime” had also been added. There was a broad consensus that cyber security is a critical topic for the United Nations system, and a number of speakers noted that it was important to integrate physical security and cyber security, as doing so would enable the system to learn from lessons from physical security. In this context, reference was made to the JIU Report on Safety and Security which made it clear that no organization can address the topic properly alone. Hence, collaboration in this area is critical and the HLCM is the right place for it to be taken forward.

¹ <https://www.unsceb.org/content/march-2017>

20. During the discussion, the implications of new European Union regulations on transparency were brought to the attention of the Committee in reference to priority 5 of the Strategic Plan, on Data and Transparency. Organizations will need to work collectively, in collaboration with the Legal Network, on how to address new demands for protection of data and privacy.
21. Based on the shared assessment of HLCM members, the Committee noted that all mandates on operational subjects listed in the new Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review resolution had been already included among the Strategic Plan's priorities and related activities. The Committee also noted that the Strategic Plan would have to later be adjusted to integrate any action towards the changes in the United Nations Development System that will eventually be agreed, following the completion of the review led by the Deputy Secretary-General.
22. The Committee supported the adoption of the HLCM Strategic Plan 2017-2020 with the understanding that it was a living document that would be reviewed continuously to respond to the demands on the HLCM, as the system will move forward in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and recognizing that emerging priorities from the Secretary-General in the area of management would need to be given priority attention.

➤ **The High-Level Committee on Management:**

23. Confirmed its readiness to contribute its input and perspectives in the review of the United Nations Development System led by the Deputy Secretary-General, in the forms and modalities that the Deputy Secretary-General will indicate.
24. Following a careful review of the mandates included in the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review resolution adopted in late 2016, adopted the HLCM Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and the corresponding revised Results Framework, as outlined in document CEB/2016/HLCM/15/Add.1/Rev.1, subject to further adjustments, particularly in light of any additional direction that may be provided by the Secretary-General, and of the outcome of the review of the United Nations Development System.
25. Noted that the Strategic Plan and the Results Framework will remain living documents, and that the latter will be populated and adjusted in the course of the next months, following a new round of consultations to be conducted by the CEB Secretariat.

B. New Service Delivery approaches: Simplification, decentralization and flexibility

2. (a) Thematic Discussion on Global Service Centres



Documentation:

- ✓ *CEB/2017/HLCM/2 – Outline of the session*
- ✓ *CEB/2017/HLCM/3 – Update on Global Service Delivery Solutions in the UN System*
- ✓ *CEB/2015/HLCM/11 - Progress with Global Service Delivery Solutions in the UN System*
- ✓ *JIU/REP/2016/11- The role of service centres in redesigning administrative service delivery*

26. The HLCM Vice-Chair introduced this item by recalling the strong and unanimous call that Member States made at the last ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment on 28 February - 1 March for a higher degree of integration, coordination, accountability, and transparency in the UN system. She further noted that this was as true on the operational side as on the programmatic side - the operational infrastructure and the business models of organizations are key enablers in the pursuit of the integrated approach that Agenda 2030 calls for.
27. The Vice-Chair noted that, in the past few years, the operational functions of UN system organizations have increasingly relied on inter-agency collaboration, replication of best practices and capitalizing on economies of scale. Important achievements have brought measurable results and reductions in transaction costs, but acceleration and mainstreaming is needed.

28. The purpose of this thematic discussion was to further develop the organizations' collective knowledge and analysis of the UN system's experience in global service centres, to start building the bases for a leap frog in this area.
29. The Committee heard presentations from organizations that have already established Global Service Centres – FAO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, IOM, and WHO. The discussion, which also hosted a presentation by the Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on his report on “The role of service centres in redesigning administrative service delivery”, was arranged in a share & compare format, based on a template that covered the following pre-selected topics: Business models and Governance; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); Customer service approaches; Operational arrangements; Operational challenges and solutions; Opportunities and challenges for joint provision of services with or to other UN organizations; and, Possible pricing models applicable for the provision of services to other clients.
30. **Joint Inspection Unit presentation** - The JIU Chairman focused his briefing on the different models for service provision adopted by UN system organizations. According to his findings, there are similar characteristics between service centres in that they all provide large scale operational functions and they support both the headquarter and the field. The JIU report also indicates that the primary driver for establishing service centres has been cost savings, and that these have been realized. However, quality of service and streamlining of processes were also drivers for some organizations, and this has been achieved through business process re-engineering. A key finding is that the establishment of service centres requires considerable time, planning, analysis and investment, suggesting that such endeavours should only be undertaken after careful consideration. The next step for the JIU is to look at inter-agency shared service opportunities, and this work will commence during 2017.
31. **Business models and Governance** - The Committee received presentations from FAO on its centre in Budapest and the UN Secretariat on its plans for global service delivery. UNCHR acted as a discussant to compare their approach to those of the presenters. FAO presented a model that included significant business process re-engineering that went together with the establishment of the centre. The approach looked at both efficiency gains along with cost savings. The UN Secretariat presented a case where the introduction of a new ERP system is driving change and where there is a push towards drastically reducing the number of entities carrying out back office functions. The UN Secretariat is expected to present a detailed proposal to the General Assembly in the fall of 2017. UNHCR, in their role as discussant, in contrast, presented a case where management of operational functions is based in Geneva and existing processes were largely maintained having Budapest and Copenhagen as out-posted HQs. The move to Budapest was seen as a cost saving exercise that did not focus on process re-engineering.
32. From the presentations and the subsequent discussion it was noted that the differences in approaches were larger than some had expected. However, numerous similarities also emerged, in line with the presentation by the Chairman of the JIU, showing that the services provided, or planned to be provided, were similar between the organizations, regardless of model. In the case of centres that have been in place for a longer period, such as UNHCR and IOM, Committee members were cautioned against the growth that tends to take place in low cost locations. Decisions to add units, not linked to the original purpose of the centre, can lead to business fragmentation at the location of the centre, which may in turn result in less coherence in the organization.
33. **Key Performance Indicators** - The Committee received a presentation by UNICEF on their approach to KPIs. The day before the meeting, interested Committee members were also invited to a tour of the UNICEF centre in Budapest, where an introduction to their KPIs was given. The presentation highlighted a strong focus on establishing clear targets, mostly related to time for completing transactions. The management team reviews performance against these targets on a weekly basis. It was explained that targets for emergency countries are set more aggressively, in some areas, with shorter time frames than non-emergency countries. KPIs were monitored through daily data collection using a Case Management Tool. Weekly review meetings are held to discuss problem areas identified by the data produced. After analysing causes, corrective action, if necessary, is decided upon. UNDP, acting as the discussant, indicated their use of a similar approach, with a strong focus on regular monitoring of KPIs, and with the ERP system playing a key role in data collection. In many cases, the KPIs were similar or the same.

34. The importance of transparency in KPIs and their monitoring was seen as a priority both by the presenters and in the subsequent discussion. It was generally agreed that strong KPIs and sound data collection and monitoring systems are essential to provision of services to other organizations. In this respect, the Committee noted that KPIs should be shared and published.
35. **Customer service approaches** - The Committee received a presentation by UNHCR regarding their approach in Budapest and in Copenhagen. The centre in Budapest has been in place for several years already and, when it was established, it was done primarily for cost saving purposes, with savings primarily being generated by moving to a cheaper duty station. UNHCR has decided on a model where reporting lines still go to operational entities in Geneva rather than to managers at the centre. Hence, the customer service approach continues to lie under the responsibility of each operational division. For UNHCR, improving customer service remains at this moment in the structure of the results-based management in the organization, which is different from KPI monitoring for back office processes. Furthermore, the nature of the approach of out-posted HQs rather than out-sourcing could require different modality when it comes to customer service focus which in some cases, included client satisfaction survey. UNHCR has just completed a review of HQ's functions and adjustments are expected as part of the follow up.
36. Similarly, IOM, acting as the discussant, noted that recently established centres are considerably different than older ones. When IOM established its centres in Manila and Panama, customer service approaches and detailed KPI development and monitoring was not prioritized, as cost savings was the immediate driver. Hence, this has not been a regular focus of the management of the centre. In the discussion that followed, the Committee agreed with the presenter and discussant that a strong customer service approach along with strong KPIs and data collection are a pre-condition for successful service provision to others. Approaches to customer service could also include surveys and involvement of service recipients into governance mechanisms, to ensure transparency and satisfaction with the management. However, not clear consensus emerged on whether inclusion in the governance structure would be necessary for good customer service.
37. **Operational arrangements** – The Committee received a presentation by UNDP which focused primarily on cost recovery and pricing models. UNDP outlined four possible methods of pricing for services: fee and payment against invoices; transaction charged and reported back via inter-funding accounting system; subscription fees against a centre of excellence; and, joint investment and subsequent subscription. All of these approaches were presented as possible ways to manage financing of service provision to others. The preferred model for potentially extending services to others was not indicated, but mention was made of the existing global price list, which is used in the field for ad-hoc service provision. WHO, in its role as discussant, stated that their model is 100% funded from the core budget of the organization and does not operate on a cost recovery basis. In relation to providing services to UNAIDS, an additional model was introduced, that of cost sharing based on number of staff. The latter represented a non-sophisticated, yet very simple approach to cost-share.
38. In the subsequent discussion, a fifth financing model was proposed, which would be based on increasing the capacity of a centre to handle new transactions based on estimated volume. The organization to receive services would then pay for the expansion and continued management and cost of this increase in capacity.
39. Finally, the Committee received briefings from UNAIDS, UNWOMEN and UNFPA as organizations that are receiving services, and from UNFPA and UNESCO as organizations looking for further options for additional/increased outsourcing of back-office functions. These organizations are looking for optimized programme delivery with high-quality services that are cost effective. The importance of modern ERP systems and the ability for ERPs to communicate, while not necessarily being inter-operable, was seen as a key precondition for such collaboration. It was noted that existing, organization-specific service centres have been designed to specifically meet the needs of the parent organization in the first instance, with excess capacity being offered to sister organizations. This relationship and construct differs from the model of a service centre designed to meet the needs of a number of organizations equally. The issue of a clearly defined client's role and influence in the governance as a fully-fledged partner to the service provider was consequently raised as a key issue. The presenters agreed that good communication between provider and recipient of services is critical, and that there needs to be a clear and effective dispute resolution mechanism. A common perception was that of service providers prioritizing services for their organization, and therefore KPI tracking is needed to ensure transparency. In the subsequent discussion it was agreed that a clear definition of roles and responsibilities of both the service provider and the client is important, in order to also be able to accurately assess the causes of inefficiencies and delays, when they arise.

40. In the general discussion on how to move forward, the Committee agreed that organizations should be asked to develop and make accessible to other UN entities a list of the services that they could provide for others, the KPIs that they use, and their preferred cost recovery/pricing model. Organizations looking to outsource services would then have a clear picture of what possibilities may exist and what approaches are used by the different existing centres. Such a list could also form the basis of system-wide and bilateral discussions on moving towards joint service provision.
41. Throughout the presentations and discussion, some challenges emerged. There was a consensus that change management and communication of change must be carefully planned and implemented. Working through global service centres is different than business as usual, and investment in sustained change management is crucial for success. There is a need for culture change along with process change. It was also noted that process and culture change within organizations have successfully led to large efficiency gains even without moving to a service centre approach.
42. It was agreed that, moving forward, predictable, transparent and disaggregated pricing models or alternative approaches to compare costs of services provided would have to be determined. There was also a general consensus on the fact that KPI monitoring and customer service approaches may, in some cases, need to be improved and, in these cases, focus needs to be on adopting a model for external service provision in addition to of one for internal support only.
43. Many noted that finding and retaining staff represented a challenge, in different degrees, depending on the duty stations. Recruiting staff with familiarity with how UN system organizations operate is often difficult. Some organizations also mentioned the possible need for more flexible contract modalities for service centres. In this respect, it was agreed that the up-coming review of national staff contracts by the ICSC might be useful.
44. On the “softer” side of challenges, the importance of making staff feel a part of a whole was emphasized. In that context, developing a shared ownership of the organizational mandates is difficult when work is carried out in different locations. Similarly, some service centres do not allow for the “coffee break” approach to solving problems, where issues can be addressed informally and where ownership is created from personal relationships. In one case, creating a conference centre as a part of the service centre was a way to bring staff from the organization as a whole into contact with service centre staff.

➤ ***The High-level Committee on Management:***

45. Expressed appreciation to the Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit and to member organizations for their presentations.
46. Requested the CEB Secretariat to form a task force to :
 - a. Take stock of the information and the data gathered to date on the experiences of member organizations with respect to the evolution of their service delivery models;
 - b. Consolidate a summary of different approaches and best practices in Global Service Delivery, including governance and risk management options, building on existing HLCM documents and the JIU report on Global Service Centres;
 - c. Develop an inventory of Needs for operational services and an availability and capacity assessment of potential service providers;
 - d. Conduct a review of cost recovery, cost sharing and pricing models, per service or service line;
 - e. Propose approaches to maintaining and sharing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for comparability among organizations and transparency with stakeholders;
 - f. Consolidate a list of Service Level Agreements (SLA) with internal and external customers, for comparability among organizations;
 - g. Propose approaches to inter-agency learning and sharing of best practices between Service Centres; and
 - h. Prepare a paper for the spring 2018 session on the above.

47. Requested the Finance and Budget Network to develop proposals for UN standards for inter-agency funding and drawdown, with the aim to provide a clearing mechanism for services provided across entities.
48. Encouraged organizations to take initiatives towards agency-to-agency service provision.

3. (b) Project proposal for the joint provision of HR Services



Documentation:

- ✓ *CEB/2017/HLCM/4 – Consultant report with Feasibility study and Business Case for Joint Facility Classification and Reference Checking*

49. The HLCM Vice-Chair recalled that the HR Network had briefed HLCM about an initiative to establish a Joint HR Facility for Job Classification and Reference Checking. This initiative formed part of the new HLCM Strategic Plan.
50. The Co-Chair of the HR Network introduced the topic, reporting back on discussions at the recent Network meeting. A number of agencies were looking positively into joint service delivery for one or both of the suggested services, while others pointed out that the desired qualitative benefits would best be achieved by better process integration into other HR processes within the organization. There was overwhelming support for better information sharing among agencies. The Network agreed that a joint facility should be driven by interested organisations in a non-prescriptive manner, while more generally fostering collaborations among all Network members in these areas, regardless of the use of a joint service delivery facility.
51. The external Consultant contracted by the HR Network subsequently presented her Business Case and Feasibility Study for the project. She highlighted that – from a financial perspective alone – only the collaboration in Job Classification would yield savings for a number of agencies. No such savings were to be expected in Reference Checking. However, a number of qualitative benefits and more thorough risk management would represent a positive impact of the initiative. She confirmed that a Joint Facility should be able to offer job classification services at lower or same cost as currently offered by specialised consultants. Most organizations were interested in further collaboration in process streamlining and better information sharing, regardless of their immediate interest in joint service delivery. She analysed several options, ranging from a purely virtual centre to creation of a new centre independent of current locations. Furthermore, she recommended specific governance arrangements, with the involvement of participating organizations and the CEB/HLCM.
52. In the subsequent discussion, the representative of the Legal Network explained that joint information sharing on disciplinary cases was feasible, as long as it contained only confirmed findings or credible allegations. Further work was needed in this regard. A number of organizations indicated a preference for a physical centre in a location and setting that made use of existing structures and facilities. UNHCR declared their interest to join a joint facility for reference checking while they were still undecided about job classification. UNWTO indicated that for small agencies a fee-per-use modality was critical in any decision to join. UNFPA, WIPO and WHO also indicated a firm interest to join such facility for both services. UNDP confirmed the willingness of UN Volunteers to host such initiative, indicating that they saw large potential in it. IOM indicated their interest in further collaboration, highlighting however that cost is a critical decision criterion.

➤ ***The High-level Committee on Management:***

53. Took note, with appreciation, of the business case and feasibility study submitted by the HR Network (CEB/2017/HLCM/4). HLCM noted that the predominant drivers for the initiative were qualitative improvements and risk reduction, while a clear financial business case could only be demonstrated for Job Classification services. The Committee also highlighted that a number of qualitative benefits could be attained through other initiatives such as process streamlining and enhanced information sharing, and encouraged the HR Network to pursue these initiatives.

54. Endorsed the recommendations to proceed with the Joint Facility project, indicating its preference to start with the second option - to co-locate the Joint Facility with existing activities, as presented in the document. HLCM endorsed the other recommendations contained in the report, in particular with regard to an inclusive project governance.
55. Noted that to date, only one agency had indicated their interest to host such initiative (UNDP/UNV) , and requested interested agencies, including UNDP, to form a working group to prepare concrete steps towards implementation, including location selection, staffing modalities and a detailed pricing model.
56. Requested this working group to inform the HLCM, through the HR Network, about a detailed implementation plan and provide regular progress updates on this HLCM initiative.
57. Requested the HR Network to initiate preparatory work for the establishment of a reference checking database, and to report back on its progress at the next HLCM meeting.

C. Global UN System Workforce and Transformative Leadership

4. Duty of Care in high-risk environments - Terms of Reference and Programme of Work



Documentation:

- ✓ CEB/2017/HLCM/6 – Briefing Note on the Cross-functional Task Force on Duty of Care

58. The HLCM Vice-Chair introduced this item stressing that, today more than ever, Duty of Care for UN personnel, particularly but not exclusively in high-risk duty stations, represents a subject that so many organizations are looking at as a really key issue. It is part of the new HLCM Strategic Plan, and the activities provided for in the new Results Framework are taken forward by a Task Force under the leadership of the Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees. The Vice-Chair expressed appreciation to UNHCR and to UNICEF, who is providing the secretariat support for the Task Force.
59. The Chair of the Duty of Care Taskforce acknowledged the work of Under-Secretary-General Peter Drennan in completion of the original Working Group's mandate. She presented both a summary of works already underway and the Taskforce proposed approach, which was summarised as mapping (now complete), planning (currently underway) and implementing (the final phase).
60. The Taskforce comprises broad representation of organizations and inter-agency networks.
61. The mapping of activity has demonstrated that both organizations and networks are actively working on all but two of the priorities identified by the original Working Group.
62. The USG, UN-DSS, expressed appreciation for the establishment of the Task Force and for the progress made. He highlighted some of the key issues related to duty of care in various duty stations around the world, particularly the very high risk ones, and noted how the deteriorating conditions for UN staff reinforce the absolute relevance of this work, and the need to progress.
63. Members of HLCM expressed strong support for the approach. Two potential areas for further consideration included eventually broadening the focus from "high risk" duty stations, and the need to explicitly implement measures for non-staff workforce. Some members also proposed to further develop this stream of work to integrate it with the new CEB collaborative leadership model, as well as with considerations on duty of care for partners, particularly with respect to potential insurance arrangements for malicious acts and other types of coverage, where the UN system certainly has the scale to obtain particularly advantageous conditions.
64. The Chair advised that there will be a face-to-face meeting of the Taskforce in Geneva in May, and requested that organizations ensure that they are represented by appropriately senior personnel with decision-making authority.
65. The HLCM Vice-Chair highlighted the importance of the initiative, and the expectation that individual agencies but also the relevant inter-agency groups (IASMN, HR Network, Medical Doctors, etc.) will continue to support this initiative.

➤ ***The High-Level Committee on Management:***

66. Took note with appreciation of the progress report by the Task Force, endorsed the programme of work contained therein, and approved the Terms of Reference of the Task Force.

5. Briefing by the USG – Department of Safety and Security on the current security environment for UN personnel



Documentation:

❖ *Summary sheet*

67. The HLCM Vice-Chair recalled that one of the six top priorities of the new HLCM Strategic Plan was to “Foster the organizations’ commitment to the safety, security, health and well-being of their staff”. She also noted that CEB had strongly re-affirmed this notion in its Common Principle n. 11: “The organizations of the UN System will preserve and foster the health and wellbeing as well as safety and security of their staff – while remaining committed to stay and respond to the ever-increasing demand for their services, despite the often deteriorating conditions in which those services are being delivered”.
68. The Under Secretary-General for the Department of Safety and Security then briefed the Committee on the current security environment for UN personnel, noting that the United Nations is operating in a global security environment that is increasingly dangerous, complex and challenging. At the call of their respective governing bodies, United Nations personnel are delivering United Nations political, humanitarian, peace-keeping and development mandates and programmes in the most challenging parts of the world.
69. A growingly complex combination of threats also presents an increasing pressure on host Governments’ security capacities which, inevitably, transfer greater responsibility to the United Nations. The intensity of the attacks against United Nations premises and official vehicles has increased threefold between 2014 and 2015, and there has been a twofold increase in direct attacks against UN peacekeepers serving high-risk environments. Among the worrying trends are the partnership and intersection between non-state armed groups, violent extremists and criminal groups, the use of internet and social media in fuelling violence, and expanded armed confrontations in high-density urban areas. In emerging conflict zones the predominance of terrorist attacks using unsophisticated modus operandi is likely to continue, while in complex conflict theatres the innovative use of weapons and sophisticated tactics is expected. Targeting may include United Nations and humanitarian operations and personnel, either deliberately or opportunistically.
70. Regrettably, the security environment is unlikely to improve in the near term. An assessment of the global security environment for the next five years has concluded that armed conflict and violent extremism will continue to shape the future global security landscape.
71. The Under Secretary-General noted the need to improve the ability by organizations to prepare staff working in high-risk operations, and to foster their resilience after working in those environments. In this respect, HLCM’s work on Duty of Care was critical. He further noted that when organizations scale back and move international staff out, they leave national staff and rely on them to deliver. IASMN working groups on security arrangements for national staff are acting to help staff and provide them with better tools to support their resilience.
72. The Under Secretary-General underlined that appropriate mitigation measures should be put in place, and costs associated with them should be explicitly recognized. In this respect, IASMN and the FB Network are working to review different funding models to identify ways forward, including by looking on how to use technology to alleviate gap in funding.
73. Noting that the United Nations risk profile has increased dramatically, UN organizations should work towards more refined and consistent management policies and tools, to be able to assess, context by context, what their tolerance to risk should be, and how to manage it.

74. Finally, the Under Secretary-General noted that the UN system is losing as many people in traffic accidents each year as in terrorist attacks. IASMN is looking at developing a road safety strategy to prevent deaths.
75. In the ensuing discussion, HLCM members noted the direct link between cyber-terrorism and business continuity. In this respect, the USG noted that the ASG- OICT is taking the lead on this subject at the UN Secretariat, and DSS is working closely.
76. The UN Medical Directors noted that prolonged exposure to high-risk environments had a heavy health and psychological impact, and that there was a deep gap existing between medical risk management and security risk management. She stressed the need for organizations to dedicate the necessary attention to this matter, and to comply with existing health support policies and provisions.

➤ ***The High-Level Committee on Management:***

77. Took note with appreciation of the briefing by the Under Secretary-General for safety and security, and re-iterated that safety & security and wellness are key components of sustainable business models, as well as collaborative approaches, compliance with regulatory and policy provisions, and a culture change that recognizes and integrates all such elements.
78. Took note of the IASMN 25th session report.

6. The UN System Leadership Model



Documentation:

- ✓ *CEB/2017/HLCM/7 – UN System Leadership Framework*

79. The Vice-Chair recalled that the Common Principles to guide the UN system's support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, endorsed by CEB in April 2016, highlighted the critical importance of transformative leadership across the UN system and that the Board had tasked its high-level committees to develop a shared concept of transformative and collaborative leadership to effectively support the 2030 Agenda. The Deputy Director of the UN System Staff College, lead of the joint HLCP/HLCM task team on leadership, and the co-chairs of the UNDG working group on leadership, subsequently facilitated a consultative process that brought together a range of complementary expertise and perspectives from across the system. The combined effort culminated in the comprehensive draft United Nations System Leadership Framework that was before the Committee for its consideration (in parallel with HLCP and UNDG).
80. The draft framework identified eight defining characteristics of UN leadership aligned with the 2030 Agenda; namely, that it was norm-based, principled, inclusive, accountable, multi-dimensional, transformational, collaborative, and self-applied. Systems-thinking, co-creation, focusing on producing impact for the most vulnerable, and driving transformational change were four key leadership behaviours that exemplified the new way of working. The framework was intended to be applicable to staff at all levels, functions and duty stations, and to serve as a strategic organizational tool. It complemented the Secretary-General's initiatives promoting cross-pillar collaboration and gender parity.
81. The co-leads stressed that culture change would be central to operationalizing the framework. An "opt-in" approach would be taken, permitting agencies to determine how to internalize it as appropriate for their unique needs. The key drivers of the required change were ownership by senior UN leaders; active engagement and involvement by all staff; and aligning structures, systems, policies and processes to the framework to enable the desired behaviours. To promote implementation through "pull factors" (rather than imposing desired behaviours on staff), it was proposed that change agents should be empowered within organizations to bring the framework to life. It was envisioned that their achievements could be publically recognized through an online platform to create transparency, reinforce accountability and create incentives for change. The proposal also enumerated a number of potential system-wide interventions to stimulate the alignment of UN culture to the framework, which would complement entity-specific roadmaps.

82. Recognizing that good leadership was hard to define yet central to an organization's performance, the Committee fully supported the leadership characteristics and behaviours articulated in the framework, noting its utility as a tool to promote cultural and organizational change at all staff levels. The Human Resources Network had discussed the framework and its implementation in detail and welcomed it as a helpful guiding framework. While acknowledging the diversity within the UN system, members underscored the importance of and value in having a shared vision and common frame towards which to collectively strive. While it was understood that all staff had a role to play in realizing the desired changes, the importance of support for the framework from Executive Heads and other senior managers was emphasized.
83. Many members looked forward to beginning to operationalize the framework within their organizations and pursuing the accompanying culture change. The bottom-up approach to pulling culture change through entities was welcomed. The Committee also appreciated that the implementation of the framework would be flexible and respect the diversity of UN system organizations and their specific needs, while still guiding the entities to harmonize around core values. Organizations choosing to "opt in" would develop detailed and systematic internal implementation road maps based on their individual business models and in the context of their broader organizational approaches to culture change. Some members expressed interest in having a more fully developed global roadmap for their reference.
84. A number of members indicated that the proposed leadership framework was well aligned with their existing leadership and/or change strategies and activities. Sharing experiences and best practice among participating entities would be beneficial to support effective operationalization and promote coherence. Support was also expressed for proceeding, also on an opt-in basis, with the collaborative system-wide initiatives proposed. Additional opportunities for inter-agency collaboration in leadership development could be identified as implementation progresses.
85. It was suggested that gender sensitivity should also comprise a competency for leaders. Another essential leadership characteristic – the capacity to build trust – was highlighted. Indeed, the leadership framework was seen to be a useful lever for bridging divides and restoring credibility in the context of present challenges. It was observed that leadership also required taking calculated risks, another area in which culture change was required within the UN system. Current realities required bold action and ambition, and thus it was suggested that "driving transformational change" could be featured more prominently in the framework. It was also suggested to further emphasize in the framework equality and justice as key causes the UN system serves.
86. Accountability to the framework was stressed, and members agreed that appropriate performance assessment and management would be critical to ensure that UN system staff were working to embody the framework. More thought was needed on ways to incentivize and reward leadership in order to drive the implementation of the framework. Investing in staff training was seen to be essential to meeting the framework's aspirations.

➤ ***The High-Level Committee on Management:***

87. Supported the adoption of the UN System Leadership Framework, with adjustments resulting from the discussion, for submission to CEB at its April 2017 session.

7. Outcome of the ICSC 84th session and HR Network Strategic work plan



Documentation:

- ✓ CEB/2017/HLCM/8 – Briefing Note by the HR Network from the outcome of the ICSC 84th Session
- ✓ CEB/2017/HLCM/9 – HR Network Strategic Work plan 2017-2020

88. The HLCM Vice-Chair recalled that, following the implementation of a revised compensation package for internationally recruited staff, the ICSC Comprehensive Compensation Review entered into a second phase, reviewing the conditions for locally recruited staff categories. In order to approach this task holistically, the ICSC decided that, before entering into the concrete compensation discussions, a review of the current use of staff categories and the use of the current contractual framework may be useful. She confirmed that organizations are very much concurring with this approach, since the discussions on readiness to implement the new Sustainable Development Agenda are clearly pointing towards the need for a high quality, agile workforce that is able to deliver results in an increasingly resource-constrained and less predictable environment, while national and local labour markets are increasingly well developed. Emphasis on national implementation and partnerships is growing, and the discussion is a pertinent one in this context.
89. The HLCM Vice-Chair also highlighted that ICSC was currently discussing the outcome and implementation of the recent place-to-place surveys which, while resulting in some increases for largely the American and Canadian duty stations, were affecting many European Headquarter duty stations negatively through significant reductions of net take-home pay. She highlighted that this required careful communication and preparation.
90. Other important topics discussed at the ICSC 84th session included the planned review of the pensionable remuneration scales, and a planned review of the Hardship Classification methodology. The latter was of particular interest and importance of the field-based organizations, given that thorough and realistic duty station classifications are an important underpinning of the compensation system for mobile staff.
91. The Vice-Chairman of ICSC confirmed the progress of the discussions on the future use of staff categories, and of the NPO category in particular, noting that the organizations' call for more flexibility – in particular with regard to the nationality requirement in recruitment and the restrictions to national content of work - were well noted and addressed in these discussions.
92. The ICSC Vice-Chairman also provided additional background information on the place-to-place surveys, highlighting that the use for the first time of external data provided by Eurostat had led to some additional comparability challenges in EU-based duty stations. Those would be addressed through additional surveys in the coming months. With regard to the results for Geneva, which was likely to result in a reduction in net take-home pay of 6,3 % based on end of March data, he highlighted that the main driving factor were macroeconomic conditions, given that the cost of living in New York had increased over the recent years in New York but decreased in Geneva. In addition, currency exchange rates played a role. He highlighted that the current methodology did not provide for a salary guarantee at the current local level but only for equal purchasing power compared to New York. ICSC had decided to postpone the implementation in Geneva by one month, with subsequent implementation based on the current operational rules for implementation.
93. With regard to the hardship classification review, the Vice-Chairman confirmed that the present review would be handled in a comprehensive manner, taking into account factors such as geographic isolation, healthcare and suitability for family life, while not discounting safety and security aspects.

94. The Co-Chair of the HR Network confirmed the active involvement of the Network in the ICSC deliberations, highlighting the importance of the hardship classification review as an important underpinning for a mobile workforce. She also stressed the importance of a timely conclusion of the ongoing discussions on the use of staff categories, pointing to the need for more flexibility in using the NPO category. With regard to the results of the place-to-place surveys, she confirmed that organizations at the ICSC session did not concur with the immediate implementation of the survey results in Geneva, given that more detailed information and communication was needed for staff, that implementation would have to be carefully planned and prepared, and that adequate transition and phase-out measures would need to be in place. Such transition measures should not only be applied in Geneva but in all future duty stations that see a negative impact following such surveys. She informed the Committee about a letter that was addressed to the ICSC Chairman by the Director General of the UN Office in Geneva on behalf of the Geneva-based organizations, highlighting these points.
95. In the subsequent discussion, a number of organizations raised concerns about the currently planned approach to implementing survey results in Geneva, reiterating the request for more detailed information and explanation, as well as for a carefully planned implementation with adequate transition measures to mitigate impact on existing staff. Geneva-based organizations confirmed their support for the letter issued by the Director General of the UN Office in Geneva. They voiced serious concerns about the impact on staff morale, in particular given the concurrent implementation of the changes of the compensation review. Some organizations voiced serious concerns regarding the aggravation of the already existing overlap between General Service and International Professional salary scales in Geneva. The representative of UNHCR confirmed the continued need for ICSC to address the particular situation in Budapest with regard to post adjustment.
96. Considering the concerns raised by staff and organizations, the representative of the Staff Federations strongly recommended postponing implementation to carefully plan it and to prepare adequate transitional measures, not least to minimize the number of staff seeking legal recourse. He supported the additional survey in order to address the challenges of the first-time use of external data in EU-based duty stations.
97. On the other ICSC-related topics, participants unanimously welcomed the planned review of the hardship classification methodology. They also appreciated progress on the deliberations on the future use of staff categories, including the NPO category, highlighting that it would be useful if this discussion would lead to adequate conclusions and recommendations in the coming months.
98. The ICSC Vice-Chairman confirmed that ICSC will take the concerns of organizations and staff seriously, and that ICSC concurred with the need for adequate, detailed and timely communication to organizations and staff. He also confirmed the willingness of ICSC to be actively engaged in the communication of results.
99. Following this discussion, the HLCM Vice-Chair recalled that the HR Network had presented a discussion paper on the evolution of the global UN System-wide workforce a year ago. Based on this discussion, the HR Network was requested to continue its discussions and revert to the Committee with a High-Level Work-plan.
100. The Co-Chair of the HR Network introduced the Work-plan, highlighting that it had been developed in consideration of the recent QCPR resolution, the management reform agenda of the new Secretary General and the new HLCM Strategic Plan. She highlighted the four priority areas of the Work-plan: (1) creating an enabling work environment, (2) enhancing UN System permeability, Inter-Agency mobility and cost efficiency, (3) fostering HR Analytics, evidence-based decision making and IT enablement of HR, and (4) transforming the way in which HR is managed, in individual organizations and system-wide.
101. The creation of an enabling work environment would include aspects such as duty of care, other psychosocial support, a structured way of measuring and addressing staff engagement and diversity considerations. The Network saw gender parity as an important element, and advocated to consider this as part of a broader diversity agenda that may help creating enabling work environments. While Inter-Agency Mobility still needed further attention, it could be expected that career paths of the future would include more moves in and out of the UN System, and this would need to be considered in the review of contractual arrangements, benefits and policies. She also recalled the Secretary-General's request for further simplification and decentralization.

102. Furthermore, HR Network Co-Chair underscored the increased need to underpin HR-related decisions with fact-based analysis and cost predictions, thus calling for an approach that rationalizes and streamlines routine inter-agency data collection efforts in order to free resources for better analysis of the collected information. Finally, the way in which the HR function should operate would also have repercussions to the way in which the HR Network operates. It was suggested to create inter-agency HR Expert Communities as a forum for intensified knowledge exchange and driver for more tangible joint HR initiatives, supported by a knowledge sharing platform. Apart from the existing community on Performance Management, Staff Engagement and Culture, the most interest was expressed in Communities for Talent Outreach and Recruitment as well as for HR Analytics and Workforce Planning.
103. In the subsequent discussion, organizations confirmed their support for the HR network Work-plan. One organization highlighted the importance of diversity management in a broad sense, including employment of people with disabilities and a balanced, inter-generational workforce.

➤ ***The High-Level Committee on Management:***

104. Confirmed its continued willingness to actively participate in the discussions of the second phase of the ICSC Compensation Review in the same consultative manner used in the first phase, in particular through the engagement of its Strategic Group.
105. Confirmed its expectation that the outcome of this review should lead to adequate, flexible tools that allow organizations to respond in an agile and cost-effective way to their specific challenges in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.
106. Highlighted the need to better and more flexibly engage local talent, and expressed its expectation that this part of the review be concluded in a short term.
107. Welcomed a comprehensive review of the hardship classification methodology, noting that this was an important underpinning for organizations' endeavors to foster geographic mobility of staff.
108. Took note of the outcome of the current round of place-to-place surveys and its expected negative impact on a large number of European duty stations. HLCM requested that the implementation of the survey results be carefully planned and prepared, in particular through appropriate communication by the ICSC well in advance of an implementation date, and that such implementation would be phased in a gradual manner in order to mitigate negative impact on staff.
109. Endorsed the HR Network Strategic Work Plan, and requested the Network to revert to the Committee with concrete deliverables, timelines, responsibilities and resource requirements.

D. Innovation, Experimentation, Transparency and Accountability

8. Adoption of a UN Common Documentation Standard



Documentation:

- ✓ *CEB/2017/HLCM/10/Rev.1 – Working Group on Document Standards – Recommendations to HLCM for the adoption of the United Nations Semantic Interoperability Framework (UNSIF)*

110. The HLCM Vice-Chair opened the discussion on the UN Common Documentation Standard by noting that the use of ICT as an agent of change and a driver of innovation in business models remains a priority for the HLCM. Recalling the successful practice of adopting internationally recognized standards, such as IPSAS and IATI, the Vice-Chair invited the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Department of General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) to introduce the “United Nations Semantic Interoperability Framework”.

111. The USG of DGACM opened her remarks by commending the dedication and collaborative spirit of the HLCM Working Group on Document Standards, co-led by the HLCM Secretariat, FAO and DGACM. She noted that through a careful analysis of all document classes, and with the benefit of an Advisory Board composed of organizations with prior experience in XML implementation, such as the European Parliament, the Italian Senate, the US House of Representatives and the UK National Archives, the working group succeeded in creating a unique customization of the Akoma Ntoso XML standard for UN documents known as “Akoma Ntoso for the United Nations” (AKN4UN). This customized standard allows the UN system to model its documents in XML in a uniform and intelligible manner, fostering system-wide document interoperability and setting the foundation for future collaboration in this area. The standard also includes “Guidelines for the Mark-up of UN Normative and Parliamentary Documents”, a detailed description of the customized standard and a comprehensive guide to model United Nations documents in all respects, from structure and metadata to semantic content and linked concepts.
112. In addition, the working group also created the first United Nations Document Ontology, a framework for the description of all components of UN documents and the links that can exist among them, allowing for a UN-wide ecosystem of machine-readable documents that will prove to be a considerable asset for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and which offers a robust framework for evidence-based policies and accountability. The USG also noted that implementation of the standard has the potential, through automation, to substantially reduce the time required to process multilingual documentation, allowing specialists to perform tasks that add value as well as fostering transparency since it allows document content to be more easily searchable by stakeholders.
113. Implementation of the standard is now the next step, and the Working Group recommended to the HLCM the adoption of a follow-up project entitled “Supporting the Adoption and Implementation of the UN Semantic Interoperability Framework across the UN System”. This project seeks to provide organizations with the support and coordination necessary to build the capacity needed to put the AKN4UN standard and the Guidelines into practice.
114. The USG-DGACM also presented the eLUNa product, a web-based suite of language applications developed by the UN Secretariat based on XML technology. This system, which surpasses anything currently available both in terms of performance and ease-of-use, consists of a family of language tools that includes interfaces for translation, revision, editorial work and a search application, as well as a series of applications for document and terminology management. It also includes a machine translation function, developed by the World Intellectual Property Organization. Designed to meet the needs of UN organizations, eLUNa is entirely web-based, is simple to use, thereby reducing training time, and is continuously improved based on feedback from users. The editorial interface of eLUNa is the first step in the implementation of the Akoma Ntosa standard.
115. The USG-DGACM concluded her remarks by noting that the eLUNa product is currently used globally by 1,200 UN translators and in 2016 was used to translate more than 90 million words. As the eLUNa system is made available to other organizations, governance and financing structures are required so that interested organizations can adapt it to their environments. Should interest emerge from other organizations, the UN Secretariat would prepare a proposal for the consideration of HLCM. Such a standardized approach would bring the UN system closer to achieving document interoperability in language services exemplified by the AKN4UN initiative.
116. The HLCM Vice-Chair then invited the Assistant Director-General (ADG) of FAO to present some of the implemented pilots that showcase the benefits and impact the organizational efficiency and effectiveness of this new approach. The ADG of FAO noted that as they have been implementing the system, the organization is experiencing significant reductions in time required to prepare documents, especially through the reduced need to manually format documents for presentation. A video presented to the HLCM provided the details of six prototype applications developed by FAO that showcase the potential of the Akoma Ntoso for the United Nations in the management of governance and normative processes and in the creation of actionable information to support policy and decision-making. Four of the prototypes focused on access to information and two for enhancements to productivity. The prototype services include a portal for access to the FAO food safety standard (Codex alimentarius), an interactive version of FAO’s basic texts such as their constitution and general rules and enhancements to access to governing body documents that allows for seamless contextual navigation between document types. These enhanced services are available in the six official languages.

117. The HLCM Vice-Chair noted that although the working group only formed in June 2016, though the dedication of the many participants from 16 organizations it was able to produce the standard within a record time. During the discussion, organizations commended the working group and expressed enthusiasm for supporting the adoption of the UN Semantic interoperability framework and its corresponding guidelines, with the understanding that they are living documents and will evolve over time to meet the needs of all organizations. There was agreement that this initiative would help realize further efficiencies. WIPO thanked the HLCM for recognizing its contribution of the machine translation facility to the eLUNa system, and indicated that this service undergoes continuous development. WIPO offers this system to all organizations and is also working on a License Agreement aimed at formalizing the current practice with organizations. Under such License Agreement, WIPO wishes to continue to make this System available to all organizations on a worldwide basis and totally free of charge, subject to compliance with measures aimed at safeguarding its fundamental rights.
118. The HLCM thanked the members of the working group and the leadership provided by FAO, UN/DGCAM and the HLCM Secretariat.

➤ ***The High-Level Committee on Management:***

119. Commended the work of the HLCM Working Group on Document Standards to develop a UN Semantic Interoperability Framework (UNSIF) for normative and parliamentary documents.
120. Noted that the UNSIF creates the foundation to harmonize machine-access to UN system normative and parliamentary documents on the basis of an internationally recognized standard that, while making normative and parliamentary documents more accessible and open to all stakeholders, will contain the system-wide long-term information management costs.
121. Adopted the UN Semantic Interoperability Framework for normative and parliamentary documents (UNSIF) as outlined in document CEB/2017/HLCM/10/Rev.1 and formed by:
- a. Akoma Ntoso (AKN) as the XML reference standard and in particular its customization into Akoma Ntoso for the United Nations System (AKN4UN), which identifies the structural elements of AKN to be used in UN system documents.
 - b. The United Nations System Document Ontology (UNDO), which describes the formal representation of UN documents and their relationships with each other and the entities they portray.
122. Adopted the first version of the AKN4UN Guidelines for the mark-up of UN normative and parliamentary documents and UNDO as the main reference for the implementation of UNSIF.
123. Endorsed the proposal supporting the implementation of the UN common documentation standard across the UN System, as outlined in Annex 1 to document CEB/2017/HLCM/10/Rev.1.

9. Common Definitions of Fraud and Presumptive Fraud



Documentation:

- ✓ CEB/2017/HLCM/11 – *Common Definition of Fraud and Presumptive Fraud*

124. In the context of the General Assembly's consideration of the Secretary General's report A/70/668 on the accountability system in the UN Secretariat, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), in its report A/70/770, as endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 70/238 of 23 December 2015, reiterated its view "that a single agreed definition, across the United Nations system, of what constitutes fraud, as well as cases of suspected or presumptive fraud, is essential in order to develop effective counter-fraud policies to ensure compatibility and comparability of related data across entities and to improve overall transparency", and reiterated its opinion that "the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) would be best placed to develop such guidance so as to achieve consistent application across all organizations of the United Nations system".

125. An HLCM Task Force on Common Definitions Related to Fraud and Implementing Partners was established in 2016 to carry out the work required to address the mandate of the General Assembly. The Co-Chair of the Finance and Budget Network, on behalf of the co-leaders of the Task Force, provided an overview of the work of the Task Force and introduced the common definitions of fraud and presumptive fraud that the Task Force had agreed on. During his introduction, the FB Network Co-Chair emphasized that the objective of the Task Force had been to develop high level definitions, as wide in scope as possible, recognizing the different business models of UN system organizations and that further elaboration of the definitions, with more detail and examples as per specific requirements, could be integrated into the policies and/or frameworks of individual organizations, as appropriate.
126. During the discussion, HLCM members expressed appreciation for the work of the Task Force and noted that the resulting definitions represented the best efforts for compatibility across UN system organizations. Some HLCM members referred to the definition of fraudulent practice currently used by UNDG in legal instruments for pass-through funding, noting that this is aligned with the definition used by the Multilateral Development Banks and has been adopted by some UN system organizations. The FB Network Co-Chair noted that there is currently no common definition adopted by all UN system organizations, and that while the Task Force had used the UNDG definition as a starting point for discussion, not all organizations had agreed to that definition and the final agreed definition of fraud had evolved to a broader, higher level definition that would encompass the definition used by UNDG.
127. The representative of UNRIAS provided a statement on behalf of UNRIAS, noting that UNRIAS had two main reservations regarding the proposed definition of fraud, and welcomed that one of those regarding the inclusion of the word “material” in the definition (“... knowingly misrepresents or conceals a *material* fact...”) had been fully addressed by the Task Force. The other reservation related to the existence of the current UNDG definition and that there is a potential for confusion when negotiating agreements if another definition exists alongside the UNDG definition. The Co-Chair of the Finance and Budget Network clarified that, following the endorsement by CEB of the common definitions for the UN system adopted by the Task Force, the definition used by UNDG would eventually have to be replaced by the former. He further emphasized that the agreed common definitions of fraud were not inconsistent with the Multilateral Development Banks or UNDG pass-through Agreement definitions, since they were broader and at a higher level, and incorporated the provisions of both the Multilateral Development Banks and UNDG definitions.
128. It was broadly agreed that HLCM members did not have objections to the wording of the definitions, recognizing that the Task Force members had negotiated the definitions very thoroughly before reaching agreement on inclusive, high level definitions. However some members expressed a need for clarification as to the way that the new common definitions would be operationalised in each organization, suggesting that perhaps more time should be taken for internal consultations within each organization. In the ensuing discussion the HLCM Vice-Chair recalled paragraph 6 of the document CEB/2017/HLCM/11 whereby the Task Force agreed that the proposed common definitions would provide a consistent and harmonized framework, within which organizations would have the autonomy and flexibility to further elaborate and define their implementation approaches and other operational details in their respective regulatory frameworks, legal instruments and policies, as appropriate, to meet their specific requirements and within the timeframes appropriate to the circumstances of each organization. It was also recalled that there is great interest in these common UN system definitions from Member States, not only from the General Assembly but also within other governing bodies, and that addressing the mandate from the General Assembly is a priority for the Secretary-General and the CEB.
129. It was noted by UNRIAS and HLCM members that the next phase of work of the Task Force was very important and that, in accordance with its Terms of Reference, the Task Force would continue work in 2017 to develop common definitions for vendor, implementing partner and grant recipient. The Task Force would also explore the possibility of agreeing on common internal control parameters and criteria to be applicable to arrangements with implementing partners and recipients of grants, and a menu of best practice principles. After completion of these activities, the next stage would be to look at developing an information sharing platform for tracking and managing implementing partners, including an assessment as to what extent existing tools are already being used by organizations and which tools may be available.

➤ *The High-Level Committee on Management:*

130. Recalled that the mandate to establish a single agreed definition across the United Nations system of what constitutes fraud, as well as cases of presumptive fraud, had been reiterated several times by the General Assembly, and most recently in the context of its review of the sixth progress report on the accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat in March 2017.
131. Adopted the common definition of fraud for the United Nations system as:
 - a. “Any act or omission whereby an individual or entity knowingly misrepresents or conceals a fact (a) in order to obtain an undue benefit or advantage or avoid an obligation for himself, herself, itself, or a third party, and/or (b) in such a way as to cause an individual or entity to act, or fail to act, to his, her or its detriment”
132. Adopted the common definition of presumptive fraud for the United Nations system as:
 - b. "Allegations that have been deemed to warrant an investigation and, if substantiated, would establish the existence of fraud resulting in loss of resources to the Organization"
133. Noted that individual organizations would be expected to operationalize the agreed common definitions within their respective regulatory frameworks, legal instruments and policies, as appropriate, according to their specific requirements and within a timeframe appropriate to the circumstances of each organization.

ANNEX I – List of Participants**Chair:** Ms. Jan Beagle, Deputy Executive Director , UNAIDS**Secretary:** Mr. Remo Lalli, CEB Secretariat

Ms. Simona Petrova, Director, CEB secretariat, and Acting Secretary, CEB

Organizations	Name – Title – Division
United Nations	Mr. Yukio Takasu, Under Secretary-General, Department of Management
	Mr. Peter Drennan, Under Secretary-General, UN-DSS, Chair, IASMN
	Ms. Catherine Pollard, Under Secretary-General, DGACM
	Ms. Antigoni Axenidou, Director, General Legal Division, Rep. of the Legal Network
	Ms. Jillann Farmer, Director, Medical Service Division, Chair, Medical Directors WG
	Ms. Cecilia Elizalde, Director, Documentation Division, DGACM
	Mr. Christophe Monier, Project Lead, Global Service Delivery Model Project – <i>by VC</i>
	Mr. Amr Nour, Director, Regional Commissions New York Office
ILO	Mr. Greg Vines, Deputy Director-General
FAO	Ms. Fernanda Guerrieri, Assistant Director-General, Corporate Services Department
	Mr. Sylvain St. Pierre, Head, Shared Service Center, FAO Budapest
	Ms. Helene Jasinski, Deputy Chief, FAO SSC Budapest
UNESCO	Mr. Getachew Engida, Deputy Director General
	Ms. Nutan Wozencroft, Chief Financial Officer, Bureau of Financial Management
UNAIDS	Ms. Helen Frary, Senior Advisor, Change Management
ICAO	Mr. Vincent Smith, Director, Bureau of Administration and Services
WHO	Dr. Hans Troedsson, Assistant Director-General
	Mr. Roberto Balsamo, Management Officer
IOM	Ms. Laura Thompson, Deputy Director General
	Mr. Carlos Oliver Cruz, Special Assistant to the Deputy Director General
	Mr. Marco Boasso, Director, IOM Global Administrative Centre in Manila
ITU	Mr. Anders Norsker, Chief, Information Services, Representative of ICT Network
WMO	Mr. Angiolo Rolli, Director, Resource Management Department
IMO	Mr. Aubrey Botsford, Acting Director, Administrative Division
WIPO	Mr. Ambi Sundaram, Assistant Director General, Administration and Management
UNIDO	Ms. Fatou Haidara, Managing Director, Policy and Programme Support, & Director ad interim, Department of Human Resources Management
	Mr. Konstantin Ivanov, Officer-in-Charge, Department of Operational Support Services
UNWTO	Mr. José G. Blanch, Director, Administration Division
IAEA	Ms. Mary Alice Hayward, Deputy Director General & Head of the Dept. of Management
	Ms. Neris Baez Garcia De Mazzora, Chairperson, Procurement Network & Director, Office of Procurement Services, Department of Management

Organizations	Name – Title – Division
UNCTAD	Mr. Adnan Issa, Chief of Resource Management Service
UNDP	Mr. Jens Wandel, ASG, Assistant Administrator & Director, Bureau for Management Services
	Mr. Darshak Shah, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director
	Ms. Martha Helena López, Director, Office of Human Resources
UNEP	Ms. Theresa Panuccio, Director, Office for Operations and Corporate Services
UNHCR	Ms. Kelly Clements, Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees
	Ms. Shoko Shimozawa, Head of Global Service Center
UNICEF	Ms. Eva Mennel, Director, Division of Human Resources
	Mr. Mark Beatty, Director, Global Shared Services Center
	Ms. Lori Issa, Executive Manager, Office of the Executive Director
	Ms. Madhavi Ashok, Senior Adviser, UN Partnerships
	Mr. Luis Soares, Chief of Service Quality Management
UNFPA	Ms. Laura Londén, ASG and Deputy Executive Director (Management)
WFP	Mr. Calum Gardner, Director, Budget Services
	Ms. Lidia Tutarinova, Inter-agency Coordinator to the Assistant Executive Director
UNODC	Mr. Dennis Thatchaichawalit, Director, Division of Management
	Mr. Polinikis Sophocleous, Chief, Financial Resources Management Service
UN-HABITAT	Mr. Andrew Cox, Director, Management and Operations Division
UNOPS	Mr. Vitaly Vanshelboim, Deputy Executive Director
UN WOMEN	Mr. Moez Doraid, Director, Management & Administration
ITC	Mr. Gerry Lynch, Director, Division of Programme Support
World Bank	Mr. Bjorn Gillsater, Manager, World Bank Group, New York Office
IMF	Mr. Chris Hemus, Director, Corporate Services and Facilities Department
Other Representatives:	
UNSSC	Ms. Claire Messina, Deputy Director, Programme Management and Business Development
CTBTO	Mr. Patrick Grenard, Director of Administration
ICSC	Mr. Wolfgang Stoeckl, Vice-Chairman
HLCP	Ms. Kayoko Gotoh, Secretary
UN-RIAS	Mr. Anthony Watson, Chief Internal Auditor, ILO
UNDG	Mr. John Hendra, Co-Chair, UNDG Working Group on Leadership – <i>by VC</i>
	Mr. Sarmad Khan, Team Leader and Policy Adviser, Leadership Development – <i>by VC</i>
UNDG/DOCO	Mr. Anders Voigt, Business Operations Adviser
FICSA	Mr. Peter Kakucska, Member of the Executive Committee
	Mr. Imed Zabaar, former Member of the FICSA Executive Committee

ANNEX II - Checklist of Documents

Item no.	Title	Summary Sheet	Document Symbol
	Provisional Agenda	n.a.	CEB/2017/HLCM/1/Rev.3
	Provisional Programme of Work		CEB/2017/HLCM/1/Add.1/Rev.1
A.1	HLCM Strategic Plan 2017-2020	Yes✓	CEB/2016/HLCM/15
	Results Framework - Strategic Plan 2017-2020		CEB/2016/HLCM/15/Add.1/Rev.1
	Letter from the DSG on the review of the UNDS		CEB/2017/HLCM/INF.1
B.2	Outline of the Session	Yes✓	CEB/2017/HLCM/2
	Update on Global Service Delivery Solutions in the UN System		CEB/2017/HLCM/3
	Use of Key Performance Indicators for Performance of Service Centers		CEB/2017/HLCM/3/Add.1
	Progress with Global Service Delivery Solutions in the UN System		CEB/2015/HLCM/11
	The role of service centres in redesigning administrative service delivery		JIU/REP/2016/11
	Consultant report with Feasibility study and Business Case for Joint Facility Classification and Reference Checking		Yes✓
C.4	Briefing Note on the Cross-Functional Task Force on Duty of Care	Yes✓	CEB/2017/HLCM/6
C.5	Briefing by the USG – Department of Safety and Security on the current security environment for UN personnel	Yes✓	Summary Sheet only
	IASMN 25 th Session Final Report		n.a.
C.6	UN System Leadership Framework	Yes✓	CEB/2017/HLCM/7
C.7	Briefing Note by the HR Network from the outcome of the ICSC 84th Session	Yes✓	CEB/2017/HLCM/8
	HR Network Strategic Work Plan 2017-2020		CEB/2017/HLCM/9
D.8	Working Group on Document Standards – Recommendations to HLCM for the adoption of the United Nations Semantic Interoperability Framework (UNSIF)	Yes✓	CEB/2017/HLCM/10/Rev.1
	Working Group on Document Standards – Guidelines for the mark-up of UN normative and parliamentary documents (AKN4UN) (NOT FOR PRINTING)		CEB/2017/HLCM/10/Annex 2
	Working Group on Document Standards – A framework for the description of United Nations system documents and their relationships with each other and the entities they portray (UNDO) (NOT FOR PRINTING)		CEB/2017/HLCM/10/Annex 3
D.9	Common Definitions of Fraud and Presumptive Fraud	Yes✓	CEB/2017/HLCM/11
F	A new environment for the United Nations	Yes✓	Summary Sheet only