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**Chief Executives Board  
for Coordination**

CEB/2009/HLCM/ICT/1  
20 January 2009

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**Meeting of CEB ICT Network**

Eleventh Session

International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, 28 – 29 October 2008

[Discussion Summary and Conclusions](#)

**1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

1. The ICT Network opened its eleventh session at the headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The chairperson of the ICT Network, UN Secretariat Department of Field Support USG Susana Malcorra, sends her regrets to the Network, explaining that last-minute emergency meetings of the Security Council prevented her from convening the Network meeting and requested UN Secretariat ITSD Director Ed Blinder as a substitute chair, who welcomed the members and opened the session.
2. The acting Chair opened the meeting by welcoming new members and members who have not attended in a long time, and noted that attendance at the ICT Network meeting has been growing. The acting Chair then turned to the IAEA Assistant Director General for Management, Mr. David Waller, to officially open the meeting and who provided an overview of the work of the IAEA.
3. The network adopted the agenda with one addition, a discussion of CEB support to the ICT network.

**2. System-Wide Business Practices**

**a. Working Group on the harmonization of ERP practices**

4. WFP, speaking as chair of the SAP Special Interest Group (SAP-SIG), noted that no additional meetings had occurred since the last ICT Network Meeting, however new developments on SAP licensing reiterated the importance of working together to discuss these types of issues with the vendor. The SAP-SIG agreed that the next meeting would happen in May and that there should be a focus on negotiating a single contract for all agencies. Speaking for the Oracle/PeopleSoft special interest group

(Customer Advisory Board for International Organizations – CABIO), UNDP noted that the next meeting of the group is scheduled for February, 2009, hosted by the World Bank in Washington, DC. The meeting will include discussions on licensing and cooperative approaches to business practices.

5. The CEB Secretariat provided additional background to the Network on the HLCM support to the ERP business practices proposal, reporting that the Chair of the ICT Network, at the last HLCM meeting, called upon the Committee to reiterate its support for a multidisciplinary approach to this business practices initiative. The HLCM agreed that achieving coordinated business practices that support ERP systems would require a coordinated approach.
6. Outcome: The CEB Secretariat to coordinate a meeting with representatives of the HR, Finance & Budget and Procurement Networks to discuss implementation of this initiative.

**b. Working Group on Common Service Centres**

7. Activities of the working group on shared services centres has proceeded on three main fronts; coordination with the procurement network on arrangements for cross-agency use of negotiated Long Term Agreements (LTA's); compilation of software currently in use by agencies of the system; and activities of the lead agency to create a service centre approach for managing ICT services.
8. Discussion of this initiative began with a presentation by the chair of the procurement network (WFP), who thanked the ICT Network for this opportunity and described the effort of the Network to move from a pure administrative function to a fuller support of system-wide supply-chain services. The presentation noted that ICT represents approximately 30% of all UN system purchases and that many times a knowledge gap exists between departments and procurement, and amongst procurement entities around the system. To bridge this gap, the Procurement Network created a central web site, called the United Nations Global Marketplace ([www.ungm.org](http://www.ungm.org)) and managed by UNOPS, for sharing information about LTA's, specifications, processes, presentations, etc. It was also stated that there is currently no consistency of confidentiality rules with respect to sharing and uploading ICT related contractual documents, such as long term agreements.
9. On the issues of interest to the ICT Network, the Procurement Network Chair called into question the feasibility of allowing a blanket approval for using LTA's across agencies as these arrangements may not always be the best procurement solution for many reasons, including restrictions it places on the market and gaining competitive pricing. In response, the Procurement

Network indicated that they have developed a framework to create a procurement strategy based upon type of item, complexity, value and other factors.

10. During the discussion, the Procurement Network Chair suggested that the ICT Network may wish to identify a limited number of specific contracts that could be agreed-upon system-wide. This would allow the Procurement Network to focus its activities on specific areas of interest to the ICT community. The ICT Network thanked the Procurement Network Chair for his presentation and willingness to work closely with the ICT Network to streamline procurement processes of interest across the system.
11. Outcome: (a) ICT Network to develop a list of two (2) to four (4) Long Term Agreements (LTA's) for the Procurement Network to consider for the next year. (b) Each ICT Network member to discuss the situation of using LTA's negotiated by other agencies. (c) Agencies will share their ICT LTA's with the CEB Secretariat to make available to the ICT community.
12. WFP then presented the current situation with their adoption of a service centre approach to managing their desktop computer environment. WFP recalled that the project was comprised of two components; outsourcing of support and creating a standard image for the computers. After determining that no single vendor could provide the complete range of services required, they focused on developing a solution with the International Computer Centre. WFP invites other agencies interested in participating in further developing a standard image that can be supported by a single service provider.
13. During the discussion, other agencies spoke of similar efforts to implement a supportable standard for user computers, both as an effort to reduce costs as well as provide reliable services. The Network agreed that not all agencies need participate in this initiative for it to become worthwhile for the system.
14. Finally, the CEB Secretariat briefs the Network in the status of the software survey and presents some preliminary data, indicating the vast variety of software in use across the system. The Network welcomed this effort, while noting that a "snapshot" of software use has limited value over the long term unless agencies are committed to maintaining the information.

**c. Working Group on the UN System Portal**

15. The CEB Secretariat provided an update on the Portal project, recalling that this was initially proposed in 2002 and adapted to comply with the current reality of organizations publishing from their own Content Management Systems and based on the recognition that organizations broadly support the RSS standard and can comply, if they wish, with a common way of disseminating information. Currently, a group representing eight agencies

have been providing technical guidance in areas such as implementation and content management systems and act in a technical advisory capacity for the direction and development of this project. The next step is to create an ICT Network steering group to act as the project board and provide some direction to the implementation phase. The presentation noted a current draft report of the Joint Inspection Unit on web site hosting that supports the project. In addition, the next Web for Development conference, which will take place early in 2009 in New York hosted by UNICEF, will have sections aimed at establishing a mechanism to support projects of this scale and style.

16. Outcome: The Network thanked the CEB Secretariat Webmaster for the presentation and continuing to work on this project and agreed to form a steering group to guide its development.

**d. Working Group on Business Case Development and Costing**

17. The CEB Secretariat, on behalf of the UN Secretariat who chairs this group, introduced the current activities of the working group on business case development and costing. The presentation referred to the circulated document containing the benchmarking template, along with its instructions, noting that this instrument emerged from similar work of the International Financial Institutions (IFI). The template, an Excel spreadsheet, allows organizations to broadly calculate their current ICT-related costs in a way that allows comparisons across organizations. The objective is to have organizations complete the template and share the calculated results, in the form of percentages. The presentation stressed that organizations are not expected to share the underlying data used to perform the calculations, as this was considered proprietary.
18. The IFI representatives at the meeting, the IMF and the World Bank, suggested that organizations view this exercise more as an opportunity to explore their own ICT expenditure rather than as a pure comparison activity. They noted that after performing this exercise over several years and that the clarity of the numbers improves over time.
19. Outcome: The Network agreed to complete the templates and send the calculated results contained in section 5 to the CEB Secretariat for compilation, and that organizations may want to utilize their most recent complete biennium data, which is 2006-2007. Early in 2009, once many templates have been compiled, the CEB will organize a conference call for interested agencies with the Gartner Group, who has expertise in this area.

**e. Working Group on Data Centre Consolidation**

20. Introducing the discussion on the data centre consolidation initiative, the CEB secretariat recalled that this began as a larger project to study the value and feasibility of agencies using a central data centre for managing servers

instead of provisioning individual centres. While UNHCR initially agreed to lead this effort, IAEA agreed to continue in this capacity and prepared an initial Terms of Reference for a more targeted study focused on the International Computer Centre.

21. In the discussion by the Network, there was recognition that the JIU report on hosting covered much of the territory for the proposed study, and that any further work in this area could build upon this work. The ICC noted that the consultant identified for this study had already completed some preliminary work and was prepared to complete the project with a revised Terms of Reference.
22. Outcome: IAEA will prepare and circulate a revised terms of reference that builds upon the JIU report on hosting, to be used by the ICC contracted consultant to complete the revised report.

**f. Working Group on Internationally Recognized Standards**

23. The Chair of the Internationally Recognized Standards working group, UNICEF, presented the current activities in this area, noting that ICT related professional practice domains, for example in the area of security, operational excellence, business continuity, IT governance and project/programmes/portfolio management have emerging international standards that the Network should consider. In addition, UNICEF noted that institutional auditors are moving from simply monitoring control frameworks and fraud prevention and into areas of value management, benefit realization and portfolio management. While not always directly linked to ICT, the emerging standards nevertheless have ICT components. Furthermore, auditors are now beginning to look for evidence that of a) using common methods, standards and tools whenever proprietary practice is not justified, and b) IT investments being governed by the whole organisation, in a transparent fashion. Finally, UNICEF recommended that the ICT Network may encourage to - whenever feasible - have one common future way of auditors assessing the state of ICT maturity of its institutions.
24. The ICT Network thanked UNICEF for this presentation and welcomed the new directions that standards in these areas may take.
25. Outcome: The ICT Network decided to recommend to the HLCM to have the UN Representatives of Internal Audit Services (RIAS) invited to develop a proposal towards a consistent scheme for assessing individual organisation's efforts towards optimised realisation of value from IT investments. Ideally such an effort should demonstrate a coherent approach across agencies towards using the latest standards and best practices in the domain of IT Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) management. It decided further on to commence a stocktaking exercise across the System

using a questionnaire to obtain the current state and existing demands towards IT governance and methodologies.

**g. Working Group on UN System Directory**

26. The Chair of the common directory working group, UNDP, attending through a video-conference, presented the current state of this project, which include the creation of the terms of reference (ToR) for the common directory governing committee as well as the steps necessary for moving to a production environment. Noting that moving to an implementation required the establishment of a governing body, the presentation indicated that the ToR was submitted to the ICT Network for adoption. In addition, the working group discussed hosting arrangements for the directory with the International Computer Centre (ICC).
27. After thanking the Chair of the Common directory working group, the Network received a presentation from the Director of the ICC regarding their proposal for hosting. The ICC presentation noted that estimated costs for the system include a one-time investment of approximately \$1,500 with annual costs of approximately \$12,000. Noting that a similar project to facilitate the shared access of Intranets between UN agencies has been presented to the ICC by UNDP, and after reviewing the technical approaches for implementing that project, the ICC proposed that (a) the two projects – common directory and shared intranet access – be combined and hosted by ICC as a shared service and (b) additional shared sites such as CABIO, SAP-SIG and CEB could also be hosted on the same infrastructure. Finally, ICC offered to absorb the costs of hosting the common directory for the first year, with the implementation of the production system to commence in January, 2009.
28. Agencies welcomed the proposal by the ICC, while expressing some concern about combining the implementation of the common directory and the sharing of Intranets, preferring to treat them as separate projects, and thanked the ICC for agreeing to host the common directory at no cost for the first year.
29. After further discussion, the Network agreed to amend paragraph 28 of the Governance Committee Terms of Reference to read:

The Committee establishes guidelines and procedures within the scope of the common directory system by proposing them to the ICT Network for comment. After the comment period, the Committee formulates the standards and guidelines taking into consideration all comments.

30. Outcome: The network (a) agreed to the ICC proposal to host the common directory at no cost for the first year and (b) adopted the Terms of Reference for the governance committee, with changes to paragraph 28 of the draft.

### **3. A Carbon-neutral UN – ICT Activities**

31. The Director of the Sustainable UN (SUN) project, Niclas Svenningsen (UNEP), addressed the Network regarding the importance of ICT to achieving a carbon-neutral United Nations. The presentation noted that the purpose of the sustainable UN project is to help each organization meet its commitment under the CEB climate neutral strategy to reducing Greenhouse gasses across the UN system. Through the SUN project, each agency has committed to reducing its carbon emissions and to purchase carbon offsets on the open market. By the end of 2009, each agency is required to have a plan in place to achieve this, and all agencies are currently performing an inventory of carbon emissions. The presentation noted that preliminary inventory results indicated that airplane travel accounted for the largest component of greenhouse gas emissions by organizations, followed by other activities, including the energy required, from cooling and electricity use, to operate computer systems. The presentation called for ICT Network support to alternatives to travel through the increased use of communications capabilities as well as more effective use of advanced computer systems to reduce energy requirements for computer operations. The presentation suggested that the cost savings incurred from reduced travel could be used for increased investment into advanced videoconference and other electronic communications facilities as well as increased use of virtual servers to reduce energy costs.
32. Organizations thanked the SUN Project director and noted that many agencies are already working to reduce their carbon emissions, and that ICT departments are often already involved in these activities. Organizations note that simply making additional electronic communications available to staff members may not achieve the intended goal if not followed by policies and procedures that mandate its use. In addition, agencies suggested that including a “carbon cost” within ICT business cases may help to draw attention to the ICT impact on greenhouse gas emissions. Agencies also pointed out that due to the programme-based funding model used by many agencies, it can be impossible to directly apply travel savings to ICT investment. In general, the Network agreed that increased use of ICT facilities can help to offset some travel and that the Network will continue to work on this issue.
33. Outcome: The ICT Network agreed to create an ad-hoc working group to further explore the system-wide ICT issues associated with reducing carbon emissions.

#### **4. Desktop coherence – directions for upgrading on the desktop**

34. The CEB Secretariat introduced this topic, noting that organizations will be faced with upgrading their desktop toolkit, both operating system and productivity applications, in the near future and may wish to coordinate these efforts. During the discussion, the Network agreed to utilize the ICT Network website to share information regarding their plans for upgrading.

#### **5. Geographic information systems**

35. The Co-Chairs of the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG), from OCHA and UNHCR, introduced the current activities of the group, centered around the development of a UN spatial Data Infrastructure (UNSDI). The presentation defined an SDI as the technology, policies, standards, human resources and related activities necessary to acquire, process, distribute, use, maintain and preserve spatial data and noted that the UNGIWG expects to adopt the framework at its next meeting in November 2008. The framework specifies the institutional and technical governance architecture as well as the core deliverables, including both standards and best practices for sharing geospatial data, interoperable geospatial services like a data warehouses and a visualization facility and core datasets in areas such as health, infrastructure and human population, among others. In concluding the presentation, the UNGWIG representatives requested the ICT Network to (a) endorse the SDI as an initiative that supports “harmonization of business practices” and supports “one source” proposals (b) recognize the need to work together, including need for specific ICT support to enable a UN SDI and (c) agree to sharing of best ICT practices by those UN and UN agencies with spatial data ICT capacity (FAO, WFP, OCHA, DPKO, UNEP, et al.).
36. In thanking the UNGIWG for their presentation, many organizations indicated their support for the work of the Group, noting current and ongoing GIS-related activities within their agencies and the Network fully endorsed the SDI as an initiative that supports the concept of harmonization of business practices and could be used as a input into the “One Source” proposal. The Network recognized the need to provide support to the enable a UN SDI, and called for the UNGIWG to provide further information regarding the specific ICT needs in this regard. Finally, the Network agreed to share best ICT practices as appropriate in order to support the exchange of GIS information across agencies.

#### **6. JIU Report**

37. Having recently completed a draft report on ICT hosting, the ICT Network invited the JIU to present the results of the report and discuss its conclusions. The JIU thanked the ICT Network for the opportunity and noted that in the preparation of the report they have been working closely with the leadership



of the International Computer Center and the ICT Network, through the CEB Secretariat Senior ICT Advisor. The Inspector noted that the report is based on over 50 interviews with ICT representatives from around the system as well as on the responses to a detailed questionnaire on the subject of hosting. After reviewing the structure of the report, the Inspector noted that the report stresses the importance of strong ICT governance, a clear ICT strategy and the need for a detailed cost/benefit analysis for making hosting decisions.

38. Responding to the presentation, the IAEA noted that this study was in response to its request and thanked the JIU for including this topic in its programme of work. In reviewing the recommendations, the Network noted that some of them appeared incomplete and could benefit from additional input. Furthermore, agencies noted that many of the recommendations appeared to deviate significantly from those contained in earlier drafts of the report, which was shared with an ad-hoc working group of the ICT Network created to provide input to the report. The Network called upon the ad-hoc working group to reconvene and draft a response to the JIU to address these concerns. It was further agreed that this response would not prejudice the response that each agency would provide individually to the JIU.
39. Outcome: (a) The Ad-Hoc JIU Hosting Report Working Group to reconvene to draft a general response to the JIU hosting draft report. (b) Each agency would provide an individual response to the draft report of the JIU.

## **7. Country-Level activities:**

40. The Chair of the UNDG Working Group on Country Office Business Operations Task Team on ICT, WFP, briefed the Network on current country-level ICT activities, noting that the mission of the tasking group is to “allow all country offices seamless exchange of information and harmonized infrastructures, and to implement ICT best practices in ‘Delivering as One’ ”. In practice the Tasking Team is of an ad-hoc rather than standing nature, tasked and governed by the WG, while referring matters of policy concern to the ICT Network. It deals with operational inter-agency ICT initiatives and issues related to country offices upon request by “Deliver as One” pilot countries (Cape Verde, Pakistan, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Vietnam, Uruguay, Albania). Many of these countries have been the subject of ICT strategy and technical design missions. Some of the issues addressed by the tasking team include an integrated network and security architecture for distributed offices, consolidation of VSAT and ISP connectivity, and shared ICT inventory procurement for local contracts.
41. The presentation concluded with a request for the ICT Network to consider two issues; endorsement of common domain name approach for the Resident Coordinator’s Office and discussion and decision with business/information stakeholders on sharing of Agency Intranets. On the first issue, the Tasking

Team chair recalled presenting this issue at the previous ICT Network meeting, and noted that the country offices had agreed to utilize the domain “one.un.org” for all communications. This domain would allow RC’s to communicate independently from their institutional domain address. On the issue of Intranet access, the Tasking Team chair noted that the issue of access to agency intranets was being pursued from several directions, with a request from the Delivering as One pilot countries and from the UNDP Partnership Bureau’s knowledge management project, among others.

42. The Network thanked the Tasking Team for its presentation and agreed to endorse the concept of the single domain for e-mail and web sites for the Resident Coordinators. The ICT Network noted that this is primarily a business decision that had very little technical impact on agencies, with the exception of the UN Secretariat, who agreed to provide the sub-domain. On the issue of access to Intranets, the ICT Network welcomed the introduction of this subject and agreed to consider the alternatives for achieving this, while noting that the key issue is access to specific content contained with the Intranets of individual agencies, and outside the authority of ICT departments.
43. Outcome: The Network (a) endorsed the recommended one domain and (b) asked the CEB Secretariat to follow-up and report back on the issues surrounding Intranet access.

## **8. Other Business**

### **a. Risk Analysis/Security**

44. The CEB Secretariat noted that many organizations have asked about mechanisms for sharing information pertaining to information security, including policies, training, support, etc. During the discussion, many agencies noted the importance of a harmonized approach to this topic.
45. Outcome: The Network agreed to create a special interest group on information security and called upon the CEB Secretariat to create and circulate a draft Terms of Reference for this group.

### **b. Data Communications Study**

46. The CEB Secretariat provided the Network with an update on the data communications study, noting that obtaining clearance from the UN Office of Legal Affairs has take a long time, but that the contract is expected to go before the UNICEF Contract Review Committee in December. The project is expected to commence in early January, and participating agencies should prepare for interacting with the vendor after that.
47. In addition, WFP provided an update on the current status of the VSAT Long Term Agreement, recently concluded with Emerging Market

Communications. This contract allows for shared access to satellite communications facilities in a variety of ways, and will be used by field-based agencies, many of whom have already begun, or even mostly completed, their installations. The presentation noted that this LTA was intended to be a model of inter-agency procurement, and although the team had to overcome many obstacles, ultimately it proved to be a success.

**c. Planning for the next meeting.**

48. As agreed at the previous meeting, the ICT Network, in conjunction with the ICC Management Committee, will hold its next meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, hosted by the UN Secretariat Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Dates will be coordinated with the ICC.

Annex 1  
List of Participants

Organization	Name	Title
UN	Mr. Eduardo Blinder	Director, Information Technology Services Division, DM
	Mr. Rudy Sanchez	Director, Information Technology, DFS
	Mr. Jason Bellone	Chief, Information Technology, UNOG
ILO	Mr. Nadim R. Habra	Chief, Information Technology and Communications
FAO	Mr. David Benfield	Director, Information Systems and Technology Division
UNESCO	Mr. Paulo Serra	Director, Information Systems and Telecommunications
ICAO	Mr. Pat O'Hare	Chief, Information and Communication Technology
WHO	Mr. Martin Peter Catterall	Director, Information Technology and Telecommunication Department
World Bank	Mr. Omar Baig	
IMF	Mr. Jonathan Palmer	Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Services, Technology and General Services Department
ITU	Mr. Anders Norsker	Chief, Information Services Departement
WMO	Mr. Miguel Casas-Garate	Acting Chief, Information Technology Division
IMO	Mr. Vincent Job	Deputy Director / Head, Information Technology and Information Systems, Administrative Division
WIPO	Mr. Neil Wilson	Director and CIO, IT Division
IFAD	Mr. Jose Stigliano	Director, ICT Division
UNIDO	Mr. Jason Slater	
IAEA	Mr. Charles Havekost	Director, Division of Information Technology
WTO	Mr. Ghassan Karam	Director, Informatics Division
UNWTO	Ms. Adriana Gaytan	Chief, Information Technology
UNDP	Ms. Shirin Hamid	Chief Technology Officer, Bureau of Management
UNHCR	Mr. Michael Bouglas	Chief, Operations and Technical Services

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
UNRWA	Mr. Suhail Katkhuda	Chief, Information Systems Division
UNICEF	Mr. Stefan Zutt	Director, Information Technology Solutions & Services Division
UNFPA	Mr. Rafiodin Malikzay	Chief, Management Information Systems Branch
WFP	Mr. Ernesto Baca	CIO and Director, Information and Communications Technology Division
UNDCP/UNO DC	Mr. Phillip Kruss	Chief, Information Technology Section
CTBTO	Mr. Mensah Solomons	Chief, Network and Systems Support Section
ICC	Mr. Andreas Christoforides	Director
ICC-CPI	Mr. Ian Blacker	Chief, ICT Section, Information and Communication Technologies
ICJ - International Court of Justice	Mr. Guillaume Auber	Head of IT Division, IT
IOM	Mr. Mariano-Joaquim Bernardo	Chief, Information Technology and Communication
OHCHR	Mr. Christopher O'Connor	Chief, Information Management and Technology
OPCW	Mr. Marc Weidmann	Head, Information Services Branch
UNAIDS	Ms. Sima Newell	Manager, Information Technology and Systems
UNFCCC	Mr. Ibrahim Al-Haifi	Chief of ICT, Information Services
UNJSPF	Mr. Paul Dooley	Chief, Information Management Systems Section
UNOPS	Mr. Karsten Bloch	Chief, Division for Information & Communication Technology
UNSSC	Mr. Gian Paolo Zaccaria	Head, Information and Communication Technology Unit
UNEP	Mr. Robert Rodriguez	
UNDG	Edgardo Yu	Chair, ICT Tasking Group
CEB	Ken Herman	Senior Advisor on Information Management Policy Coordination
CEB	Richard Maciver	ICT Specialist and Webmaster